

Preliminary Ireland Pilgrimage (September 8-17, 2022) \$3,749 per person double occupancy

Package Includes:

- Round trip airfare from St. Louis
- 8 nights superior tourist class hotels
- Daily Irish Breakfast and dinners (with tea/coffee)
- Entrance fees and transfers
- Touring as indicated in the itinerary (please see preliminary itinerary below)
- Baggage handling at all hotels (1 bag per person)
- Gratuities
- Services of a Professional English-speaking Tour Guide/Driver in a Modern Motor Coach



Preliminary Itinerary:

Day 1: Depart Thursday, September 8, 2022 for Ireland

Day 2: Friday, September 9

Upon arrival at Dublin Airport, meet with your driver/guide and board your modern motor coach.

Transfer to Belfast.

Upon arrival, enjoy a **Panoramic City Tour of Belfast** – A guided city tour is an excellent way to discover Belfast City. The tour will take in the leaning Albert Memorial Clock tower (Ireland's answer to the Tower of Pisa) and the Opera House, which is one of Belfast's great landmarks. Your tour will pass by the City Hall, the Opera House, The Crown Bar (dates from 1885), Queens University and the Botanic Gardens.

Throughout the 20th century, Northern Ireland has had a complicated political history. While the region is vibrant and peaceful today, just over 40 years ago, Belfast was a city in civil war; known as the troubles. To



learn more about this period of history, we will take in the sights of some colourful murals depicting this time.

Visit **Titanic Museum** - Located in the heart of Belfast, the Titanic Belfast recreates the story of the world's most famous ship in an iconic, six floor building right beside the historic site of the original ship's construction. Opened in April 2012 to coincide with the centenary of its launch, the self-guided journey begins on entering the building's giant atrium, where the visitor is surrounded by the four 'ship's hull' shaped wings which house the Titanic Experience. As you journey through the nine large galleries of the interactive exhibition, you will uncover the true story of the Titanic, from her conception in Belfast in the early 1900's, through her construction and launch, to her famous maiden voyage and subsequent place in history. Some tours will take in a visit to the Harland and Wolfe Shipyard, where the Titanic was built and launched in 1912.

Our final stop, if time permits will be at Ballymurphy and Corpus Christ Church, where St. Mother Teresa worked alongside

four other nuns from her Missionaries of Charity order during the 1970s.

Overnight at: **Holiday Inn Belfast City Centre, Belfast**



Day 3: Saturday, September 10 – Leave Belfast and travel to Londonderry (Derry)

Visit the **Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge** - Carrick-a-Rede, on the Antrim Coast, is a spectacular rope bridge, which spans a chasm, 30 metres deep and 20 metres wide. Originally a seasonal working bridge for fishermen, it connects a small island to the mainland. Its construction once consisted of a single rope handrail and widely spaced slats, which the fishermen would cross to bring ashore salmon caught off the island. The single handrail was subsequently replaced by today's two-handed railed bridge. Visitors bold enough to cross to the rocky island are rewarded with fantastic views. Underneath the bridge are large caves, which often served as a safe haven for fishing trawlers escaping from winter storms. Please note that we are unable to secure this visit until one month before the group arrives.

Continue to the **Giants Causeway** - Encounter Northern Ireland's favorite giant Finn McCool at the new Giants Causeway Visitor centre on the North Antrim coast which opened in the summer of 2012. According to legend Finn McCool created

the Giants Causeway by building stepping stones to Scotland to challenge the Scottish giant Benandonner! The new Visitor centre explores the major themes of mythology, geology, landscape, ecology, culture and social history based on the UNESCO World Heritage site that consists of 40,000 basalt polygonal columns formed 60 million years ago after a volcanic eruption. There are various interactive exhibits and short video presentations within five designated interpretive exhibition areas and the self-guided visit will culminate with a spectacular two minutes audio-visual projection of a volcanic eruption flowing over the walls and onto the floor. Other services and facilities include a large craft and souvenir shop, Tourist Information and restaurant. To enhance the wider visitor experience around the site, a hand held audio guide is available in a range of languages which will bring the wider World Heritage Site to life and inform visitors of unique features to look out for across this amazing landscape. Guided tours of the site are also available. The walks and trails around the World Heritage Site have been upgraded, with the addition of a new accessible cliff top walk for families and people with disabilities. In 2015, Conde Nast Traveler magazine included hopping the stones of the Giant's Causeway as one of the '50 things to do in Europe before you die'.

Journey to **Derry** and enjoy a photo stop at **Dunluce Castle** before checking into our hotel.

