

Pilgrimage to Lourdes & Paris
April 12 – 22, 2024

Initial Information Form

Trip Director: Joe Zalot
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Trip Leaders: Joe Zalot and Karen O’Brien, MD

- Dr. Z Travel is owned and operated by Joe Zalot, Ph.D. Joe is a [Staff Ethicist](#) at the National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia, and a former university professor. He is a veteran of 30 foreign trips and has visited France, Italy, Vatican City, Germany, Poland, the Czech Republic, Switzerland, Austria, Ireland, England, the Netherlands, Israel, and Kenya. Joe has led ten travel groups (parish pilgrimages and student travel/education courses) to Rome, five groups to Paris, two groups to Florence, and individual groups to Munich/Berlin, Amsterdam and Krakow (Poland).
- Karen O’Brien, MD is the former Director of Inpatient Palliative Care Services at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston and current Director of Faith and Community Relations for Palliative Care at Mass General. She is also a member of the *Lourdes Medical Bureau/International* which investigates the “inexplicability” of miraculous cures that occur at Lourdes. She has visited the shrine 24 times and was present on the Medical Board for the last declared miraculous healing of Sister Bernadette Moriau (acclaimed in 2018, see [60 Minutes](#) story). Karen is actively involved in the Archdioceses of Boston and has co-hosted a 2-season series called [Talking of Palliative Care](#) (scroll down for episodes) on Catholic TV. This show won a national Bronze Telly Award in Health and Science.

Trip Price

- Land only: \$2999 double occupancy, \$3999 single
- Airline:
 - We are not including the cost of airline tickets in the trip price as participants will likely be traveling to France from various cities around the US. For planning purposes, airfare to Europe should be between \$800 and \$1400, depending on your departure city.
 - You are welcome to make your own flight reservations or Joe is happy to help you with them. Please note that Joe will be departing from New York and Karen, the other trip leader (see above), will be departing from Boston. You are welcome to fly to/from Europe with either of them. Again, let Joe know and he will help you with reservations.
 - If you are planning to make your own airline reservations, Joe will likely be flying from New York to Toulouse, France (TLS) on the evening of April 12th and arriving the next morning (13th). He will then take a train or bus to Lourdes from there. Toulouse is a major French city and the airport is affordable and very easy to fly into. If you make your own flight reservations you are welcome to meet Joe in Toulouse and travel to Lourdes with him (let him know) or you can travel directly to Lourdes.
 - If you are making your own airline reservations, we will be departing from Paris on the morning of April 22nd. You can fly out of either Charles de Gaulle (CDG) or Orly (ORY) airport.

Trip price includes:

Lourdes:

- 3 nights lodging with breakfast
- Massabielle Grotto (Marian apparition site) and healing pools

- Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary, Basilica of the Immaculate Conception
- Stations of the Cross, evening Rosary procession
- Museum of Miracles, Bernadette Soubirous house ... and more
- Tour of sanctuary grounds and lecture on Lourdes miracles with Karen O'Brien
- Discussion of palliative care and end-of-life decision-making with Karen and Joe
- Airport/hotel transfers
- Train from Lourdes to Paris

Paris:

- 6 nights lodging with breakfast
- Chapel of the Miraculous Medal, St. Catherine Labouré
- Church St. Vincent de Paul
- Sacre Coeur (Basilica of the Sacred Heart)
- Eiffel Tower – admission to the second level (option to go to the top)
- Paris Museum Pass – offers 4 days admission to:
 - Arc de Triomphe
 - Hotel des Invalides – Napoleon's Tomb and French War Museum
 - Louvre Museum – Mona Lisa, Winged Victory, Venus de Milo ... and much more
 - Orsay Museum (Impressionists ... among many others)
 - Sainte Chappelle (built to house Jesus' Crown of Thorns, fantastic stained-glass windows)
 - Conciergerie (where they held prisoners during the French Revolution, before the guillotine)
 - L'Orangerie Museum (Monet's "Water Lilies")
 - Rodin Museum ("Thinker" and many of his other sculptures)
 - Versailles (chateau and gardens)
 - Notre Dame Cathedral bell towers (due to the April 2019 fire, the cathedral will be closed)
 - See the Museum Pass [website](#) for details on the many other museums and sites this pass covers
- Metro (subway/bus) tickets in Paris
- Day-trip to Normandy landing beaches
 - Point du Hoc
 - Omaha Beach
 - American Cemetery
- Hotel/airport transfer

