

Summer Pilgrims

By Lee Yates



The word *pilgrim*, for most Americans, evokes images of black hats, white lace aprons, and shoes with buckles. Not only are these images inaccurate, they narrow the definition of pilgrim to one group. Pilgrims are people on a spiritual journey. Summer is filled with people on journeys. How might you help turn a trip into a pilgrimage?

For
Teen Family

Season
Summer

Needed

Computer with Internet access or dictionary; postcards; stamps

Activity Plan

1. Spend some time with your family reminiscing about trips you have taken as individuals or as a family. Lift up any that felt like they had a spiritual element to them; for example: mission trips, visit to a family cemetery, church camp.
2. Look up *pilgrimage* and *pilgrim* and discuss the definitions. Discuss when you might have been pilgrims.
3. Make a list of all extended family members and close friends who will be traveling over the summer.
4. Write postcards to these individuals and families, letting them know you will pray for them while they are traveling. Ask them to send you a postcard from their trip to tell you about the joys or concerns of their journey.
5. Take time each week to come together as a family to read any postcards you have received and to pray for the people on your list of travelers who are away from home that week. Here are some words for the prayer if you need them:

God of all times and places, your people have been traveling for thousands of years. Abraham and Sarah moved all over the place, constructing many altars to honor you. The Hebrew people traveled through the wilderness, following your presence in the cloud and the pillar of fire. Paul carried your word to people all around the Mediterranean Sea, starting churches in many places. Remind us to seek your presence in every journey we take, and grant your traveling mercies to everyone who is on the road today, especially (name people who are traveling). Amen.

6. Anytime your family travels, take a moment to start your trip with prayer, asking God to open your eyes to the unexpected on your journey.