

LOURDES PILGRIMAGE 2008 INFORMATION

Dear Confrères and Consoeurs:

I am very pleased to report to you that the Malades and Alternates for the 2008 Lourdes Pilgrimage have been selected.

The Tier I Medical Review Committee consisting of 4 licensed physicians and 2 registered nurses met in Atherton on Friday, February 15th and the meeting was chaired by Dr. Jack Lenahan, 2008 Pilgrimage Medical Director. The committee reviewed the applications prior to the meeting and rated the applicants on a scale of 1 - 3: 1 = medically fit to travel on the pilgrimage; 2 = seems reasonably fit and able to travel; 3 = does NOT seem physically able to travel. During the meeting, which lasted approximately 5 hours, the Medical Committee discussed each of the applications at length, and unanimously arrived at a decision regarding each one. Out of the 82 submitted applications, 7 were rated 3 by the committee, and those applications were removed from consideration by the Tier 2 Selection committee.

The Tier II Selection Committee consisted of 9 members, including 2-licensed physicians, one-licensed registered nurse, and 6 non-medical members. The committee met on Friday, February 22nd at the California Club in Los Angeles and the meeting was chaired by Kevin White, Pilgrimage Director. The committee members received their application booklets in advance of the meeting and were asked to review each in its entirety and rate the applications on a scale of 1-3: 1=excellent malade applicant; 2=good malade applicant but with reservations; 3=not a good candidate. In order to facilitate a more careful analysis of the applications, each committee member was assigned specific applications to review, so they could take the lead on presenting each case. Summary sheets were also provided to the members so that the presentations were uniform. A large screen was used to project a life-size photo of each applicant. As their name was announced, their photo was shown on the screen and the committee asked Our Lady of Lourdes to pray for each applicant. I truly believe Our Lady guided us through our deliberations.

The committee meeting lasted 6 hours without stopping for lunch. The discussion was spirited and passionate; all decisions were unanimous. The following is a breakdown of the results of the meeting by Location:

ARIZONA: 9 Malades accepted
LOS ANGELES: 6 Malades accepted
ORANGE COUNTY: 10 Malades accepted
SACRAMENTO: 4 Malades accepted
SEATTLE: 3 Malades accepted
SAN FRANCISCO: 10 Malades accepted
SAN JOSE: 5 Malades accepted
SAN BERNARDINO: 1 Malade accepted
OTHER LOCATIONS:
 New Mexico: 1 Malade accepted
 Hawaii: 1 Malade accepted

In addition, 8 Alternate Malades were selected.

Lourdes Location Representatives have been informed of the specifics regarding the outcome of the selection meeting and will be informing all applicants within the next few days. If you know a 2008 Malade applicant, I respectfully ask that you wait several days before contacting that person in order to allow the LLR to make the initial contact; though, in some cases, LLR may ask members of the Order with personal relationships to make the initial contact.

As always, should you have any questions about the pilgrimage, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Confraternally yours,

Kevin J. White, KM
Director

INDULGENCE FOR LOURDES ANNIVERSARY

To commemorate the 150th anniversary of the apparition of Our Lady to Saint Bernadette at the grotto of Massabielle, the Holy See has granted a plenary indulgence to those who make a pilgrimage to Lourdes. Here is an excerpt from the decree:

“Each and every member of the Christian faithful who, truly repentant, is purified through sacramental confession, restored through the Most Holy Eucharist and offers prayers for the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff, will be able to gain a Plenary Indulgence daily, which may also be applied, by way of suffrage, to the souls of the faithful in Purgatory: If, during the year running from 8 December 2007 until the end of 8 December 2008, they devoutly visit the following places, preferably in this order - 1) the parish baptismal font used for the Baptism of Bernadette; 2) the house of the Soubirous family called the "cachot"; 3) the Grotto of Massabielle; 4) the chapel of the hospice where Bernadette made her First Communion - and pause to reflect for an appropriate length of time at each of these Jubilee sites, concluding with the Lord's Prayer, some legitimate form of the Profession of Faith, and the Jubilee prayer or some other Marian invocation.” (Decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary, Nov 32, 2007)

What do we mean by an “indulgence”? The granting of an indulgence has nothing to do with the forgiveness of sin; it is an act by which the Church mitigates a penance on the basis of shared membership in the Body of Christ. God forgives us as soon as we repent of our sins and celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation. But we still need to perform some penance to make satisfaction for our sin. Why? Since our age is marked by a lively concern for the ecology, it might help to think of sin as a kind of spiritual pollution: works of generosity restore the spiritual environment that has been damaged by selfishness. Prayer, fasting, and works of mercy are traditional forms of penance, and have always been central to a life of discipleship. We can do penance not only for our own sins but also on behalf of others.

This mutual cooperation undergirds the doctrine of indulgences. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says: in the communion of saints, “... the holiness of one profits others, well beyond the harm that the sin of one could cause others. Thus recourse to the communion of saints lets the contrite sinner be more promptly and efficaciously purified of the punishment for sin” (CCC 1475). In the early centuries a Christian who had denied the faith during persecution was required to perform a rigorous penance. Another Christian awaiting execution could offer his sufferings on behalf of the weaker member, whose penance would be lightened or lifted altogether. It is true that the practice of granting indulgences led at times to abuses, but the doctrine itself is both sound and biblical. It is simply a concrete expression of the commandment of Saint Paul: “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Gal 6:2; see 1 Cor 12:26).

The decree cites the customary requirements for the reception of an indulgence: celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation, reception of Holy Communion, and prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father. Reconciliation and the Eucharist are the sacramental means of deepening our union with God; they do not have to be received on the same day as the exercise is

performed, but within a week or so. Prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father really means prayers for the needs of the whole Church, of which the successor of Peter is pastor. For an indulgence to be “plenary” the recipient must be free from any attachment to venial sin; otherwise, the indulgence is “partial”. Rather than becoming pre-occupied with distinctions, it is best simply to seek the indulgence for oneself, or for one of the faithful departed, with a desire to undo the effects of sin and increase the holiness of the Church, the Body of Christ.