

## To the kind attention of pilgrims who stay overnight in the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre

- The Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre is normally closed at night. The Basilica doors close at 7pm (November – February), at 8.30pm (September and March), at 9pm (April to August), and open at 4am all year round (5am when the legal hour is in force). On Saturday nights (and on certain special occasions) the Basilica doors reopen at 11pm (midnight, when the legal hour is in force) and they remain open for the rest of the night.
- Limited numbers of pilgrims are allowed to stay inside when the doors are closed. The limit for the Catholics (Latins) is **15 persons**.
- Booking for an overnight stay in the Basilica has to be done on a personal basis in the Latin sacristy of the Basilica. No one, except for the Franciscan Friars of the Basilica, is authorised to accept bookings. We can only accept bookings of one week in advance.
- Pilgrims who stay overnight must be present in the entrance of the Basilica 15 minutes before closing time. One should remember that, during winter months, the Basilica is very cold. One is advised to bring warm clothing. Toilets are available for pilgrims in the small courtyard close to the “Arches of the Virgin”.
- Pilgrims should remember that they are allowed to stay overnight **in order to pray**. No eating and drinking are allowed in the Basilica. It is prohibited to bring bedding or sleeping bags with the intention of sleeping in the Basilica. Pilgrims should remember that staying overnight entails fatigue and they are to come with good intentions.
- Praying in the Holy Tomb is allowed from closing time until the beginning of official prayers of the Greek Orthodox at 11.30 pm (11pm on Saturday nights). After that moment no Catholics are allowed in the Tomb. Pilgrims can continue praying on Calvary or at the Latin area of the Basilica (St. Mary Magdalen Chapel). Pilgrims can also enter the Blessed Sacrament Chapel during the Divine Office of the Franciscans (between 11.30 pm and 00.30 am). They are not to disturb the friars in their prayers or the other Orthodox communities during their Divine Liturgies. The friars cannot offer breviaries to pilgrims. They only have limited quantities of breviaries in Latin for their own use.
- **Elderly and fragile persons** should remember that, staying overnight is not beneficial to their health. They should know that, once the Basilica closes, there is no way of getting out if one feels sick.
- **The Franciscan friars of the Basilica do not shoulder any responsibility or liability for any kind of mishap or accident that pilgrims might incur when they stay overnight. Pilgrims stay overnight in the Basilica at their own risk.**

The Franciscan Superior of the Holy Sepulchre.