



In the Footsteps of Saints

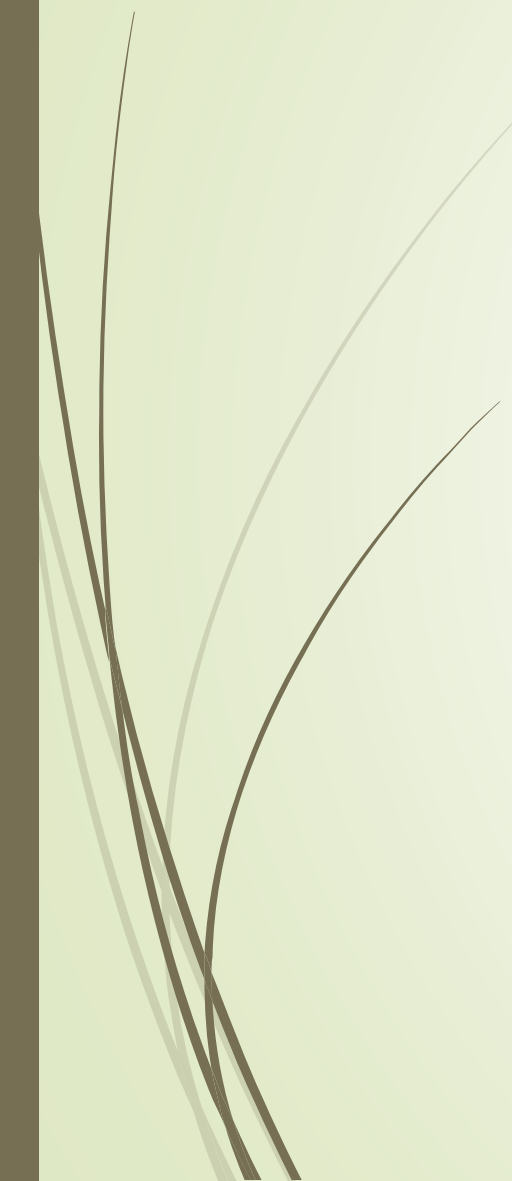
Who am I? I am Yours




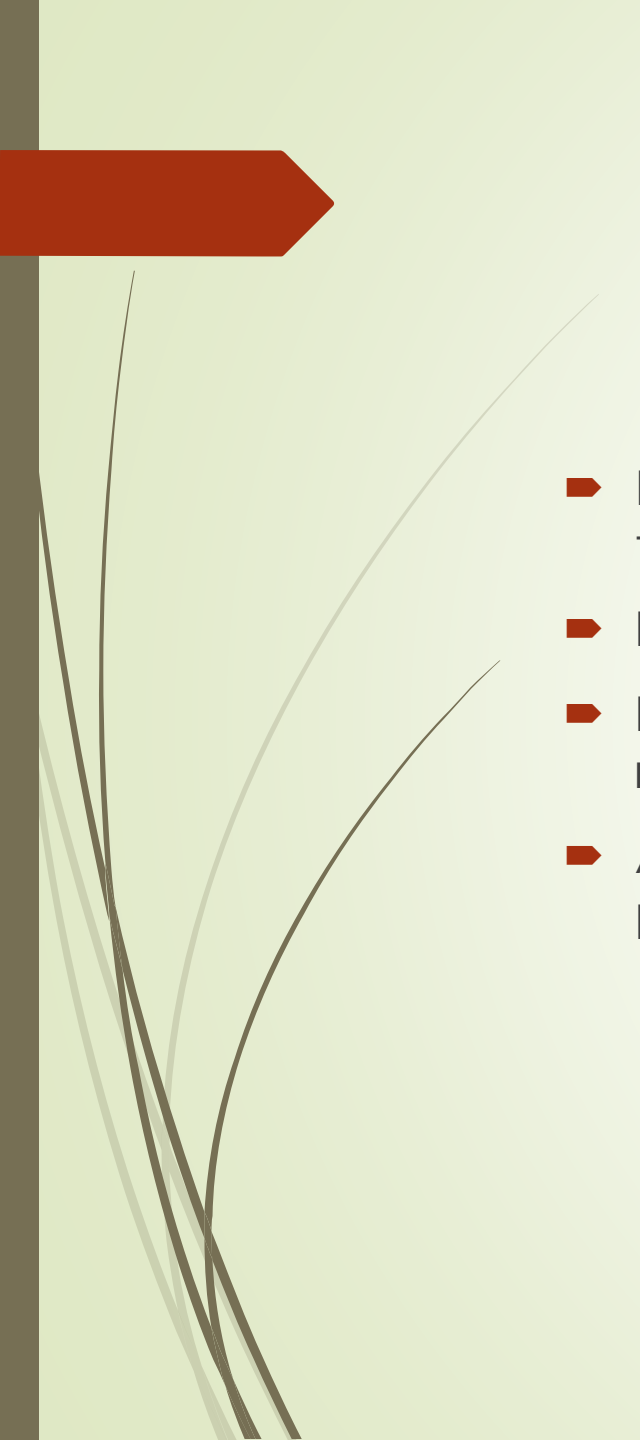
- As we journey towards Krakow, 2016, we join together with other pilgrims from around Australia who are preparing to head to Krakow. Unlike other trips that we might have been on, heading on a pilgrimage challenges us to prepare not only practically – what clothes to pack, what currency we'll need, and what power adaptors we might require in a foreign country – but also spiritually as well.
- What have I been doing to prepare for our Pilgrimage?
- What am I going to commit to doing to prepare Spiritually for our Pilgrimage?
- Are you mentally prepared for a multi-day pilgrimage and all it entails? Can you 'switch off' from your regular life for 27 days and forget about the responsibilities of work and home? Are you prepared to live out of your comfort zone? Are there certain characteristics in people that irritate you – that make you say, "I can't accept it when people.....?" Can you overlook your companion's frailties or habits? What are your hopes, fears or expectations?



