

# IDEAS FOR PILGRIMAGE

The Diocese of Wilcannia-Forbes is home to some of the most diverse and striking landscapes Australia has to offer. From spectacular outback settings and wide open spaces to modern infrastructure and facilities. The region is rich in natural resources.

Agriculture, mining and construction are some of the region's largest industries alongside the growing renewable energy sector.

There is a Catholic church in almost every town and village. Some have been sold, some are derelict, some abandoned, some only used once a month, and yet there is a history and range of architectural design and building materials that reflect the design of the times and the dreams and generosity of the people and their priests.

1. Building the Church of God - the early priests: Follow the trails of the priests in the early days of the Diocese. Mass was held in private homes and pubs. They were responsible for many small churches in the towns in the Diocese often within a days ride of each other. Sadly many of these are slated for sale or demolition.
2. Follow in Bishop John Dunne's footsteps - he established many parishes, convents and schools .
3. Educating the masses: Follow the trails blazed by the Sisters of St Joseph and the Mercy Sisters. Check out the convents and schools that are still in use across the Diocese. Look through the cemeteries for priests and nuns and say a prayer over their grave.
4. From the old Country: See the remains of the cultural activities left by immigrants eg. The influence of Irish immigrants, priests and nuns, bonded labour, names of towns and property
5. From Rags to Riches and Back - follow the rise and fall of the mining sector cross the Diocese and it's impact on the life of the Church and its people.
6. The Riverboat trade: Follow the Darling River Run and visit once thriving towns along the mighty Darling and Murray Rivers - Deniliquin and Wentworth.
7. Follow in the footsteps of St Teresa Of Calcutta and her Missionaries of Charity from Bourke to Dareton.
8. Visit the Carmel of Elijah , the Carmelite Monastery in Mathoura.
9. Visit sites of spiritual significance to Indigenous Australians eg. Mungo National Park, Mt Gundabooka and Mt Grenfell Historic Site.
10. Follow the opening up of the west and Central West: follow the rivers and visit the little churches in what are now hamlets.
11. Experience the catholic heritage buildings in Broken Hill: The Cathedral, Ss Peter and Paul, All Saints, St Mary's and St Anne's, the Bishop's house, the house of Compassion and the Convents.
12. If you are a handy person or a tradie, retired or not, think about donating your time and energy helping little parishes with repairs to church buildings.
13. Marvel at the faith of the people of a bygone era and pray for the Holy Spirit to enliven our faith communities.
14. Join a parish on a local pilgrimage.
15. Visit the vast outback, a land of droughts and floods, a land where people must be people of hope to survive and thrive. Join a bush Mass where the faithful travel many miles to attend Mass.