



WORLD YOUTH DAY SAFETY NOTICE

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Secretariat of Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth

The Secretariat of Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) is pleased to provide the following safety and security information to all pilgrimage leaders, pilgrims, and their families in preparation for the international celebration of World Youth Day in Kraków, Poland in 2016.

The USCCB World Youth Day Office is working collaboratively with the U.S. State Department, the U.S. Consulate in Krakow, and the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in the United States, as well as the USCCB Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection, to assist in the protection of those making this international pilgrimage. In addition, the World Youth Day Local Organizing Committee in Kraków is also working with the security forces of Poland in the planning of the 2016 gathering.

If they should arise, any threats to the safety of the international pilgrims will be closely monitored by authorities. Monitoring and assessments will be ongoing, and any concerns that arise will be communicated to travelers. The USCCB World Youth Day Office will also convey any alerts on its website, www.wydusa.org, and social media platforms (www.facebook.com/wydusa/ and www.twitter.com/wydusa/), as well as through direct communication with registered group leaders.

Most Rev. Frank J. Caggiano, Bishop of Bridgeport and World Youth Day USA Episcopal Liaison for the USCCB, noted this in his address to the bishops of the United States at their Fall General Assembly in Baltimore, Maryland, in November 2015, saying “We will continue to be diligent and proactive in all these matters and we will provide multiple opportunities for leader training in the coming months.”

In general, it is important for every pilgrim and every leader to be vigilant in their journeys to, from, and within Kraków, to be aware of themselves and their surroundings at all times. It is also helpful when pilgrims and leaders look out for the safety of others and take special care to act responsibly in an international setting like World Youth Day.

The USCCB World Youth Day Office recommends the following:

- Regularly check the United States Department of State websites (<http://www.state.gov/> and <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/general/americans-traveling-abroad.html>).
- Regularly check the U.S. State Department’s Poland traveler’s site including important travel warnings and alerts (<http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country/poland.html>).
- Know passport regulations: Pilgrims with U.S. citizenship will need a valid U.S. passport to travel to Poland and one that has at least six (6) months of validity left for international travel (which means passports used for WYD Kraków in July 2016 should be valid through February 1, 2017 or later). Citizens of other countries residing in the U.S. should consult their consulate or embassy in the U.S. for further instructions on their visa and passport regulations.

- U.S. pilgrims are encouraged to register their trip with the United States State Department Safe Traveler Enrollment Program (<https://step.state.gov/step/>). No visa is required for U.S. citizens traveling into the European Union (EU), of which Poland is part.
- Pilgrims should photocopy their passport prior to travel and leave (1) one at home, (2) one at the diocesan, parish, or group leader's office in the United States, and (3) one for the group leaders to have with them in Kraków during the trip itself.
- Should pilgrims lose their passport or in the case of an emergency, they must immediately seek out the U.S. Consulate, located at ul. Stolarska 9, 31-043 Kraków, Poland (very near the Dominican Holy Trinity Basilica in the Kraków center city area).
- Regularly check the website for the U.S. Consulate in Kraków at www.krakow.usconsulate.gov. The consulate's telephone number is +48-12-424-5100. Officials from the U.S. Consulate will also be available at various English-language World Youth Day sites throughout the week.
- Regularly check the website for the U.S. Embassy in Poland at <http://poland.usembassy.gov>. Pilgrim leaders should also know the location and details of the Embassy of the United States within Poland, located in the country's capital, Warsaw: Aleje Ujazdowskie 29/31, 00-540 Warsaw, Poland. The telephone number for the U.S. Embassy in Poland is +48-22-504-2000.
- If any pilgrims or leaders are found in an emergency situation in Poland, they can dial 112 (this is the equivalent to our 911). Many Poles speak English and can assist you.
- There are many World Youth Day volunteers (who speak multiple languages) around Kraków and the surrounding areas who will provide assistance or point pilgrims in the right direction for more information. In addition, U.S. pilgrims and leaders can get non-emergency assistance from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and the U.S. Consulate, both of which will have offices set up in Kraków convenient for the pilgrims from the United States.
- Be aware of safe environment procedures in case pilgrims are inappropriately approached: who to contact and what to do. It is best to consult with the child and youth protection office of your local diocese for more information, especially if you are traveling with minors or vulnerable adults. Within large crowds, it is essential that you have an exit strategy and a pre-determined place where pilgrims can gather if they are separated or need to retreat from the event quickly. Being aware of these tools and staying vigilant will be helpful not only for your pilgrims, but the safety and security of all international World Youth Day participants.

This information and more helpful tips can be found online in the ***International Pilgrim Leaders Guide***, developed by the USCCB Secretariat of Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth at the following link: <http://www.usccb.org/about/world-youth-day/upload/WYDUSA-International-Leaders-Guide-2016.pdf>

If any pilgrims, leaders, or families have additional concerns, they can contact the USCCB World Youth Day Office at (202) 541-3044 or email wyd@usccb.org, or connect to the website at www.wydua.org.