Trip price does not include:

Airfare (see above under "Trip Price")

Meals (except for breakfast which is included with hotel)

Admissions to any sites not indicated on the itinerary

Passport

Phone calls/texts/emails home

Optional side trips

Registration and Payment

There are 20 spots available for the trip and they will be filled on a "first come, first served" basis.

- A \$500 deposit is due upon registration (make checks payable to "Dr. Z Travel, LLC")
- The balance is due by **February 1, 2024**

Passport: It is your responsibility to secure a passport for international travel. If you do not yet have a passport, or if it will expire before the completion of the trip, please (re)apply for one ASAP. You can use this link to get the necessary forms.

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html/>

Liability Release and Medical Consent forms

After you submit your registration, you will receive the Liability Release and Medical Consent forms. Please read and sign these forms, and then return them to Joe (emailing an electronic copy is preferred!). Joe will not purchase your airline ticket until he has received your signed Liability Release and Medical Consent forms.

Travel Insurance

The decision to purchase (or not purchase) travel insurance is completely up to you. There are many companies that offer travel insurance, such as AAA if you are a member, so feel free to explore various companies and choose the policy that best fits your needs.

Flights: TBD

Airport/ hotel transfers: TBD

Lodging – these are subject to change

Lourdes

Hotel Mercure Lourdes Imperial

3 Avenue du Paradis, 65001 Lourdes, France

Website ([link](#))

Tel: +33 5 62 94 06 30

Paris

Hotel Berne Opera

37 Rue de Berne, 75008 Paris, France

Website ([link](#))

Email: reservatiob@hboparis.com

Tel: +33 (0) 1 43 87 08 92

Itinerary (subject to revision due to weather, other factors)

Friday, April 12

Depart US, fly to France

Saturday, April 13

Morning/afternoon:

- Arrive in France, transfer from airport to hotel in Lourdes
- Free time at Lourdes Sanctuary

Evening:

- Rosary procession (optional)
- Get to bed for a good night's sleep!

Sunday, April 14

- Mass at Lourdes Sanctuary Basilica
- Tour of Lourdes Sanctuary ([link](#))
 - Massabielle Grotto (Marian apparition site) and healing pools
 - Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary, Basilica of the Immaculate Conception
 - Stations of the Cross,
 - Museum of Miracles,
 - Bernadette Soubirous house

Evening: Rosary Procession at Lourdes Sanctuary

Monday, April 15

Morning:

- Presentation on Lourdes miracles – Karen O'Brien
- Discussion of palliative care and end-of-life decision making – Karen & Joe

Afternoon: Free time in Lourdes

Evening: Rosary Procession at Lourdes Sanctuary

Tuesday, April 16

Morning: Train to Paris (5 hours)

Afternoon/evening:

- Arrive Paris, transfer to hotel, walk around the Place Clichy area (where the hotel is located) and discover supermarkets, restaurants, drugstores, etc.
- Purchase Metro (subway/bus) tickets and learn how to use the Paris subway system.
- Take Metro to Notre Dame Cathedral ([link](#)) – Unfortunately, the cathedral itself will be closed due to the April 2019 fire.
- Take Metro to Trocadero Palace for some great photo opportunities of the Eiffel Tower.
- See the Alma tunnel (underpass) where Princess Diana’s car crash occurred.

Wednesday, April 17

Morning/afternoon:

- Visit/tour the Chapel of the Miraculous Medal and incorrupt St. Catherine Labouré, 140 rue de Bac ([link](#))
- Visit the incorrupt St. Vincent de Paul, 95 rue de Sévres
- Eiffel Tower ([link](#)) – Note: admission to the Eiffel Tower is included in the trip fee.

