

Holy Land Pilgrimage – Pilgrim Packet

Informational Meeting Resources

Meeting Date	Friday, January 23, 2026
Meeting Time	6:00 PM (Eastern Time)
Location	Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish – Parish Conference Room / Microsoft Teams
Travel Dates	February 25 – March 6, 2026

1) Meeting Agenda

- Welcome & opening remarks
- The spirit of pilgrimage (pilgrimage vs. vacation)
- Required travel documents: ETA-IL + passport requirements
- Important 206 Tours reminders (final instructions, airline check-in)
- Phones, credit cards & money (including tips)
- Packing & clothing expectations (weather, modesty, shoes)
- Airport & travel logistics (security, meeting point, arrival time)
- Questions & final reminders
- Closing prayer

2) The Spirit of Pilgrimage

A pilgrimage is not simply a tour — it is a prayerful journey in the footsteps of Jesus. Our goal is not only to see holy places, but to allow the Lord to deepen our faith, renew our hearts, and draw us closer to Him.

Remember:

- A vacation says: “I need a break.” A pilgrimage says: “I need grace.”
- A vacation asks: “What will I enjoy?” A pilgrimage asks: “Lord, what are You doing in me?”
- This is not a luxury tour. Expect some discomfort, delays, and waiting — and offer it to God.
- How we handle stressful moments is part of the pilgrimage: patience becomes prayer, inconvenience becomes an offering, and charity becomes our witness.

3) Pilgrim Code of Charity

A pilgrimage is not only about the places we visit — it is also about who we become along the way. Please embrace the following spirit:

- We travel with prayer.
- We practice patience (pilgrimage includes crowds, security checks, and waiting).
- We lead with charity (the schedule matters, but charity matters more).

- We remain flexible (plans can change due to weather, traffic, or site availability).
- We look out for each other — no one gets left behind.
- We don't complain — we offer: "Jesus, I offer this to You."
- We remember the goal: a pilgrimage is meant to transform us.

4) Required Entry Document: ETA-IL (Electronic Travel Authorization)

All travelers must secure an ETA-IL prior to arrival. This is completed directly with the Israeli Government (not through 206 Tours).

ETA Website:

<https://israel-entry.piba.gov.il/>

What you will need:

- Travel dates
- Personal information
- Upload your passport (recommended: passport valid at least 6 months beyond return date)
- Pay with a credit card (ETA cost: 25 ILS ≈ \$7 USD)
- Wait for approval (typically within 72 hours)

Additional notes:

- ETA is generally valid for 2 years and allows a stay of up to 90 days per visit.
- Each traveler must complete the ETA individually.

5) Passports, Copies, and Medications

- Bring your passport with you to the airport.
- Make a photocopy of your passport information page and pack it separately.
- Save a clear photo of your passport on your phone (securely).
- Bring all prescription medications in your carry-on in original bottles.
- Bring enough medication for the trip plus a few extra days (buffer).

6) Important 206 Tours Reminders

- 206 Tours will send 'Final Instructions' (contact info, hotel details, important reminders) approximately 3 weeks before departure.
- International flights often require document verification at the airport counter; boarding passes may need to be obtained at the airport.
- Keep essentials in your carry-on: medications, valuables, and one change of clothes.
- If flights are delayed/cancelled, work directly with airline agents and notify the group leader/guide of changes.
- If you have dietary restrictions, notify 206 Tours as early as possible.

7) Phones, Credit Cards, and Tips

Cell Phones (International Travel)

Many carriers offer international “day pass” plans that let you use your phone in Israel much like you do at home. These typically charge only on days you use your phone abroad.

- AT&T: International Day Pass (typically \$12/day).
- Verizon: TravelPass (typically \$12/day).
- Spectrum Mobile: Global Day Pass (typically \$10/day).

Action Item: Please contact your provider before departure to confirm pricing, activate international service, and avoid unexpected charges. If you do not need phone service, keep your phone in Airplane Mode (Wi-Fi only).

Links:

- AT&T International Day Pass: <https://www.att.com/international/day-pass/>
- Verizon TravelPass: <https://www.verizon.com/plans/international/international-travel/travel-pass/>
- Spectrum Mobile Global Day Pass: <https://www.spectrum.com/mobile/plans/international>

Credit Cards

- Notify your credit card provider you will be out of country (Israel) from February 25 – March 6.
- Check whether your card charges foreign transaction fees (Apple Card typically does not).
- Use credit cards when possible.

Tips

- Tips are expected and are not included in the cost of the trip.
- Plan approximately \$150 per person total for tips (guide + bus driver).

8) Packing, Clothing, and Weather

Weather

- Expected weather: high 50s to low 60s.
- Possible rain and cooler mornings/evenings.

Clothing

- Pants for everyone.
- Shoulders covered for holy sites.
- Western Wall head covering: women (scarf), men (kippa/yarmulke).
- Comfortable walking shoes — plan for 3–5 miles of walking per day.

- Pack at least one warm outfit: waterproof coat, sweatshirt, heavier pants (jeans), winter cap & gloves.

Suitcases

- Try to pack light.
- Avoid checked bags when possible.

Liquids (TSA)

- Liquids must fit in a quart-size zip bag.
- Containers must be 3.4 oz (100 ml) or less.

Power Adapters

- Bring appropriate power adapters.
- Please do not bring blow dryers.

Water

- Bottled water will be provided throughout the pilgrimage.
- We recommend avoiding tap water to prevent stomach issues.

9) Airport & Travel Logistics (Pittsburgh Group)

- Arrive at the airport 2–3 hours before departure.
- All are responsible for their own travel to Pittsburgh International Airport.
- Meeting location: at the flight gate.
- Be prepared for security screening and international travel procedures.

10) Digital Access to Resources

This packet and key links will be made available digitally for those unable to attend, including the meeting recording.

<https://fatherboyd.com/pilgrimage-2026>