



Diocese of Ossory

Directives for Ossory Pilgrimage Youth Section

The Ossory Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes take place each year from 22nd to the 27th May. An integral part of the Pilgrimage is an extensive Youth Section which draws Transition Year students from the 16 secondary schools in the Diocese. These students travel as youth pilgrims to develop their personal and spiritual lives and also to work as helpers to the assisted pilgrims who stay in the hospital in Lourdes. Below are the directives under which the Youth Section of the Ossory Pilgrimage operate.

1 Number of Youth Pilgrims & Youth Leaders

- 1.1. Not more than 50 youth and 10 youth leaders (5:1 ratio).
- 1.2. Youth Leaders to be gender balanced 5 male: 5 female in so far as possible.

2 School Group Structure

Places shall only be offered to Secondary Schools in the Diocese of Ossory.

Schools groups are divided into three categories.

- 2.1. **Base Schools:** Schools which provides a teacher to travel as a youth leader each year.

Currently these schools are St. Kieran's College, Loreto, Presentation, CBS Kilkenny, Grennan College.

Base schools currently have an allocation of 5 students each year.

- 2.2. **Group Schools:** Schools which provides a teacher to travel as a youth leader every 3rd Year

Group schools currently have an allocation of 5 students in the year in which a teacher from their school travels with them as a youth leader. On alternate years Group school allocation is 2 students.

Should a Group School fail to provide a teacher as leader on the 3rd year it will forfeit its allocation of 5 and instead have an allocation of 2.

Current School Groups

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Castlecomer C.S	Col. Cois Suire Mooncoin	St. Brigid's College Callan
St. Fergal's Rathdowney	Sc. Aireagail Ballyhale	Abbey CC Ferrybank, Our Lady of Lourdes

- 2.3. Occasional Schools:** Schools which only occasionally send 2 students, should places be available.

3 Allocation of Places to Schools

- 3.1.** Schools participating in the Ossory Lourdes Pilgrimage Youth Section will be allocated the number of places for students and youth leaders to represent their school by the Youth Director each year.
- 3.2.** A school will forfeit its allocation of students and youth leaders if it fails to return the official application forms for its selected students by the date given for the application deadline. (the last Friday in November each year).

4 School Liaison

- 4.1.** Each school participating in the Ossory Lourdes Pilgrimage Youth Section must have a designated person who liaises with the Youth Director i.e. School Chaplain, a member of the Religious Education Department or other appropriate teacher.

5 Responsibilities of the School Liaison

- 5.1.** The School Liaison is responsible for communicating with the Youth Director at all times in matters pertaining to the schools' participation in the Ossory Lourdes Pilgrimage Youth Section.

- 5.2.** The School Liaison is also responsible for ;

5.2.1. Having received the schools allocation for the year the school liaison advertises the pilgrimage among the students and distributes application forms.

5.2.2. Selecting students according to the selection criteria outline below.

5.2.3 Gathering student information and details and returning these on the official application forms to the Youth Director by the designated date. (see 2.2. above).

5.2.4 Help Co-ordinating the fundraising activities of the selected students and encouraging their parents to help in these activities.

5.2.5 Returning the full fare for all students going on the pilgrimage by the designated date, details of which will be given to the School Liaison each year by the Youth Director.

6 Selecting Youth Pilgrims

6.1. Each school selecting students as youth pilgrims must adhere to the selection criteria and process as outlined below.

7 Selection Criteria

7.1. You are a practicing Catholic and are involved in your parish e.g. choir member, reader, Eucharistic minister, handing out mass leaflets, collector etc.

7.2. You are participating in the JP II awards.

7.3. Good Record in school over the last four years.

7.4. Other relevant life experience, e.g. personal experience of caring for someone, your own illness or experience of difficult circumstances and what you learned from them as a person.

7.5. Be able to show what qualities would you bring to the pilgrimage.

7.6. Your parent is a member of Lourdes pilgrimage staff (i.e Brancardier, doctor, nurse, kitchen staff, youth leader etc.).

7.7. Be willing to commit to the **compulsory** preparation programme for the pilgrimage (3 days).

8 Selection Process

Students must do the following:

- 8.1. Ask for an application form from the teacher/chaplain responsible for organising the pilgrimage in your school.
- 8.2. Write a brief essay on why they would like to travel as a youth helper on the pilgrimage (they can refer to the selection criteria) and return it to the School Liaison by the specified date before first mid-term break.
- 8.3. Attend an interview after mid-term break which will be based on what they have written.

These directives were ratified: 23rd September 2013

Review date: 7th October 2014

Youth Director

Date