

Pilgrim's Pack

CHRISTUS REX PILGRIMAGE 2026

Dear Pilgrims,

We look forward to welcoming you to the 2026 Christus Rex Pilgrimage.

Please read this pack before travelling. It contains important information about transport, accommodation, meals, luggage and safety, including several changes for 2026.

The Pilgrimage is run entirely by volunteers. Thank you for your cooperation, patience and charity throughout the event.

The Christus Rex Society

Contact details

General enquiries: info@crex.org

Website: www.crex.org

During the Pilgrimage: 0417 643 744

Emergency services: 000

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1. GETTING THERE AND CHECKING IN

Check-in - St Patrick's Cathedral Hall, Ballarat

Address: 3 Lyons Street South, Ballarat Central VIC 3350

Check-in Hours: Thursday 22 October, 3pm – 10pm

Friday 23 October, 7:00am -8:00am (after Mass)

Please do not arrive before 3.00 pm on Thursday. Our volunteers will still be setting up.

- At check-in, collect your name tag and any pre-ordered merchandise. Volunteers will direct you to your accommodation and luggage drop-off.
- All pilgrims must be registered and check in before joining the walk.
- Please do not drive into the Cathedral carpark for drop-off. This area must remain clear for event vehicles and emergency access.

Getting to Ballarat

By train: V/Line services operate from Melbourne to Ballarat.

By car: We strongly recommend parking in Bendigo and taking the Christus Rex coach to Ballarat on Thursday.

Do not leave your car in Ballarat. We do not provide transport back to Ballarat after the Pilgrimage concludes in Bendigo, and there is not a direct public transport link.

Thursday coach - Bendigo to Ballarat

- Departs from the front steps of Sacred Heart Cathedral, Bendigo.
- Departure times: **3.00 pm and 8.00 pm.**
- Tickets: **\$30 per person.**
- Tickets must be purchased online through www.crex.org/shop

Coaches are almost fully booked. You must purchase a ticket in advance. Do not arrive expecting a spare seat.

Personal vehicles on Pilgrimage

We recommend that you do not drive your personal vehicle between stops and venues throughout the weekend. If you or a family support person need to drive a vehicle throughout the pilgrimage, please note the following:

- There is very limited parking available at the stops, which is reserved for official Pilgrimage support vehicles. Park well away from the stops and venues so that you do not block access.
- Display the name and contact number of the driver prominently on the windscreen of the vehicle.
- Do not attempt to move your vehicle during the period of 20 minutes before or after the pilgrims arrive or depart the stops and venues.

2. ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation is basic and communal. Please follow venue instructions, keep walkways clear and leave facilities tidy.

Please respect the facilities and local communities that accommodate the Pilgrimage.

Thursday night - important changes

There is no hall accommodation for men on Thursday night.

A camping option is available in Ballarat on Thursday night for the first time this year.

Shuttles will run from the check in desk on Thursday to the campground, and back again before Mass in the morning. Please come to the Check-In Desk before setting up at the campground.

The Community Hall and Family Hall are still available at St Patrick's Cathedral for women, and parents with children aged 12 and under.

Community Halls

Community halls provide basic, shared indoor accommodation for women and children under 12 years. You will need to bring your own sleeping bag, sleeping mat and pillow. Space is limited, so please keep your belongings tidy, leave walkways clear and be considerate of others, particularly during sleeping hours.

Camping and facilities

- Camping areas are communal and unpowered.
- Bring your own tent, sleeping bag, sleeping mat and camping equipment.
- Portable toilets are provided.
- **No showers are available Thursday or Friday.** Bring hygiene wipes and a towel.
- Hot showers are available Saturday.

Sunday night: No accommodation is provided. Pilgrims staying in Bendigo must make their own arrangements.



3. PACKING AND LUGGAGE

Bring **two separate bags**: a daypack you carry while walking, and overnight luggage transported by our volunteers.

Daypack - carry each day

- Water bottles
- Waterproof raincoat
- Warm jumper
- Hat and sunscreen
- Snacks
- Essential medication
- Blister dressings and spare socks
- Mobile phone and portable charger
- Rosary
- Tissues and hand sanitiser

Overnight luggage

- Sleeping bag, mat and pillow
- Tent and camping equipment, if camping
- Spare clothes, socks and underwear
- Warm evening clothes and sleepwear
- Toiletries, towel and hygiene wipes
- Shower footwear
- Comfortable shoes for evenings

Footwear: Wear well-fitting, worn-in walking shoes or boots. New shoes are more likely to give you blisters as they wear in.

Clothing: Dress modestly and appropriately for Mass and the Pilgrimage. Prepare for very cold mornings, rain and hot afternoons. We recommend light layers that you can remove throughout the day as temperatures rise.

Luggage transport

Overnight luggage will be transported in two large trucks using a crate-based loading system.

