



OMV LOURDES PILGRIMAGE

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APPLYING TO LOURDES

All applications are online via www.omvactivities.org.uk

COST

The pilgrimage cost is £540.

GENERAL HELPERS

If you are applying to volunteer in Lourdes as a general volunteer please be aware of the following:

PRE-REQUISITES

Age. You must be between the ages of 17 and 29

If you are in year 12 but still 16, you may still apply if you will be 17 before 21st July 2019

Disclosure & Barring Service clearance – all volunteers must be cleared by the DBS (previously the CRB Authority).

If you have never been checked you must be checked by the OMV. This is done at the OMV Training Day (see Training)

If you have been checked by another organisation other than the OMV, please email the Lourdes [Volunteer Coordinator](#) with details

If you have been cleared by the OMV you need to have this **renewed every 3 years**. The Volunteer Coordinator will contact you if your DBS must be renewed

First Aid – all volunteers must have completed a first aid training every two years. This is done at the OMV Training Day.

Safeguarding - all volunteers must complete an online safeguarding course every year. This is free of charge to volunteers and if your applications is accepted you will be sent instructions to complete this in your own time.

SELECTION CRITERIA

We consider all applications equally after the booking period has closed. We do not use a 'first-come, first-served' basis. We choose our volunteers to provide the best possible care for our disabled guests (referred to as Hospital Pilgrims, or 'HPs'). These are the things we consider:

Experience. This is the single most important factor and all returning volunteers are guaranteed a place on the pilgrimage. On a typical pilgrimage around 40% of places are for first time volunteers.

Gender. The male to female ratio of our volunteers will reflect the ratio of male to female HPs.

Age. If we have to choose between two first time volunteers (who are the same in all other respects [please see, 'supporting your application' below]) we will generally choose the older applicant. This is because the OMV restricts the upper age of our volunteers to 30 and the younger applicant will have more opportunities to apply again.

Partner Schools. The OMV has partnerships with a number of schools whose pupils have volunteered in Lourdes over a number of years. Each school is given a number of



guaranteed places for some of their pupils who apply to volunteer.

The partner schools are: Downside School, London Oratory School, St Mary's Ascot, Eton College, St Mary's Shaftesbury, Worth School and Harrow School.

We also reserve places for those who do not attend one of these schools, or who are no longer at school.

SUPPORTING YOUR APPLICATION

We will consider supporting factors if they relate to your ability to care for HPs in Lourdes, or otherwise add to the pilgrimage.

Experience. If you have experience of working with people with disabilities or serious illnesses please give details on the application form.

Languages. If you can speak **fluent** French or Italian, please indicate this on the application form.

MEDICAL TEAM & CLERGY

As well as general helpers we also bring a medical team of doctors, nurses and physios and a chaplaincy team.

The Medical team. The Head Nurse selects the pilgrimage medical team, which includes nurses, doctors & physios. If you wish to join the medical team please contact the [Head Nurse](#) before you make your application.

The Chaplaincy team. If you would like to join the chaplaincy team, please email the [Pilgrimage Director](#).



BURSARIES

The Lourdes bursary scheme was created to ensure that the most experienced helpers can continue to volunteer after they are no longer supported by school, parents or guardians to pay for the cost of the pilgrimage.

If you are less experienced, or a first time volunteer, the bursary system is not closed to you however we would strongly advise you to seek financial support from your school, university, parish or workplace.

The OMV also will 'match fund' you if you independently fundraise for the OMV. For every £3 you raise we will give you a £1 discount off the cost of the pilgrimage.

We will only award bursaries to people who are paying for their own place on the pilgrimage; we take the information you give us on trust and expect everyone to be honest.

The OMV, as a charity, has a limited bursary fund and awards are made at the committee's discretion.

AVAILABLE AWARDS

The Lourdes team are able to make awards of between £100 and £250 towards the cost of the pilgrimage. The size of the award will depend on how well your application fits our criteria.