Overnight at: **Best Western Plus Whitehorse Hotel, Derry**

Day 4: Sunday, September 11

This morning enjoy a public mass at **St. Columba's Church** and visit **Sr. Mary Anne Doyle's Grave** (and other Sisters of Mercy) on the grounds of St. Columba's Church. If open for visitors, we will make our way to 16 Pump Street, near St. Columba's Cathedral to visit the former Mercy Convent.

After lunch we will depart for Donegal. En-route we will visit the Stone Fort of **Grianán of Aileach**, which sits on a hilltop overlooking Inishowen County Donegal. It is 250 metres above sea level, the stone fort was probably first built on an earthen rath. The origins of the Grianán of Aileach fort are dated back to 1700 BC. It is linked to the Tuatha de Danann who invaded Ireland before the Celts and built stone forts on top of strategic hills. The round fort is built largely without mortar. The dry stonewalls contain two passages within them as well as terraces along their interior which would have allowed access to their summit. *(Please note, depending on accessibility, we may need to hire out a smaller coach to transfer the group to/from the summit as Grianán of Aileach is located on a small country road.)*

Overnight at: **McGettigans Hotel in Letterkenny**

Day 5: Monday, September 12

Leave for **Glenveagh National Park** – A spectacular 16,500 hectares (40,000 acres) of scenic mountains, lakes, glens and woods, with a herd of red deer, Glenveagh is one of Ireland's protected natural parks managed by the State. A Scottish style castle within the estate is surrounded by one of the finest gardens in Ireland, which contrast with the rugged surroundings. The

Visitor Centre houses exhibitions and an audio-visual show on the area. The Visitor Centre is accessible for visitors with disabilities and has a cafe / restaurant. A return shuttle minibus service is available to bring clients from the visitor centre to the area of the castle and the gardens.



Continue to **Slieve League (Sliabh Liag) Cliffs** - Europe's highest sea cliffs, although less famous than the Cliffs of Moher in County Clare, Slieve League's Cliffs reach almost three times higher, but you won't really notice. The site is largely untouched by tourism and walks through a largely unspoiled landscape giving visitors a spectacular view of the coast and the cliff face. To enter, you need to open a farm gate and more important you need to close it after yourself as sheep roam freely throughout this area. Donegal Bay can be clearly seen as you walk towards the terrifyingly high top of Slieve League and there is a small lake at eye level. A short walk will take you to the right of the amazing cliff face of Bunglas (which literally means end of the cliff).

Our final stop, before checking into our hotel in Sligo (if time permits) is a quick photo stop at **W.B. Yeats' Grave** in Drumcliffe.

Overnight at **Sligo Southern Hotel, Sligo**

Day 6: Tuesday, September 13

Leave Sligo and visit **Our Lady of Knock Shrine** - Knock Shrine, located in Co. Mayo is Ireland's National Marian Shrine where over 1.5 million pilgrims visit each year. It was here on August 21, 1879 that local people witnessed the manifestation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Saint Joseph and Saint John The Evangelist.

If time permits, we will journey to **Kylemore Abbey** - Kylemore Abbey (a fairy tale-like castle) is stunningly located in the Kylemore Pass in Connemara. Mitchell Henry built the House in 1868, after having spent his honeymoon in the area. The architecture is best described as neo-gothic and the house still displays all the characteristics of that period. One of Kylemore Abbey's most famous features is its miniature cathedral, built in 1870 and known locally as the Gothic church. Today, the abbey is home to the Irish order of Benedictine nuns. They established a private school for young girls, which was the renowned Kylemore Abbey International School. The school eventually closed in 2010.

Continue to **Galway** and check into your hotel.

Note: Sr. Bernadette Marie, RSM from Charleville Convent & Heritage Centre will be joining the group for dinner & overnight.

Overnight at **Connacht Hotel, Galway**

Day 7: Wednesday, September 14

This morning we will journey to Dublin. Enjoy a **Panoramic Tour of Dublin City**. Here you will discover the north and south

side of the River Liffey. This area offers great striking monuments such as the GPO (General Post Office) on the city main thoroughfare, O'Connell Street, or the Custom House along the quays, as well as the Phoenix Park, the largest public park in Europe. The south side appears more sophisticated with its vast Georgian squares, such as Merrion Square, where Oscar Wilde's House can still be found (today owned by an American College), its colorful doors, along with Grafton Street and its quality shops. Not so far from St. Stephen's Green, in Kildare St., you will see the house of Bram Stoker, the author of Dracula. This part of the city is also dominated by the students of Trinity College, where the famous book of Kells is permanently exhibited in its library. The university is facing the medieval district where Dublin Castle and the two Anglican Cathedrals can be found.