Evening: Montmartre

- Visit Basilica of Sacré Coeur ([link](#))
- Hang out on the front steps of Sacré Coeur Basilica for street artists and a great view of Paris!
- Place du Tertre ([link](#)) – famous for its street artists, shops, and restaurants.
- All the kitschy souvenirs you want (and don’t want)

Thursday, April 18

Morning:

- Arc de Triomphe ([link](#)): Climb the monument (or there is an elevator) for a fantastic panoramic view of Paris (museum pass). Afterward, take a stroll along the Champs Elysees.
- Musée de Louvre (Louvre Museum, [link](#)) – See the Mona Lisa, Winged Victory, Venus de Milo, and much more! (museum pass)

Afternoon:

- Sainte Chapelle ([link](#), short walk from the Louvre) which is famous for its stained-glass windows (museum pass)
- Conciergerie ([link](#), next door to the Sainte Chapelle) which during the French Revolution held prisoners condemned to the guillotine ... including Marie Antoinette (museum pass)

Evening: Free

Friday, April 19

Morning:

- Hotel des Invalides (museum pass, [link](#)). See (1) the Tomb of Napoleon and (2) the French War Museum – the World War II exhibit at the war museum is especially interesting in light of our visit to the Normandy landing beaches.
- Rodin Museum (located very close to the Hotel des Invalides) – see many of Rodin’s sculptures including “The Thinker” (museum pass, [link](#))

Afternoon: Free time – Options:

Museum pass:

- Musée de l’Orangerie ([link](#)) – Monet’s “Water Lilies”
- Musée d’Orsay ([link](#)) – contains many well-known Impressionist paintings and other works of art
- Legion of Honor Museum ([link](#)) – located next door to the Orsay Museum (free admission)

- Cluny Museum ([link](#)), otherwise known as the Museum of the Middle Ages
- Basilica of St Denis – see the tombs of French royalty
- French Air and Space Museum
- Museum of the Chateau de Malmaison – more Monets!
- Visit any of the many other museums and sites covered by the Museum Pass ([link](#))

Other

- Walk through the Latin Quarter and visit Luxemburg Gardens as well as the churches of St. Germain des Prés and St. Sulpice (free)
- Jim Morrison’s grave at the Pere Lachaise Cemetery (free)
- Shopping at Les Galleries Lafayette, Printemps, or Les Halles
- Catacombs tour ([link](#)) – you may be freaked out by it, but you’ll remember it forever! (not covered by museum pass)

Saturday, April 20

Normandy landing beaches

- Point du Hoc ([link](#))
- Omaha Beach
- American Cemetery at Colleville-sur-Mer ([link](#))
- Arromanches (if time permits, [link](#)) – see remnants of the Mulberry Harbor

Sunday, April 21

Morning:

- Mass in English (optional) at St Joseph Church, 50 Ave. Hoch ([link](#))

Morning & afternoon:

- Option 1: Visit any of the many museums and sites covered by the Museum Pass ([link](#)) – See “options” from Friday afternoon
- Option 2: Travel to Versailles (40-minute commuter train trip) and visit the Chateau de Versailles ([link](#)) and its gardens (museum pass)
- Option 3: You can also take a day-trip outside of Paris including, but are not limited to (contact Joe for help arranging any of these optional trips):
 - Chartres Cathedral – 1.5 hours train from Paris
 - Lisieux (see the Basilica of St. Therese and her childhood home) – 2 hour train from Paris
 - Giverny (Monet’s home and gardens) – 1.5 hours train from Paris
 - Disneyland Paris – 45-minute RER (commuter) train from Paris

Evening:

- Whole group Bateaux Mouches ([link](#)) boat ride on the Seine River. This trip offers a different perspective on the sites of Paris and is a great way to wrap up our visit to the “City of Lights.”

Monday, April 22

Depart France, fly to USA

Last Revised: July 6, 2023