



Pilgrim Blessing for World Youth Day

NOTE TO LEADERS: 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 onto 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.

OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL REMARKS:

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:

Presider: 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.

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.

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.

Assembly: Amen.

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**.

Assembly: **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.

Presider:	St. James the Apostle , patron of pilgrim travelers	Assembly: pray for us.
	St. Kateri Tekakwitha , young faithful witness from our native land	Assembly: pray for us.
	St. Thérèse of Lisieux , patroness of missionaries and advocate for youth	Assembly: pray for us.
	Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati , man of the beatitudes and patron of young adults	Assembly: pray for us.
	St. John Paul II , son of Poland and patron of World Youth Day	Assembly: pray for us.

This prayer may conclude with an appropriate final blessing given by the presider.