



Diocese of Westminster

PILGRIMAGE OFFICE

Vaughan House
46 Francis Street
London SW1P 1QN

Tel: 020 7798 9173

June 2025

Dear Father,

I am writing to you to invite you and your parishioners to be part of this year's Diocesan Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham, led by Cardinal Vincent on Saturday 20th September, with the theme in this Jubilee Year of *'With Mary, we are Pilgrims of Hope, Sharing Mary's Joy'*.

Outline programme for the day:

- 10.00am Arrivals begin
- 10.30am Sacrament of Reconciliation available (priests are asked to volunteer for this)
- 11.30am Welcoming of parish and other pilgrim groups and banners
- 12.00pm Pilgrim Mass
- 1.30pm Picnic lunch
- 2.15pm Gather for the procession along the Holy Mile
- 3.45pm Prayers, Benediction and final prayers in the Abbey Grounds
- 4.30pm Departures

Early independent booking of coaches is recommended, either individually as a parish or, better still, shared with neighbouring parishes in your Deanery. Please remember to factor in the ***Pilgrim Levy** into the price you publish to your Parishioners. Once you have booked your coach, please follow these next steps:

- Register your coach and number of pilgrims with the **Westminster Diocese Pilgrimage Office** – this is really important as Walsingham can only accommodate 60 coaches, so coach registrations can only be accepted up to that number. Due to changes in parking provision, there may not be space available for vehicles and private cars that have not been registered with the Pilgrimage Office.
- Appoint a **Local Organiser/Coach Marshal** for the day and let the Westminster Diocese Pilgrimage Office know their name and contact details for communication purposes in the lead up to the pilgrimage. Additional information about the pilgrimage and coach signage will then be sent to that named person before the day in the **Coach Marshal's Walsingham Pilgrimage Pack**.
- On your **Registration Form**, tell the Westminster Diocese Pilgrimage Office of the special needs and **mobility requirements** of your pilgrims so that help **may be made** available in Walsingham, and Stewards are made aware in advance.

- Arrange for the collection of the *Pilgrims' Levy fee of **£5 per pilgrim** to cover the considerable costs of the day, including the increased costs of entry to the Abbey Grounds. This must be paid to the Westminster Diocese Pilgrimage Office *in advance* as your Marshal registers your group details with the Westminster Diocese Pilgrimage Office. Payment can be made by cheque payable to 'Westminster Roman Catholic Diocese Trustee Pilgrimage' or bank transfer directly to:

Account Name: Westminster Roman Catholic Diocese Trustee or WRCDT Pilgrimage
Sort Code: 40-05-20
Account Number: 41307649
Reference: WAL 2025 (plus 'Parish' or 'Group' Name,
or Driver Surname if private vehicle)

There will be two collections during the day: one during the Mass which goes towards the upkeep and development of Walsingham Shrine and a retiring collection after Benediction which also goes towards the costs of the day.

The Celebrations at the Shrine are likely to be live streamed on EWTN with coverage by Westminster Diocese Communications Officers. However, if a pilgrim does not wish to appear on any broadcast or public photograph they should state this to their Parish Priest, Coach Marshal, or any Westminster Steward on the day.

The Westminster Diocese Pilgrimage Administrator, Elizabeth Uwalaka, is based at Vaughan House and can be contacted with any questions you might have. Please register your coach and pilgrim numbers by email to elizabethuwalaka@rcdow.org.uk or by telephone 020 7798 9173 by **5th September 2025**, or as early as you can before the Pilgrimage.

Important information for Clergy:

One of the joys of our Pilgrimage is welcoming a great number of our priests to concelebrate the 12 Noon Pilgrim Mass with the Cardinal, along with assisting deacons. In order to adhere to the Shrine's Policy on priests and deacons seeking to minister at the Shrine, and in line with the Catholic Bishops' Conference Temporary Ministry Policy, we ask that the following essential steps be taken by any priest intending to concelebrate, or deacon intending to assist:

1. To let me know of your intention to concelebrate the Mass (for priests) or to assist at Mass/Benediction by **5th September** (email chrisvipers@rcdow.org.uk). I have to send the names of concelebrating priests to the Shrine in advance.
2. Priests serving in Westminster, Diocesan or Religious – to ensure your *Celebret* is in date for 20th September, and to bring your *Celebret* with you to the Pilgrimage.
3. Deacons – to apply to Monsignor Martin Hayes, Vicar General, for a *Letter of Good Standing*.

I very much look forward to welcoming you and parishioners from your parish on our Pilgrimage this year, so close as it is to the Feast of Our Lady of Walsingham on 24th September.

With all good wishes and an assurance of my prayers.

Rev Canon Chris Vipers
Acting Walsingham Pilgrimage Director