

Pilgrim Blessing
for World Youth Day

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In the days or weeks prior to departure, consider inviting all World Youth Day pilgrims from the local community (parish, campus, movement, or diocese) for a Pilgrim Blessing after a regularly-scheduled liturgy or a special Mass. As a sign of solidarity, it may also be helpful to include youth and/or young adults traveling internationally to Poland as well as those celebrating stateside. It is also important to include families and adult members of the broader community, as the young people are sent forth from the local Church on to pilgrimage.

Near the end of a Mass, following the Prayer after Communion, the bishop, priest, or deacon calls forth the World Youth Day pilgrims, and introduces the blessing with these words:

Presider: The time is growing short before you embark on the next stage of your pilgrimage. Your local community supports you in this endeavor, and we would like to continue journeying with you in spirit. I would invite you now to be witnesses as you go forward along the way.

With the members of this local Church, we will bless you with our prayers as you approach the mountaintop of your pilgrimage. Please know that you take the prayers of all of us with you.

NOTE TO LEADER: One suggestion is that members of the local community write down their prayers on sheets of paper and give those papers to the young people at this time. If this has happened, the following may be added to the presider's remarks:

We now entrust our prayers to you. Carry them along the way to the mountaintop of World Youth Day and pray for these intentions each day as you make the journey. Light candles or place them before the Lord at one of the shrines, sanctuaries, or churches you will visit. We entrust them now to you, for you carry the thoughts and intentions of this community.

We, here, will be praying for your journey, for safe travel, and for your spiritual and physical needs. You will remain in our thoughts and prayers wherever you may go from here today.

NOTE TO LEADER: The leader of the group comes forward to introduce the pilgrims.

Leader: For the last (*insert length of preparation here, i.e. "six months," "year," etc.*), these pilgrims have been preparing to travel to visit with the Holy Father and the global Church at World Youth Day in Kraków (and if stateside pilgrims are also present: "We also have with us those who will be celebrating World Youth Day stateside here in the United States, united in

solidarity with the pilgrims traveling internationally.”). They have prepared well and I attest that they will represent our community with great faith and humility. Therefore, we invite the following pilgrims about to embark on this journey to please come forward.

NOTE TO LEADER: *If possible, read names slowly and have them stand in front of the assembly.*

Presider:

All-powerful God,
you always show mercy
toward those who love you
and you are never far away
for those who seek you.
Remain with your servants
as they travel on this holy pilgrimage
and guide their way
in accord with your will.

Shelter them with your protection by day,
give them the light of your grace by night,
and, as their companion on the journey,
bring them to their destination in safety.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

ALL: Amen.

NOTE TO LEADER: *At the conclusion of the blessing, the presider turns to the assembly.*

Presider: Together, let us pray in solidarity with pilgrims and communities around our country with the special World Youth Day Prayer for the United States:

**God our Father,
be with us on our pilgrim journey of faith.
Give us the grace and courage
to step forward in faith and hope
on the road ahead.**

**Lord Jesus,
open our eyes to see your face
in all those we encounter.
Open our ears to hear your voice
in those who are often ignored.
Open our hearts that we might be
faithful disciples of mercy and truth.**

**Holy Spirit,
transform us. Empower us
to give of ourselves to the poor;
to welcome the lost;
to forgive those who hurt us;
to comfort those who suffer
and are marginalized.**

**Bless those who travel on mission
from the United States of America
to Kraków in Poland,
Land of Divine Mercy,
to join the universal Church
for World Youth Day.**

**Bless, too, those who celebrate stateside,
united in faith and joy.**

**Like the disciples
who journeyed up the mountain
to witness the Transfiguration,
may this experience be an encounter
that strengthens us
for our work in the world.**

**Through the intercession of Mary,
the Immaculate Conception,
patroness of our nation,
may we be worthy witnesses of our faith,
humble representatives of our country,
and inspired missionaries
bringing peace, hope, and mercy
into our communities. Amen.**

St. James the Apostle, patron
of pilgrim travelers, **pray for us.**

St. Kateri Tekakwitha, young faithful witness
from our native land, **pray for us.**

St. Thérèse of Lisieux,
patroness of missionaries and
advocate for youth, **pray for us.**

Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati,
man of the beatitudes and
patron of young adults, **pray for us.**

St. John Paul II, son of Poland and
patron of World Youth Day, **pray for us.**

NOTE TO LEADERS: *This prayer may conclude
with an appropriate final blessing given by the presider.*