AWARD CRITERIA

Your bursary application will be judged on the following criteria:

- 40% Your experience in Lourdes (including any positions of responsibility)
- 25% Your experience on other OMV activities (including any positions of responsibility or support)
- 20% Income*
- 10% Other skills (e.g. healthcare experience, language skills, singing)
- 5% Committee discretion (e.g. family breakdown, illness or bereavement)

*Income criteria - we will ask you to indicate which income band you fall within: Student, <£10k, £11-15k, £16-£20k, £21-£25k, £26-£30k.

INSTALLMENT PAYMENTS

If you earn more than £30k per annum a bursary won't be available to you, however it may be possible for you to pay in installments. Please contact the Volunteer Coordinator to discuss this.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Please make your bursary application **before 12th April**. The bursary application form is available [here](#). The Lourdes team will respond to all applications on 14th April. You will have until 19th April to pay for your place on the pilgrimage via the Lourdes volunteer application form. If you are awarded a bursary you will be sent a discount code. If you are not successful you may still apply for the pilgrimage and you may be able to pay in installments.



TRAINING

Monday 27th May 2019, London Oratory School, West Brompton

Before you volunteer in Lourdes you must attend the OMV Training Day. This is a compulsory legal prerequisite for joining the pilgrimage. Please do not apply to volunteer unless you know you can attend the training day.

During the day you will complete an introductory first aid course and your DBS check. You will also receive training in caring for people with disabilities, learn more about the pilgrimage and meet lots of other volunteers, including your equipe leaders.

It is key that you meet your equipe and equipe leaders before you get to Lourdes. You will do all your duties in Lourdes with your equipe and your equipe leaders are experienced volunteers who are responsible for you.

DBS CHECK

The Disclosure & Barring Service (previously the CRB Authority) provides access to criminal records and other information relevant to organisations like the OMV. We are required to carry out these checks to comply with health and safety regulations stipulated by our pilgrims' care homes.

NECESSARY DOCUMENTS

You will need to bring four specific pieces of ID with you to the Training Day:

- Passport
- Driving licence (provisional is acceptable)
- Original copy of a bank statement or utility bill (to show your current address)
- National Insurance card

For more information on the DBS check, including alternatives to the documents listed above, please see [DBS: Documents the Applicant must provide](#).

Please note: you will not be charged for your CRB check

PREVIOUS CLEARANCES

OMV checks. If your check was completed by the OMV you only need to be rechecked after 3 years.

Other Organisations. If your check was completed by another organization, please email the Lourdes [Volunteer Coordinator](#) with details.

SAFEGUARDING

All volunteers (general and professional) must complete safeguarding training online and pass a test at the end. This is aimed at those with no safeguarding experience and you can retake the test if you don't pass first time round. Details of how to access the online training will be sent to all volunteers once your place is confirmed.

The OMV Training Day is compulsory for all volunteers every two years and for all first time volunteers.



BEFORE THE PILGRIMAGE

VISAS

If you are not an EU citizen you may require a visa to visit Lourdes. Please contact the French embassy at the earliest opportunity as it can take time to issue visas. You may need a letter of recommendation, in which case contact the Lourdes [Volunteer Coordinator](#).

EHIC CARDS

You must ensure that you have an EHIC (European Health Insurance Card) that has been issued after 2006. An old E111 will not be valid. EHIC forms and information can be obtained from your local Post Office.

Please note that these cards carry an expiry date, and must be valid for the duration of the pilgrimage

TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is recommended you have your own travel insurance.

PACKING

All our volunteers are required to wear a uniform whilst on duty, which is outlined below. During free periods you can wear what you choose, but you are expected to dress appropriately for the religious surroundings and to uphold the reputation of the OMV.

The weather in Lourdes can vary from pouring rain to blazing sunshine and your packing should reflect this. In addition the work tends to be physically demanding: we recommend a fresh change of clothes for every day.