After lunch, we will visit with Sisters at **Coolock House** – Walk in the footsteps where Catherine McAuley lived with the Callaghan family; inheriting the estate and using the fortune to build House of Mercy on Baggot Street (a refuge and education center for women and children) which opened on September 24, 1827.

Visit former **Presentation Convent Chapel on George's Hill**, where Catherine McAuley, Anna Maria Doyle, and Elizabeth Harley made their novitiate and professed their religious vows on December 12, 1831 as the first Sisters of Mercy, founding the congregation of the Sisters of Mercy.

Overnight at **Jury's Christchurch, Dublin**

Note: Mission Leader of the Mater Hospital will join the group for dinner.

This will be a busy day and we might have to amend depending on duration required at each of the visits.



Day 8: Thursday, September 15

This morning visit **Trinity College & Book of Kells** - Trinity was founded in 1592 by Queen Elizabeth 1st on grounds confiscated from an Augustinian priory and is the oldest university in Ireland. The Campanile, erected in 1852, was built on what is believed to be the centre of the monastery. Built to further the education of the ruling Anglo-Irish families, restrictions were imposed to prevent Catholic from attending courses. These restrictions were not fully lifted until the 1970's. Trinity however admitted women in 1902, earlier than most British universities. Within its walls, visitors will be able to admire Parliament Square and its 18th Century edifices. Trinity College has had many famous students such as Jonathan Swift and Samuel Beckett who later became a lecturer in French at the university. The college houses Ireland's largest collection of illuminated manuscripts of the Gospels in the Book of Kells.

Celebrate public Mass at **St. Teresa's Carmelite Church**, where the first 13 Sisters of Mercy are buried.

Visit **House of Mercy on Baggot Street** which opened on the Feastday of our Lady of Mercy 195 years ago on September 24, 1827. Also on the grounds is a sacred tomb of Venerable Catherine McAuley, who died November 11, 1841.

If time allows, drive by Mater Hospital, founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1852 and then a possible visit at **St. Mary's Pro Cathedral** - St. Mary's Pro Cathedral was built between 1815 and 1825 on the site of a 12th-century Cistercian abbey of St. Mary. St. Mary's is not an official cathedral, even though it functions as one. St. Mary's functions as the main Catholic parish church of the city centre in Dublin. The cathedral is in the Neo-Classic Doric style, which provides a distinct contrast to the Gothic Revival look of most other churches of the period.

Return back to your hotel.

Day 9: Friday, September 16

Leave for **Dún Laoghaire or Booterstown** to visit with Sisters of Mercy at their convalescent Convent.

Return back to your hotel

Day 10: Saturday, September 17

Travel to Dublin Airport to start journey home

NOTES from Travel Agency

- Please note that the pricing is valid for a minimum of 15 travelers.

Enrollment Form
10 Day Ireland Pilgrimage (September 8-17, 2022)
With Sister Claudia Ward, RSM

TOUR COST: \$3749.00 per Person Sharing
(Land, Air, Fuel Surcharge & Taxes Included)
Single Supplement: \$579

Deposit & Payments:
\$500.00 Deposit per Person Due Immediately
(Plus travel insurance if chosen. Non-refundable)
Final Payment due by: June 15, 2022

Please Print and send in with Deposit

RESERVATION APPLICATION

***Please Note: Air taxes and fuel surcharges are included, based on time group air was originally reserved. Air taxes and fuel surcharges are subject to change until group air is ticketed. All groups are ticketed at the same time, and early ticketing is not permitted.**

Your signature is required acknowledging you have read and accept this. A reservation cannot be made without a signature:

Please sign here: _____

Please reserve _____ seat(s) on Sister Claudia's "Ireland Pilgrimage Tour" Sept 8-17, 2022 with A&R Block Travel

Name (as on passport) _____ **Passport #** _____

Passport Issue Date: _____ **Expiration Date:** _____

Address: _____
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

Date of Birth: _____ **Phone: (Home)** _____ **(Cell)** _____

Email: _____

Room Type: ___ Twin/Double ___ Triple
___ Single Supplement (Rooms are Limited)

Frequent Flyer #: _____

Global Entry # _____

Further Inquiries, please contact:

Joyce Lipkind (A&R Block Travel) **Phone:** 314-576-1700 **Email:** joycel@arblocktravel.com

Sister Claudia Ward, RSM **Phone:** 314-633-8517 **Email:** Claudia.Ward@Mercy.net

Please make checks payable to: A&R Block c/o Joyce Lipkind and send to: 12312 Olive Blvd Suite 125, St. Louis, MO 63141-5449

Deposit of \$ _____ **is enclosed.** (Plus optional insurance, if chosen, non-refundable)

NO CREDIT CARDS – CHECKS ONLY - DEPOSITS ARE NONREFUNDABLE