Every bag must be:

- **Clearly labelled** with your full name and phone number. We will not supply luggage labels.
- **Waterproofed**, preferably with a sturdy plastic liner (such as a transparent garbage bag) or dry bag inside.
- **Securely packed**, with sleeping bags and mats labelled separately

Avoid oversized or unnecessarily heavy luggage and do not over fill the crates. The crates cannot be stacked if they are over filled which means our volunteers will need to move your bag to another crate.



You cannot access your overnight luggage during the walking day. Carry medication, rain gear and other essentials in your daypack.

Final luggage collection: After Sunday Mass, collect your luggage from **Wattle Square Park, directly across the road from Sacred Heart Cathedral, Bendigo.**

If leaving the Pilgrimage early, please notify one of the Information Desk volunteers so arrangements can be made for your luggage.

4. MEALS AND DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

Meals during the Pilgrimage are prepared and served by our volunteer catering team.

Plates and cutlery are provided - you do not need to bring your own.

Menu

Friday

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| Breakfast | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Porridge (GF)• Assorted cereal (GF option)• Bread and spreads (GF option)• Full cream milk, skim milk, lactose free milk• Apples, bananas, oranges |
| Lunch | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assorted sandwiches<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Cheese, tomato○ Egg, lettuce, mayo○ Tuna, mayo, lettuce○ Lettuce, avo, carrot, tomato, cheese, mayo/hommus)○ Children's sandwiches |
| Dinner | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vegetarian Curry & Rice (GF, LF)• Vegetarian lasagne• Salad• Sliced bread |

Saturday

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| Breakfast | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Porridge (GF)• Assorted cereal (GF option)• Bread and spreads (GF option)• Full cream milk, skim milk, lactose free milk• Apples, bananas, oranges |
| Lunch | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Paella (GF, LF, Vegan options)• BBQ sausages, patties |
| Dinner | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• potato bake• coleslaw• bread |

Sunday

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| Breakfast | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Porridge (GF)• Assorted cereal (GF option)• Bread and spreads (GF option)• Full cream milk, skim milk, lactose free milk• Apples, bananas, oranges |
| Lunch | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bread rolls with ham, turkey or silverside beef, and salad• Bread rolls with salad only |

Dietary requirements

Dietary requirements recorded during registration have been passed to the catering team.

Pilgrims with severe allergies or complex dietary needs should contact us in advance. We cannot guarantee an allergen-free environment.

Morning and afternoon tea stops

Morning and afternoon tea stops provide a short break from walking, with simple refreshments such as a muesli bar and a piece of fruit. Pilgrims can rest, refuel and listen to a short sermonette from one of our clergy before continuing the walk.

Sunday celebratory dinner

Following the Pilgrimage, pilgrims are invited to a celebratory dinner at the **Queens Arms Hotel, Bendigo**, from 6:30pm.

Dinner is not included in your registration, however the menu is available on the Pilgrim's Portal on the website. Food and drinks are at your own expense.

Monday farewell breakfast

Pilgrims remaining in Bendigo are invited to a final farewell breakfast at the **Queens Arms Hotel** on Monday 26 October from 8:00am.

The food is buffet style and a voucher needs to be purchased at your own expense.

Drinking water

Drinking water is available at designated stops approximately every 2–3 km. Please ensure you have a water bottle to carry sufficient water between stops and refill regularly.



5. PILGRIMAGE ITINERARY

Times are indicative and may change depending on the walking speed of pilgrims

Friday 23 October: Ballarat to Smeaton

Time	Activity
5.20 am	Wake up
6.00 am	Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral, breakfast
7.30 am	Check-in desk reopens
8.00 am	Announcements and blessing
8.30 am	Pilgrims depart
11.20 am	Morning tea
1.50 pm	Lunch
4.55 pm	Afternoon tea
7.15 pm	Dinner at Smeaton
9.00 pm	Compline

Saturday 24 October: Smeaton to Newstead

Time	Activity
5.30 am	Wake up and breakfast
6.45 am	Pilgrims depart
8.50 am	Morning tea
11.20 am	Mass at Campbelltown, lunch
1.50 pm	Depart Campbelltown
4.35 pm	Prayers for the Dead, Sandon Cemetery
4.55 pm	Afternoon tea
7.20 pm	Dinner at Newstead Oval

Sunday 25 October: Newstead to Bendigo

Time	Activity
6.00 am	Wake up and breakfast
7.45 am	Board coaches for Lockwood South
8.45 am	Walking commences
11.40 am	Lunch
2.30 pm	Blessing and Consecration
3.00 pm	Solemn Mass, Sacred Heart Cathedral
After Mass Luggage collection at Wattle Square Park	

Sunday route: Coaches transport pilgrims to Lockwood South, followed by the final walking stage through Kangaroo Flat and along the Bendigo Creek Trail.

6. CHILDREN & Families

Bringing children on Pilgrimage

- **Children under 18 must be supervised** by a responsible adult at all times.
- Prams are not suitable for all sections of the route due to rough or narrow terrain.
- All families should come prepared with snacks, weather-appropriate clothing, and suitable footwear for their children.
- Support buses are available for younger children who cannot walk the entire distance - but these are limited and may not always be nearby.
- Car seats are **not** provided by the pilgrimage team.

