

Lourdes Diocesan Pilgrimage Committee

Hospitalite of Our Lady of Lourdes
Archdiocese of Armagh
Portadown Committee

Portadown is one of sixteen committees throughout the Diocese that make up the Lourdes Hospitalite of the Archdiocese of Armagh. The Hospitalite has as its principal aims the organising and facilitating of an annual 5-day pilgrimage to Lourdes. The pilgrimage is open to all, regardless of gender, religious denomination, affiliation, age, ethnic origin or race.

While in Lourdes pilgrims stay on a full board basis in one of the many hotels within the town of Lourdes. Assisted pilgrims are also accommodated on a full board basis in Accueil Notre Dame. The Accueil Notre Dame is not a hospital, but a purpose built accommodation within the sanctuary where Assisted Pilgrims are cared for on a 24 hour basis by doctors, nurses, carers, male and female helpers also known as brancardiers and handmaids.

Our committee has been active in the parish for the past 33 years, and still includes one of the founding members. Today it is made up of 12 parishioners who voluntarily give of their time and skills to accompany and care for Assisted Pilgrims during the pilgrimage.

From the start of the committee's existence it has been the custom that anyone applying for an Assisted Pilgrim place for the first time should never be refused on financial grounds and that the committee should assist with their fare.

In order to help financially we have to undertake fundraising activities. These include an annual Church door collection as well as dances and sponsored walks. We are very grateful to all those people who contribute to and support our fundraising activities. Each year we remember them in our prayers at the Grotto.

As there are usually around 1000 people on the pilgrimage, preparation has to begin early in the year. We place a notice in the Parish Bulletin in January advertising the availability of places together with contact telephone numbers. Since only a small number of places are reserved to the Portadown committee they are allocated on a first come first served basis.

For further information telephone Ms Bernadette Hanratty on 028 38361870.