

# Come on a pilgrimage Between Winchester and Portsmouth Cathedrals



## What is a pilgrimage?

A Pilgrimage is a special journey to a place of religious importance. People go on pilgrimages for different reasons, but for Christians these special journeys help them to think about their relationship with God and the way they live their lives.



In the past, pilgrims travelled to holy places to pray, or to find cures for their illnesses. The first Christian pilgrims travelled to Jerusalem, where Jesus died.

They often wore broad-brimmed hats and gowns tied with ropes. Pilgrims today are more likely to be wearing rain jackets, walking boots and carrying backpacks.

This book will take you on a three day walk between Winchester and Portsmouth Cathedrals, that is 29 miles! The walk takes us across countryside through Bishop's Waltham and Southwick to Portsmouth.

This walk is part of a very old pilgrimage called the Pilgrim's Trail which follows a 155 mile medieval route from Winchester Cathedral to a famous abbey at St Michael in France.

Today there are special signs, coloured green in Hampshire and blue in France, leading to the old abbey in France. But we are not going quite that far. We will stop at Portsmouth Cathedral.



When your journey is complete, try the challenge at the end to create your own pilgrimage trail.

Hope you're feeling fit, we are off to Winchester Cathedral first.....

# Winchester Cathedral

Some of you may have visited Winchester Cathedral before. At the end of your time at Primary school, if your school is in the Winchester Diocese, children are usually invited to a special service inside this amazing cathedral. People have visited the cathedral to worship for thousands of years.



A cathedral is a church that has a bishop's throne in it. A bishop is a senior member of the church. Winchester Cathedral is still busy today and is used for baptisms, weddings and funerals. Baptism is when anyone of any age becomes a member of the Christian family. Some people call it a Christening. Christians have worshipped on this site for more than 1400 years.

Here we are inside,

Wow! Just look at the size of this room, called the nave. The cathedral has the longest nave and overall length of any cathedral in Europe. If you speak from the top of the nave, people listening at the other end do not hear what you have said until four seconds later!



Look up at the ceiling above the windows. Can you see the ugly faces and strange beasts? In medieval times, people thought that if you were bad inside, it would show in your face!

**Who do you think can pull the ugliest face in your family?!**

On top of the walls you can see six chests. They contain the bones of early kings, bishops and a queen. When the Roundheads (the supporters of the Parliament) invaded the cathedral during the English Civil War, they opened the chests and threw the bones at the windows! Local people put the bones back in the chests, but they were all mixed up and have stayed so ever since!

Looking to the left side of cathedral passed where the choir sits, you can see the Pilgrims Steps. Pilgrims would crawl up these steps on their knees to show God that they were sorry for their sins.

**If you try it, be prepared – It's painful!**



At the top of the nave you will also find the Quire. This is where the choir sings. In the carvings above the wooden benches you can find a monkey, a lion and even a dragon carved into the wood.

Look back down the nave to where you came in and you can see the famous west window. This window is made up of thousands of tiny pieces of smashed glass. The original window was smashed to pieces by the Roundheads. Local people saved the glass, then the window was later rebuilt as a mosaic.

**What do you think this shows about how important the cathedral was to local people? Why do you think they were prepared to do this?**





Look carefully and you can find the Fisherman's Chapel. Can you see how the furniture in this chapel is carved to look like ripples on water? Imagine running your fingers over the seats. Describe what they feel like.

**Why do you think there might be a special chapel for fishermen?**

Saint Swithun was the Bishop of Winchester in Anglo Saxon times, and is a patron saint of the Cathedral. For many years his bones were kept here in a beautiful casket in the cathedral. Pilgrims would ask Saint Swithun for his prayers in heaven for God to cure their illnesses.

Today Bishop Tim Dakin (in the picture) is the Bishop of Winchester. He lives very close to the cathedral.



About 100 years ago, part of the Cathedral was sinking. The foundations were underwater. A brave deep sea diver called William Walker helped to repair the sinking foundations with concrete. He had to work in a heavy diving suit, in darkness, for six hours a day, for six years to make the Cathedral safe again. What a hero!  
Imagine what might have happened if William hadn't done the work...