Be Prepared

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- Just as with the physical preparation you will need to prepare mentally for walking day after day in all weathers, all terrains in a different country even when you are feeling below par or when you start to question why you are doing this journey.
 - You will have to be prepared to accept the hospitality of your host country without criticism or complaint.
 - Some of your overnight accommodation might not fulfil your expectations. How will you react to cramped rooms, lumpy beds, and rowdy tourists?
 - Restaurants, food, shops and other public facilities might not live up to your standards.

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- “Pilgrimage” is a metaphor for life and there will be good and bad days, unplanned for difficulties, upsetting and distressful times – just as there are in ‘normal’ life.
 - Can you accept the good with the bad?
 - Turn these negatives into positive lessons.
 - Let them give you an opportunity to consider the life you have back home.

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- By being physically and mentally prepared, you will be more receptive to the spiritual gifts of the Journey.
 - It is difficult to appreciate stunningly beautiful places if your back aches
 - If you have a stinging blister on your heel and you are still smarting from the rude remarks of a waiter or shop assistant or fellow Pilgrim.
 - All your energy will be focused inward on your own needs and to the physicality of your situation.



Clothed In Love

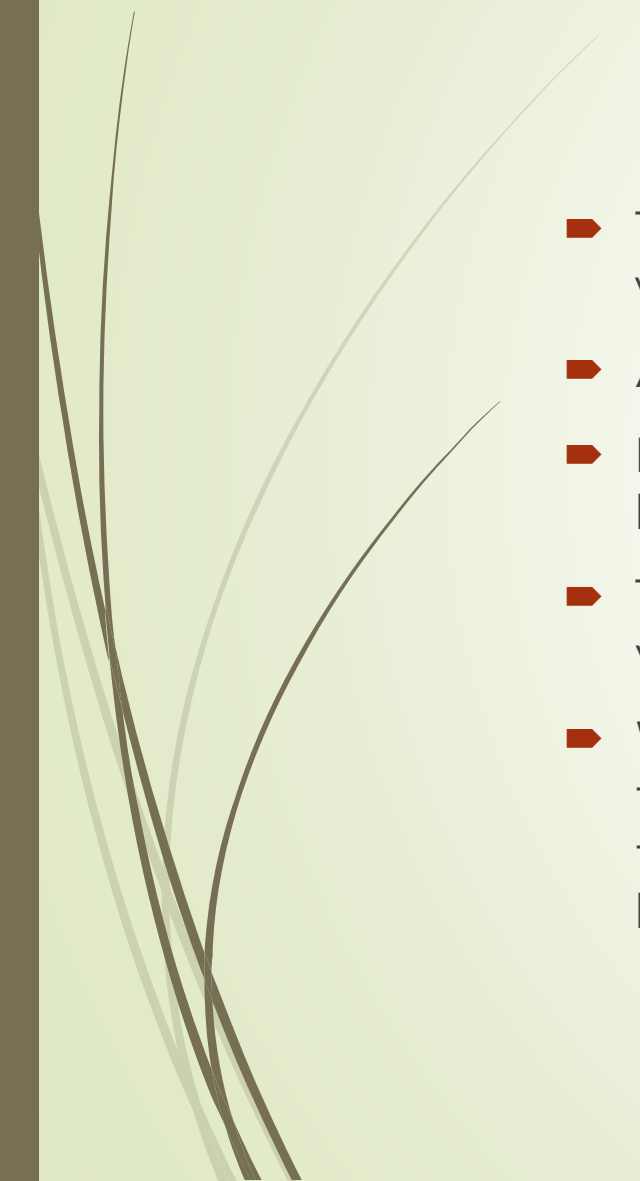
Where two or three are gathered in my name
Love will be found, life will abound.

