



HEARTS IN SEARCH OF GOD

WWW.PILGRIMWAYS.ORG.UK

The 2025 National Jubilee Walking Pilgrimage of Hope

What does it mean to be a 'pilgrim of hope'? In the Papal Bull which proclaimed the 2025 Jubilee Pope Francis wrote:

"Pilgrimage is of course a fundamental element of every Jubilee event. Setting out on a journey is traditionally associated with our human quest for meaning in life. A pilgrimage on foot is a great aid for rediscovering the value of silence, effort and simplicity of life. In the coming year, pilgrims of hope will surely travel the ancient and more modern routes in order to experience the Jubilee to the full."¹

To be pilgrim is to humbly accept that we do not have all the answers, but we do have hearts in search of God. Walking pilgrimage using public transport to the start and finish, and local businesses enroute, is a way of caring for creation and contributing to the common good of our nations.

The *Pilgrimage of Hope* will be an opportunity for Catholics in England & Wales to witness to their hope in the crucified and risen Christ. It will be a national walking pilgrimage with four main Ways converging at the Cathedral of St Barnabas, Nottingham, on Saturday 13th September 2025, the eve of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. The Ways will bless our nations with a Sign of the Cross and with the gospels.

St Matthew's Way starts at St David's Cathedral in Cardiff. The route joins the Coast Path to Chepstow where it meanders along the Wye Valley to Monmouth and then climbs the Malvern Hills. The River Severn is tracked to Worcester, then canals through Birmingham, visiting the Oratory and Cathedral, and on to the Shrine of St Chad at Lichfield, and Nottingham.

St Mark's Way starts at Leeds Cathedral and takes disused railway lines and towpaths to Wakefield and Wombwell. After visiting St Marie's Cathedral in Sheffield the Way climbs to the Chapel of the Padley Martyrs in the Hope Valley. The path follows the River Derwent to Matlock and then on to Ripley and then along the former Cromford Canal to Eastwood and Nottingham.

St Luke's Way starts at the Cathedral of St John the Evangelist in Norwich and leaves the city along a disused railway line. The route reaches the National Shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham, then joins the Coast Path to King's Lynn and continues along lanes and tracks to Wisbech, Spalding, Bourne and Grantham. The route joins the Trent Valley Way to Nottingham.

St John's Way starts at the Cathedral of St George in Southwark and visits Westminster Cathedral and the Shrine of the Tyburn Martyrs. From Paddington the Grand Union Canal towpath is taken north to Abbots Langley, birthplace of Adrian IV, the only English pope. The route crosses farmland, then along the Nene Way to Northampton Cathedral. The path continues north through countryside to Melton Mowbray and Nottingham.

¹ Spes Non Confundit, Bull of Indiction of the 2025 Jubilee, p5

As well as these four main Ways there are potential feeder routes from all the other Catholic cathedrals on the website.

A small group of 'perpetual pilgrims' will walk the full distance of the four main Ways. From April, day pilgrims will be able to register to join for stages. Accessible stages of the Ways will be identified. Those who can't join on foot can take part by praying for the wellbeing and safety of pilgrims, and by joining the final celebration liturgy online. Parishes on the routes will be invited to take part by opening church doors and perhaps providing simple hospitality for walkers such as tea and coffee in the parish hall, or even a place to lay a sleeping bag!

For more information see: <https://www.pilgrimways.org.uk/national-pilgrims-of-hope-walking-pilgrimage>

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