There is a statue to William Walker outside the cathedral. Let's take a look before we leave this incredible cathedral.

**You may like to take a moment to pray or reflect about the people that you have learnt about that are connected to this wonderful place.**

Right, off we go to Portsmouth.....

# The Walk

If you are feeling fit, we can walk the trail in two days or one very long one if you are in a hurry! However, most pilgrims take three days to get to Portsmouth. This is our route:

Winchester to Bishop's Waltham (12 miles)

Bishop's Waltham to Wickham (6 miles)

Wickham to Portsmouth (11 miles)



# Portsmouth Cathedral



Welcome to Portsmouth Cathedral, the Cathedral of the Sea!

The Cathedral Church of St Thomas of Canterbury, commonly known as Portsmouth Cathedral, is an Anglican cathedral church in the centre of Old Portsmouth. It is the cathedral of the Diocese of Portsmouth and the seat of the bishop of Portsmouth. Located on the High Street in the historic Old Portsmouth, the cathedral was constructed from 1185 on land gifted to Southwick Priory by Jean de Gisors the founder of Portsmouth.

For centuries the Cathedral has watched, listened and helped the people of Portsmouth. It has witnessed wars and peace, famous marriages, been bombed and rebuilt.

**Stop for a moment and think of the history of this place of worship. If the cathedral walls could talk, what might they say about the way that the cathedral has survived all that time?**



Before we go inside, look right up to the top of the tower in the middle of the cathedral. Do you see the cupola? (the dome at the top of the tower).

Above the cupola is a gilt model of a ship, the Golden Barque, in the form of a weather vane, this ship is 6ft 10ins long. The Golden Barque was installed on the cupola in 1710, in 1954 it was blown down during a storm and is now on display inside the cathedral, mounted on oak



timbers recovered from HMS Victory. The current Golden Barque, along with the entire bell tower, underwent a major restoration project in 2015.

There's also something rather scary round the back of the cathedral if you are feeling brave.....



Above the north entrance, there is a skull carved into the stonework. This is a ***monemento mori***, which means 'remember you must die.' It is a symbol to remind people that everyone dies eventually.



The main entrance into the cathedral is through the huge, bronze west doors. Their design is based on the tree of life, an ancient symbol representing the renewal of life. The nave is a large square space which you can see in this picture.

Look up and you will see the massive silver coloured organ pipes. Look at the panels either side. The left side shows nighttime, with a lighthouse shining on the sea (which reflects the City of Portsmouth's motto, "Heaven's Light Our Guide"). The right door shows daytime, the sun and the hull of a fishing boat. **Why do you think these designs have been chosen?**

There are three choirs at the cathedral. The cathedral choir is made of up to 20 boys and a 'back row' of adult singers. There is also a girls choir and the Cathedral Consort is a mixed choir of adults and younger singers. Often, the choirs combine to form the Great Choir, usually at large services and events. The choirs regularly go on tour, singing all over the world.



The Right Reverend Christopher Foster has been Bishop of Portsmouth since September 2010. Since arriving in the diocese he has particularly become involved in supporting people in poverty and unemployment.



**Before we leave this cathedral, think about what you have done to help people in need? What else could you do in the future?**

**You might like to have a moment of reflection or say a prayer for people in need in Portsmouth before you leave.**

That brings our walk to an end.

I hope that you enjoyed your pilgrimage between Winchester and Portsmouth cathedrals.

Remember – For Christians, to go on pilgrimage is not simply to visit a place to look at things.

To go on pilgrimage really means think about your friendship with God and what that means to you and the way you want to live your life.

Often Christians go on pilgrimage to the Holy Land, to the places associated with Jesus' birth, life, crucifixion and resurrection, but you can design your own pilgrimage around places that might help you think about your faith or your life.



Try to choose two places that are easy to walk between.

One may be your home, your local church or a wood where you can stop and think about the beauty of God's world. If you live near a beach, maybe you will take your walkers to the sea or maybe there is a lake near your home.

On your pilgrimage, remember to allow your walkers time to stop and think about the teachings of Jesus like all the millions of Christians around the world who have been on pilgrimages for thousands of years.

Design a booklet advertising your walk. Maybe you could take your family on your pilgrimage.