Make a Pledge

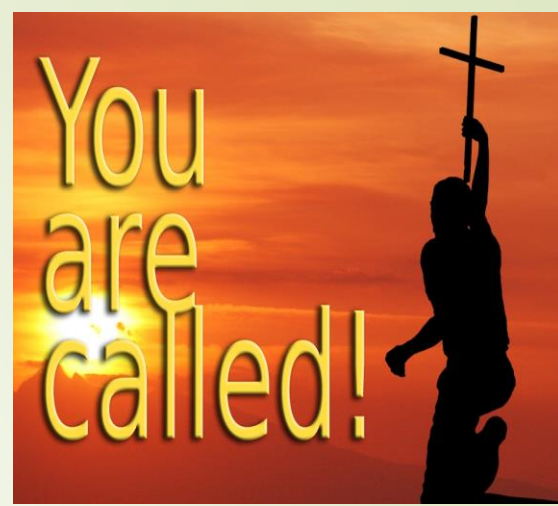
- We ask you now to make a pledge to be a good pilgrim.
- To sign a contract with yourself before you go:
- ***I undertake to be a good and supportive companion; a grateful visitor, a thankful pilgrim passing through foreign lands. I will be friendly and kind to all I meet and will be a good ambassador for my country. I cannot control the places, events, people or experiences I encounter but I can control the way I react and interact in these circumstances. I will not criticise or complain if things and people do not meet my expectations. I will endeavour to encounter my pilgrimage journey with appreciation and joy, always mindful of the millions who have gone before me, are with me now and of the multitudes that are still to follow. I will journey with integrity and will keep an open mind to all the lessons it can teach me. I will remember that at all times I bear the eyes and hands of Christ.***
- Signed:.....



Reflection on the Journey we are to undertake

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- The idea of you joining our Pilgrimage started as a seed – planted and waiting for germination.
 - All the preparation up to this point has helped it to grow.
 - Now is the time to nurture it and feed it so that it evolves into a strong and beautiful experience.
 - The way you experience it can bear fruit, not only for yourself in the lessons you will learn but for what we will pass on to others.
 - We have a responsibility to ourselves and our companions to be prepared, to step out of our comfort zones, to walk with an open mind, to embrace the beauty, to turn negatives into positives, to have a sense of humour, to be kind to each other and to strangers and allow them to be kind to us.

You have been Called



- This journey towards the mountaintop experience of World Youth Day began when you said "yes" to the Lord's call to make this trip. Planted the seed.
- Is there some aspect of your life God wants to address?
- Some question on your heart you want an answer to?
- **Consider a daily focus.** A pilgrimage can be a great way to explore a new spiritual practice or some new (or forgotten) aspect of your relationship with God.
- **Read about the sacred sites and saints** Read about the saints and meditate on them, so you can tune into their individual vibrations. When you reach the shrines, you will more readily feel their presence and receive their blessings.