In addition you will need a swimming costume, swimming towel and an alarm clock

DUTY UNIFORM FOR WOMEN

- A white doctor's/lab coat (this can be purchased at the induction day for £25 if you do not have one of your own)
- A skirt or dress which is long enough to cover your knees (no shorts or trousers on duty)
- A top that covers the top of your shoulders and doesn't reveal any cleavage
- Robust, closed-toe flat shoes that you are comfortable to spend all day on your feet in (no trainers or espadrilles).
- An ankle length plain navy or black skirt/dress to be worn on procession

DUTY UNIFORM FOR MEN

- Smart trousers, e.g. chinos or similar (no jeans or combats)
- Collared shirt or polo shirt
- Robust, closed-toe flat shoes that you are comfortable to spend all day on your feet in (no trainers or espadrilles).
- A jacket and tie to be worn on procession





Watches, rings and bracelets must not be worn on duty.

MONEY

All accommodation, travel, transfers and food is provided. You will need a £10/€10 deposit for an OMV armband. You may also wish to bring money to spend in the bar – in 2017 a bottle of wine was €10 and a pint was €5.

TRAVELLING TO LOURDES

The majority of our volunteers travel to Lourdes by coach. Our hospital pilgrims travel by air with some experienced general helpers and the professional volunteers. Pilgrims are expected to travel with the OMV unless there is a specific reason for them not doing so. The Volunteer Coordinator should be informed if this is the case.

You will be told if you are on the coach or plane to Lourdes 14 working days before the pilgrimage.

Please note, the day before the pilgrimage and the day after should be reserved as travelling days.



VOLUNTEERING IN LOURDES

In Lourdes your week is split equally between your work with our disabled guests, (we call these pilgrims 'HPs', because they stay in the Hospital); being spiritual and having fun.

WORK

When you sign up to volunteer with the OMV in Lourdes you are signing up to work with people who have a range of illnesses and disabilities, many of whom are often unable to perform many basic personal tasks for themselves. We do not expect you to have previous experience and we provide training and make sure there are always fully experienced volunteers and medical staff with you. We do expect you to get fully involved as part of your 'équipe' (team) with everything an HP may need help with; from when you wake them up in the morning to last thing at night. It is very hard work, physically and mentally, but it is also incredibly rewarding.

SPIRITUAL

Lourdes is a very spiritual place and we travel there, along with millions of other Catholics, because of the appearance of Our Lady to Saint Bernadette in the 19th century. A large part of the week is focused on our faith: we go to Mass everyday and you are required to join us, regardless of your own religion and faith. The candlelit Marian procession is a highlight of the week for many HPs and volunteers.

What many volunteers find is particularly special about the pilgrimage is that there is lots of time for quiet personal reflection, either alone or with others at Night Prayers. We also engage with issues facing young Catholics through Q&As and discussions in équipes with members of our clergy team.

FUN

Going to Lourdes as a volunteer is good fun. After duties we socialise as a pilgrimage at the 'Bronx' bar (near the St Frai Hospital) and at the end of the week there is a party for the whole pilgrimage. Everyone is welcome to contribute a song or sketch, and many HPs and volunteers are called on year after year to perform old favourites and take part in our own unique games.



WHO'S-WHO

CHAIRMAN OF THE OMV

HUGO WHYTE

Hugo is responsible for the charity as a whole and all of its activities, including Lourdes.

THE LOURDES TEAM

The Lourdes Pilgrimage is brought to you by

PILGRIMAGE DIRECTOR

TOM CHANCE

Tom organises the pilgrimage including pilgrimage activities, the budget and leads the Lourdes team.

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

KATE HAMILTON

Kate is responsible for all general helpers, including recruitment, communication and support during the pilgrimage. She is also responsible for managing and supporting equipe leaders.

HEAD NURSE

JESSICA FAGAN

Jessica is responsible for HP recruitment and care. She leads the medical team and with them looks after the health of pilgrimage.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

MILO FITZALAN HOWARD

Milo is responsible for getting the whole pilgrimage from one place to another, on time and in perfect order. He also leads on discipline.

LOURDES HEAD CHAPLIN

FR JAMES BRADLEY

Fr James is responsible for, and in charge of, the spiritual aspects of the Lourdes pilgrimage. Fr James leads the chaplaincy team and helps to provide spiritual guidance to our HPs and volunteers throughout the week.