



Day 1:

The day began in Dublin Airport's Terminal One for a 5:30am start. The queues were endless!



Although tired, we were excited for the trip ahead.

We arrived in Lourdes around midday and were brought to our hotel to drop our bags and have a quick lunch (the contents of which led a lot to be desired!) We headed to the Accueil to meet our coordinators and then



straight into training for the days ahead. We had great fun using each other as guinea pigs on the voiture and chaise! We started work on our assigned roles; Sam and Adam on hotel support, Craig, Charlie and Lughaidh on ward

support. We greeted the pilgrims as they arrived and brought their baggage up to their rooms.

We finished the day with evening Prairie that was led by Father Paul Thornton, a past student of the college.

Day 2:

We woke up at 6.15am and got showered and ready for breakfast for 7am. Charlie, Lughaidh and Craig reported for a morning shift accompanied by Adam and Sam, who were helping out on ward support until their shifts on hotel support began in the afternoon. Our duties included bringing pilgrims to and from Mass, making sure they were comfortable and engaging the pilgrims in general chit-chat. We also brought them to the Church of Saint Bernadette and to the Grotto of Our Lady via voiture.

During the Mass the weather began to really pick up and the sun was beaming. By midday it was firmly in the mid-20s. After the Grotto, we headed out again to bring the pilgrims to the Baths of Saint Bernadette. We waited for roughly 20 minutes for our pilgrims to complete them. The pilgrims were blown away by the experience! We then brought our pilgrims back to the Accueil for a few hours of rest after their busy day.

At 6pm we headed to dinner back in the hotel. At 7.30pm we went back to the Accueil for a singsong as one of our pilgrims was celebrating his 87th birthday, which was a great experience for all those present. At 9.45pm we gathered for the Prairie and four schools led the reflections. Finally,



we had a table quiz at 10.45pm which was a great bonding experience for the Blueshirts.

Day 3:

The first event of the day was bringing the pilgrims out to the baths or if they weren't going to the baths, the water walk procession was on at the same time. After lunch there were no big events, so we stayed with our pilgrims in the Accueil. This was a great time to meet up with other Blueshirts over there and their pilgrims as well. On Sunday night after dinner, there was a candle light procession. Lughaidh, Craig and Charlie were used as extra stewards for the procession. Our job was to hold torchlights throughout the whole procession. Towards the end of this procession all of the Blueshirts holding the lights, lined up in the center and walked up onto the stage to accompany the archbishop of Dublin to close the candle lit procession. We had evening Prairie followed by confessions and finished with crêpes in a cafe with Mr Forde before we went to bed.

Day 4:

We met up with our team on ward support and we did the usual duties of cleaning the pilgrim's rooms while they were at breakfast. We then brought them to Saint Bernadette's church where there was a penitential service taking place. After lunch there was confessions for the pilgrims in the Accueil followed by a mass of the anointing of the sick. We then walked back past the Grotto of Our Lady to have some afternoon tea and coffee in the courtyard

of the Accueil. At around 9pm we brought the pilgrims out to participate in the torchlight procession. When all our duties were done for the day



we had our usual Prairie. Tonight, was our night for DLSC to showcase their talent. We led the reflection by reciting the Pope's speech at the Capuchin Day Center which he visited in August. We then went back to a local hotel for a sing song with all the Blueshirts. This was surprisingly enjoyable. We finished out the day with our traditional night time crêpes with Mr Forde.

Day 5:

Today we had another early start, as we had to act out the Stations of the Cross at 9am



for the pilgrims. The Station we had to act out was The Garden of Gethsemane. Charlie was Jesus praying on his knees, Lughaidh was Judas pointing out Jesus to the authorities, while Adam, Sam and Craig played the sleeping Apostles. After the Stations we all went back to our normal duties. Craig, Lughaidh and Charlie brought their pilgrims out shopping and for a coffee while Sam and Adam collected some pilgrims from their hotels and brought them down to Mass and to light some candles. Later in the evening we had our past pupils' meal in a lovely restaurant, joined by some past teachers and pupils. After that there was a final party and sing song in the Accueil with the pilgrims. We said our goodbyes and packed for early morning departure in the morning. At the end of a long day we continued our routine and Mr. Forde brought us for crêpes to finish the day. It was a truly life changing experience!