

## FAQ's

**Do I have to walk every day?** That is up to you! Each pilgrim's journey will be different based on a variety of factors including your time, ability, and desired goals. Your pilgrimage offering may be a single walk, or you could choose to walk daily, weekly, or anything in between during the duration of our parish pilgrimage. Whether you walk for a few minutes or an hour, each step in your journey is meant to be an opportunity to offer prayer that will draw you (and your loved ones, through your intentions) closer to Jesus.

**Instead of walking, may I run/bike? May I use a treadmill/exercise bike?** As Pope Francis said, it is about moving, so as long as your mind and heart have the pilgrim spirit, all forms of movement that are accompanied by prayer will count.

**I need help creating my goal/route.** Many parishioners may be inspired to pray a rosary or another set of prayers during their walking time without a specific goal of distance or time. Others may feel called to walk a distance that replicates a famous Biblical route: Mary walked 100 miles to be with Elizabeth; Mary and Joseph walked 90 miles from Nazareth to Bethlehem to be enrolled; they also walked 6 miles from Bethlehem to Jerusalem to present Jesus in the Temple; Jesus walked about ½ mile while carrying his cross to Golgotha; and two disciples walked the road from Jerusalem to Emmaus, a distance of 7 miles (and back again to announce they had seen the Risen Lord in the Breaking of the Bread). Our parish patron, St. Paul, is famous for his multiple missionary journeys over many miles. Also, consider some inspiration from Fr. Seamus Griesbach, a former priest of our parish by checking out his pilgrim story at <https://www.anselm.edu/about/anselmian-hub/news/caring-community-through-road-hope>.

**What if I fall short of my goal?** Jesus knows your heart; Jesus understands the circumstances of your life. Every step taken in faith can be a moment of grace and growth. Your journey will unfold in its own way and time, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

**Why the bib? May I walk without it?** Our bib was designed to serve as a sacramental symbol, that is, to remind us of God's abiding presence throughout our journey (we never walk alone); to draw us into a place of piety and reverence; to create a sense of communion and support among our fellow parishioner-pilgrims; to inspire us in our commitment to offer prayer; and to evangelize others in a gentle and inviting manner (our walk is more than a walk). So just as you can pray a rosary without an actual set of rosary beads, you can walk without wearing the bib. But we hope that the bib will serve as a source of encouragement.

**What do I do if someone asks me to pray for them?** Begin by saying, "Thank you for the opportunity to pray for you." You might ask for the person's name as well as their specific needs or intentions. Then take a moment of silence, ask the Holy Spirit to guide your words, and then offer the person to say the Lord's Prayer with them at that moment (the Our Father is a familiar and comfortable prayer to many Christians). You may prefer to offer a more

spontaneous prayer. Either way, the right answer is the one that the Holy Spirit will give to you at that moment. Have faith that God's plan is in action through you.

**Can my non-Catholic friends/family join me?** Of course! Catholic means Universal, so all are welcome to journey with us! What better way to share the joy of the Gospel and give others a chance to know and grow in the love of Jesus!

**Are there other places that I can walk safely?** Your personal safety is of paramount importance. Do what makes you comfortable! As Catholics, we believe that one of the spiritual works of mercy is to pray for the dead; perhaps a stroll through a cemetery (during the day, of course) might be a great place for a pilgrimage walk. Be creative! Consider walking on the grounds of a nursing home, so that its residents can enjoy your presence and prayers. Also keep an eye on the @StPaulPilgrimsofHope Facebook page for tips from fellow pilgrims.