Living the Word

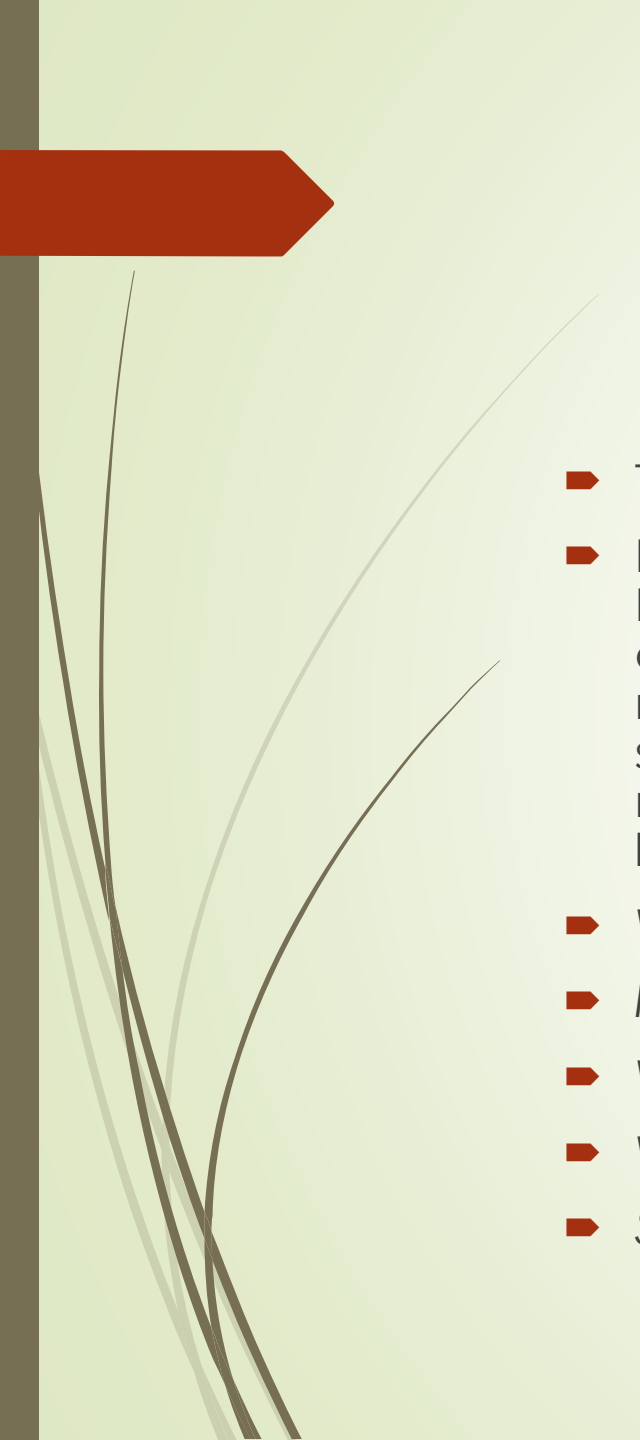
- We will travel to a world populated by saints from all times and places. We will walk in the footsteps of early Christian martyrs, monarchs and peasants, monks and bishops, nuns and holy women who had consecrated their lives to Christ.
- We will have an encounter those who have personally known Jesus.
- Be prepared to allow your heart to be moved, to be transformed.
- The First Letter of John: “See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called children of God. Yet so we are... Beloved, we are God’s children now; what we shall be has not yet been revealed. We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope based on him makes themselves pure, as he is pure” (3:1, 3).



Lessons for Living

- ▶ How will the lives of these members of the Church impact on me?
- ▶ These women and men who were not all that different from each of us—who have persevered and who tried, sometimes with imperfect success, to live in and for God.
- ▶ Like us each one is a unique person with an individual personality and way of engaging God and the world. A mixed bag of grace and sin, strength and weakness as we are.
- ▶ Some doubted and questioned or were very much products of their time Others experienced profound conversions.
- ▶ In the end, however, all these individuals achieved a special union with God by keeping their attention fixed on greater truths than those offered by the world and by choosing to say yes. They risked change; they became holy.

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- The message to us is that authentic holiness must be lived out in ways that touch the very core of who we are. This is how the saints changed the world in ways from which we still benefit today.
 - We need to hear their stories because they tell us exactly what it means to live a life of discipleship and how beautiful that life can be.
 - But they also remind us that discipleship has a cost—that the Christian life places burdens upon us and that sometimes faith can demand everything of us.
 - How will we unlock the “secret” of the saints and let their lives impact on us, teach us, guide us:?
 - They are Christians who *do* something with their faith, who put their faith into practice in dynamic ways that change the world around them. And these changes weren’t always the grand sorts of signs and wonders that we like our saints to perform. Usually, their dynamic faith was lived out in the most mundane aspects of life, moment to moment, day to day.

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- Think about it.
 - Even if we take all the stories that we know of the most beloved saints, like Saint Francis of Assisi or Catherine of Siena, we quickly realise that those tales give us only the faintest hint of what their daily lives were like. And just as our lives can never really be summed up in a single moment or experience, their lives were a succession of moments in which they chose, again and again, to try to want more, to try to be more, and to try keep their attention focused on a way of living and loving that was bigger than they could ever hope to become.
 - *Who are the saints for you?*
 - *How can I live the call to holiness in my life?*
 - *What is one part of my life where I can learn from the example of the saints?*
 - *What quality of my favourite saint can I take on Pilgrimage?*
 - *Spend some time reflecting on your life and call to holiness.*