The Children's Chapter offers activities for children aged **5–12 years** during most stages of the Pilgrimage.

Activities include catechesis, storytelling, singing, crafts, games and walking together.

Parents, please note:

- The Children's Chapter is **not a drop-off program**.
- Parents remain responsible for their children's supervision and wellbeing.
- Children under five must remain with a parent.
- Children must remain with their designated group or parent.
- Report any child safety concerns to the Child Safety Officer.

Child Safety Officers: Jessica Brazier 0432 960 514
 Paul Brazier 0448 008 365

If you become separated from your child, notify the nearest marshal immediately.

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY

If you are sick

Before the Pilgrimage: Do not attend if you have a contagious illness, particularly fever, vomiting, diarrhoea or significant respiratory symptoms. Email info@crex.org if you cannot attend.

During the Pilgrimage: Notify a marshal or medical volunteer. Do not continue walking if you feel faint, seriously unwell or unsafe.

Medical assistance

Medical services are provided by the **Royal Flying Doctor Service**.

- Carry all medication in your daypack.
- Report injuries, blisters and signs of dehydration early.
- If unable to continue walking, notify a marshal. Support vehicles are for safety and operational needs, not general transport.
- For life-threatening emergencies, call **000**.

Pilgrimage contact number: 0417 643 744

Mobile reception may be unreliable. Keep your phone charged and seek assistance from a marshal if needed.

Road safety

The Pilgrimage uses public roads, including roads carrying agricultural and other traffic.

- Follow all marshal instructions.
- Cross roads only when directed.
- Keep clear of moving vehicles.
- Supervise children closely.
- Watch for uneven ground and slippery surfaces.

All pilgrims must be registered. This is a requirement of our event permits and insurance arrangements.

Family members and other visitors are welcome to attend Mass and the liturgical celebrations but must register if joining in with the walking.

Adverse weather

The Pilgrimage normally continues in rain and cold weather.

In severe conditions, organisers may delay, shorten, reroute or suspend walking. Follow instructions from the Traffic & Safety Officer and marshals.

If the event is cancelled or significantly changed, registered pilgrims will be notified by email, SMS or official Christus Rex channels where possible.

8. SUNDAY FINISH AND TRAVELLING HOME

The Pilgrimage concludes at **Sacred Heart Cathedral, Bendigo**, following the Solemn Mass of Christ the King. Mass start time will depend on the speed of the walkers, however is expected to be around 2:30pm.

Luggage collection

Location: Wattle Square Park, across the road from Sacred Heart Cathedral.

When: After Sunday Mass.

All pilgrims must collect their luggage before leaving Bendigo.

Returning home

Pilgrims are responsible for their own transport home.

There is no return coach to Ballarat after the Pilgrimage. Do not leave your vehicle in Ballarat.

If driving home, be mindful of fatigue after three days of walking.

Leaving the Pilgrimage early

Notify a marshal or the Information volunteers before departing so that you can be accounted for and arrangements made for your luggage.

Lost property

Hand found items to a volunteer. Report missing belongings to the Information Desk volunteers. There will be a lost property point set up at each lunch and dinner site. All lost property will be donated to charity if it is not claimed by Monday evening.



9. KEY LOCATIONS

Location	Address
Thursday Bendigo Coach	Departs from Sacred Heart Cathedral Bendigo, 80 Wattle Street, Bendigo
Ballarat check-in	St Patrick's Cathedral Hall (Main hall) 3 Lyons Street South, Ballarat Central
Ballarat Family Hall	St Patrick's Cathedral Hall (Back hall near kitchen) 3 Lyons Street South, Ballarat Central
Ballarat Women's Hall	St Patrick's Cathedral Hall (Main hall) 3 Lyons Street South, Ballarat Central
Ballarat Camping Field	5 th Ballarat Scouts 684 Humffray Street South, Golden Point
Friday Community Hall	Smeaton Bowling Club 3514 Creswick-Newstead Rd, Smeaton
Friday Camping Field	Calder Street Paddock, Smeaton Cnr Clader St, McLean St, Smeaton
Saturday Mass and lunch	Campbelltown Public Hall William Street, Campbelltown
Saturday Community Hall	Newstead Community Centre 9 Lyons Street, Newstead
Saturday Dinner & Camping	Newstead Recreational Reserve 21 Panmure Street, Newstead
Sunday coach drop-off	Lockwood South Community Hall/CFA 872 Crusoe Rd, Lockwood South
Sunday lunch	Rotary Gateway Park 22A High Street, Kangaroo Flat
Pilgrimage conclusion	Sacred Heart Cathedral 80 Wattle Street, Bendigo
Final luggage collection	Wattle Square Park, opposite Sacred Heart Cathedral
Sunday Celebratory Dinner	Queens Arms Hotel, Bendigo 25 Russell Street, Quarry Hill
Monday Farewell Brunch	Queens Arms Hotel, Bendigo 25 Russell Street, Quarry Hill