

## **Pilgrimage Information: Updated on the 1st February 2022**

Dear Pilgrim

We are now hopefully exiting from the Covid 19 issues of the last two years. There are still some travel advisories and other challenges in place for those going on holidays and pilgrimages.

We will be guided ultimately by guidance from both the UK Government and the Government of those countries to be visited. Updates will be made to this advisory as and when we receive Governmental advisories.

### **The Pilgrimage**

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All pilgrims will be required to abide by the rules in place at the time of travel. At this time, all are required to have at least two vaccinations, and preferably a booster as well. Pilgrims will be supplied with any documentation that needs to be completed for either France or the return to the UK. It is likely that as a minimum, masks will be required for airports and airplane travel, and possibly more.

### **Pilgrimage helpers + volunteers**

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We welcome all the helpers / volunteers as in previous years, before Covid. You are asked at this time to consider your own health and ability. If you have any uncertainties, please contact your Doctor, or Surgery Nurse, and ask for their advice as to your fitness to carry out any role on the Pilgrimage.

### **Assisted Pilgrims**

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Those wanting to travel with the Pilgrimage, and who will be requiring help and assistance, must be aware that at this time that they may be at a higher risk than normal. The Pilgrimage medical team will assess each person booking on an individual basis, to ensure that the Pilgrimage will be able to cope with those needs. Certain medical conditions may put the pilgrim at a higher risk, and it would maybe not be advisable to travel in 2022. If the pilgrimage organisers are of the opinion that you may be at risk, or that the Pilgrimage is unable to provide the full care required we may not be able to accept your booking.

Medical forms must be completed, and the Pilgrimage medical team will advise you if they are happy for you to travel. If you are unsure in anyway, please check with your GP surgery, even if it a telephone conversation.

### **Pilgrimage support**

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The pilgrimage medical team, will be able to provide help and assistance as follows, and provided that the arrangements have been agreed with the Pilgrimage before departure. Mobility issues, washing and personal care, dining, attendance at Pilgrimage activities, night time supervision, and, general, care, compassion, confidentiality and commitment.

The Pilgrimage medical team will be able to continue any treatment plans in place before the Pilgrimage, and that they are aware of. They will not be able to change medications or prescribe any additional medications. Anybody who is not well, will need to be treated by a French the local Dr on call, or at Lourdes hospital.

### **Travel and accommodation**

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All airlines, and coach companies adhere both in France and the UK to new and regularly updated requirements for cleaning and sanitation.

Hotels, and other accommodation providers, will be conforming to the rules set down by the French government and town of Lourdes, the compliance rules are checked regularly.

High risk areas such as lift controls, public WC's, public doors and much more are cleaned on a regular basis.

Hand sanitising facilities are available, and should be used.

### **Becoming unwell**

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If anyone becomes unwell on pilgrimage, they should advise the pilgrimage medical team as soon as possible, unless of course it is a medical emergency when an ambulance should be called. Should anybody they feel that in any way they could have contracted Covid, this must be advised at this time, and even if an ambulance is called.

In the event of a positive Covid test then the procedures as set out by Government regulation will be followed in full.

Complete details of the rules in force will be published at about three weeks before departure. It is essential that good travel insurance is in place, and covers Covid, the travel policy by such operators as Tangney Tours is considered suitable.

If someone does become unwell whilst on Pilgrimage, and is unable to return home with the Pilgrimage flight, the Pilgrimage medical team and other helpers may well be able to find people to stay behind as a carer, normally speaking the insurance will arrange for a family member or friend to fly out to be with the pilgrim. Repatriation to a person's home will be arranged.

### **Conclusions**

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- Make sure that you are fit to travel, and have completed everything that is required.
- Make sure that you have the correct insurance.
- Make sure that you have your EHIC or GHIC (free on the Government website).
- Make sure that you have had your vaccinations.
- Make sure that your passport has 6 months' validity left.

Please read the updates, especially concerning any paperwork, mask requirements, and Covid requirements <https://www.tangney-tours.com/covid-19>

Our pilgrims are welcomed by our Lourdes team who are all English and French speakers. They are experts on the activities, facilities and services Lourdes has to offer and are on hand should you need any assistance during your trip.

### **John**

Tel: [01732 886666](tel:01732886666)

Address: **Tangney Tours, 3 Station Court, Borough Green, Kent, TN15 8AF, GB**