

**JMJ Youth Pilgrimages'**  
**Suggested Packing List for World Youth Day 2019**

Average January Weather in Panama = 73-88°F  
with a fair chance of rain

**Video packing tutorial:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yyMFB3lbj1E>

**Highly Recommended**

1. Backpack or suitcase (preferably carry-on size)
2. Passport (also email yourself a copy)
3. A joyful spirit (critical for the group)
4. Money Belt worn under clothing
5. Warm, compact, micro-fiber sleeping bag
6. Emergency Blanket (foil)
7. Rosary and Scapular
8. Spending Money (Balboa and Dollars)
9. Prescription Medication
10. Wristwatch with an alarm
11. Sunglasses
12. Inflatable raft\* (all pilgrims) or Camping Mat (simple lodging) \*for one night on the ground at the Vigil

**Bathroom Items**

13. Small Towel (simple & budget lodging)
14. Soap (small travel size)
15. Shampoo/Conditioner (travel size)
16. Deodorant (travel size)
17. Toothbrush/Toothpaste (travel size)
18. Sunscreen (small)
19. Brush (small)
20. Glasses, Contacts, Solution

**Clothing**

21. 4-5 shirts (wear one on the airplane), including 1 long-sleeve shirt for layering
22. 2 pairs of your choice: pants, capris, or a skirt
23. 1 pair of shorts (not allowed in some Churches)
24. Comfortable walking shoes
25. Flip flops for showers (simple & budget lodging)
26. Swimsuit (showers in simple lodging)
27. Sweatshirt (thin hooded is best)
28. Socks and underwear

**Optional**

1. Pajamas
2. Hat (to block the sun)
3. Small umbrella (for sun and rain)
4. Items to trade with other pilgrims
5. Group Flag (one per group)
6. Earplugs (for airplane & snoring roommates!)
7. Lock (for budget lodging lockers)
8. Basic over-the-counter medicines
9. Band-aids and/or a blister care kit
10. Bug Spray (3 oz or less)
11. Inexpensive Camera
12. Journal and pen
13. Protein bars (emergency food)
14. Small nylon bag (for dirty clothes)
15. Shaving razors
16. Laundry Soap (for hand washing, or shampoo works)
17. Ziploc bags (for stuff)

18. Tarp or sheet for shade/ground cover at Vigil (1 per 6-8 pilgrims)
19. Tiny AM/FM radio for English translations
20. Small rope for clothesline, tying things to your backpack
21. Safety Pins
22. Washcloth (simple & budget lodging)
23. Water bladder for easy refill
24. Deck of cards/Frisbee

**Please DO NOT Bring**

1. Things you wouldn't want to lose
2. Heavy things
3. Electronic things for your hair
4. Illegal items (We will not bail you out!)
5. Jewelry

**Baggage Limits:** Luggage restrictions vary from airline to airline. Refer directly to your airline for details. MJM Youth strongly recommends limiting your luggage to one carry-on, and *if absolutely necessary* one moderately sized checked bag.

**Clothing:** It may be very warm during the day. Christian guidelines of modesty still apply.

**Suggestion #1:** Consider light weight clothing that dries quickly. This will make it easier to hand wash and dry the few things you do bring. Hand wash 1 or 2 things each day, and you will not run out of clean clothes.

**Suggestion #2:** Place the things you think you *absolutely* need on your bed, then pack *half* of what you see.

JMJ staff members generally travel with one carry-on backpack that weighs no more than 20 pounds. (Yes, that includes absolutely everything that we are not wearing, even a laptop and the backpack itself.) We are quite certain you can get by with even less!

We have had students bring everything they needed in a book bag, while others bring huge suitcases weighing 75 pounds. (Chaperons can be worse!) Those who packed lighter were happier pilgrims. *Those who bring heavy packs become a penance for the entire group.*

**Suggestion #3:** Pack a medium-sized backpack or a suitcase with everything you think you need. Get on public transportation in your city, go to the mall, and walk around with it for five hours. Walk up and down every stairway you happen to see. This is a *hint* of what it is like to move around at WYD, and we are confident that you will be inspired to pack more lightly with a smaller backpack.

**Suggestion #4:** It will help each pilgrim to pack lighter if one or two people bring items to be used by the entire group, like a first aid kit with generic medications, bug spray, and fingernail clippers. Keep in mind that if you do not have something you need, you can buy it in Panama.

**Dispensations:** Priests and religious may need to bring additional items, like an alb, a stole, and a Mass kit. If you are lay, forget about it!

**Money Matters:**

The US Dollar is used in Panama, but it is highly recommended to bring smaller bills of \$1, \$5 and \$10, as many places will not have change for \$20s and higher.

*Debit cards* are the easiest and cheapest way to get cash once there. Check the fees your bank will charge you in advance, because even if you can access an American bank, it is considered offshore. It is best to use the ATM for larger withdrawals to make it more worth the ATM fee. Make sure your debit card has a four digit pin.

*Credit cards* are another good way to buy almost anything in Panama. Visa and Mastercard are accepted almost everywhere, as well as American Express in some places. Ask your bank in advance about transaction fees.

*Travelers' checks* are the absolute worst way to bring money, because you will be charged fees on top of fees to cash them.

**Money Belt:** You will absolutely need a money belt. In it you will keep your passport, money, emergency numbers, credit card, and any other important papers. You can get these at any luggage store or online. *Never, ever, ever* use a purse or wallet. You will attract all kinds of thieves. Fanny packs are another favorite of petty criminals.

**Luggage:** If you have a checked bag, make sure all important items are in your carry-on (medication, camera, and one change of clothing) in case your bag ends up in Africa. Do not lock your checked bag, because TSA might clip the lock to check the contents.

**Medications:** If you will be bringing a prescription medication, get an extra prescription from the doctor in case the medicine gets lost. Make sure you bring medication in its original bottle (if at all possible).

**Communication:** The cheapest way to call home is on Skype using wifi or at an internet café. Collect calls and calls by credit card can be outrageously expensive!!

**Cell phones:** We do not recommend that pilgrims bring their cell phones, except for leaders. Most cellphones will work in Panama (with high roaming and data charges). We understand that cell phones have become universal tools and can function in many ways; camera, video, alarm clock, IM, texting, GPS, oh yeah, and phone calls. If you happen to bring one, please only use it for necessities, and don't cry if you lose it.

**Electrical outlets:** Panama runs on 110-120V, and their plugs are like those in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Some of them may be non-grounded (two prong only), so if your item requires a 3-prong plug, then you will need to bring an adapter.

**Hiking:** Keep in mind that you will be outdoors a majority of the time. You will walk, and walk, and walk, and walk - long and far. Tips for backpacking hikers are largely applicable here: Your shoes should be well broken-in; your backpack should be comfortable to carry; your clothes should be comfortable and preferably sweat wicking/quick drying. A camelback or similar hydration bladder is a lightweight compact means of staying hydrated. You should also be prepared for a lack of bathrooms. It is not a bad idea to add to this list a port-a-john, travel toilet, or camping wag bag in case of emergency.

Check out our Frequently Asked Questions for more information that is helpful when making your packing decisions:  
<http://www.jmjyouth.com/wydfags.html>