**The importance of pilgrimage for Catholics**

Pilgrimages are places where God seems especially present. They are an act of thanksgiving to God and pilgrims may be fulfilling a promise made to God or a saint.People may go on a pilgrimage for physical or spiritual healing, as an act of penance for sin or to pray to God for help.

Catholics may want to visit places connected with the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, events in the life of a saint, where a vision has been seen or where healings or miracles have taken place. Pilgrimages may strengthen a person’s faith or their relationship within a group of people.

**The importance of prayer for Catholics**

Prayer is a response to God’s call. It is a conversation with God. We need time to listen as well as to speak.

Prayer requires effort. Prayer is raising your heart and mind to God.

Jesus showed us how to pray. He made time for prayer, slipping away to a lonely place to be with his Father. He said how important it was to trust in God when you pray. At important or difficult moments in his life Jesus prayed for strength and guidance.

Jesus taught the disciples how to pray and gave them a special prayer – the ‘Our Father’, or the Lord’s Prayer.

*“Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name”*

**Prayer and Pilgrimage**

**Types of Prayer**

**Prayers of petition and intercession –** When we ask God for help for ourselves (petition) of for someone else (intercession).

**Sorrow** – When we say sorry to God for something we have done and ask for forgiveness.

**Thanksgiving** – When thank God

**Praise and Adoration** – When we praise and adore God the Creator of all.

**Places of Pilgrimage**

**Canterbury –** Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury was murdered at royal request as he stood on the steps to the altar in the cathedral.

**Lourdes –** Lourdes in France is the place where 14 year old Bernadette saw visions of the Virgin Mary.

**Fatima -** Fatima is one of the most important catholic shrines in the world dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Fatima’s Sanctuary welcomes millions of pilgrims and tourists from all over the world. Fatima’s fame is due to the Apparitions of Our Lady of the Rosary that appeared to three shepherd children;

**Knock** – Knock Shrine is a Roman Catholic pilgrimage site and National Shrine in the village of Knock, County Mayo, Ireland, where observers stated that there was an apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Saint Joseph, Saint John the Evangelist, angels, and Jesus Christ in 1879.

**Walsingham - Richeldis de Faverches claimed that by she** had been requested by ‘Our Lady’ to build, in Walsingham, a replica of the House of the Annunciation.