

**Pittsburgh Theological Seminary:  
Celtic Christian Pilgrimage to Ireland and Iona (Scotland)**

## **Expectations for Pilgrims**

### **What you should expect from the Pilgrimage...**

1. Expect a Pilgrimage, not a vacation or a tour. What's the difference? A Pilgrimage is a spiritual journey, a shared walk along the path of exploration and growth, a journey of the heart and spirit through a religiously-charged landscape. It is vitally important for you and for all the other Pilgrims sharing the journey that we covenant together to protect the holy nature of this experience. During the Pilgrimage, we expect to witness the most sacred of all miracles—spiritual growth and transformation. Whatever other joys may come our way, journeying into this growth is our defining purpose.
2. Expect comfortable but simple accommodations. Expect to share your space and your journey. While all our accommodations are *en suite*, in most locations you will be sharing a room, wherever possible with someone you select as a roommate. We will be traveling for the most part by private coach, and you can expect times of quiet as well as social times while on the road.
3. Expect that the Pilgrim leaders have planned carefully for your safety and comfort. As far as possible, the worry has been taken out of the experience, freeing you to focus on what is more important. Even so, surprises may occur. After all, without a few surprises a Pilgrimage wouldn't be a metaphor for the real spiritual journey.

### **What our Pilgrimage expects of you...**

1. There will be time on the Pilgrimage for being alone, but a Pilgrimage is more a group than a solitary experience. From the beginning of the Pilgrimage to its conclusion, we expect each Pilgrim to be physically and mentally present and engaged with the other Pilgrims in our group or with the special or unexpected people we will meet along the way. We will spend time each day in group prayer and reflection. Every Pilgrim is expected to participate in these group experiences.
2. Every Pilgrim must agree in advance to abide by these guidelines:
  - a. Book your outbound travel to arrive at the Dublin airport on or before noon on Friday, May 29. Or if already in Dublin, schedule your arrival at Purcell House, All Hallows College, Dublin, by 2:00 pm on the 29<sup>th</sup>.
  - b. Book your return travel or the continuation of your travel so that you do not leave the Pilgrimage before 6 am on Monday, June 8.
  - c. Do not arrange to meet anyone at any point during the entire period of the Pilgrimage. If someone is joining you at the end for additional travel beyond Monday morning, June 8, do not arrange to meet them until 6 am that morning or later. Only Pilgrims may share the Pilgrimage.
3. If you are sharing the Pilgrimage with a spouse, a partner, or perhaps a dear friend, we expect both individuals to be Pilgrims in the fullest sense and to engage other Pilgrims.

4. Every Pilgrim is expected to prepare for the Pilgrimage. In particular you are expected to read, reflect, and spend time in prayer in order to open your mind and heart to the experiences that await us. About five months before the Pilgrimage, the guides will provide suggestions for reading and reflection.