

### **Day 1: Depart for Rome**

Make your way to your local airport, where you will board your overnight flight(s). Meals will be served on board.

### **Day 2: Arrival in Rome**

Welcome to Rome, also known as “The Eternal City.” Upon landing at Rome airport, claim your baggage and proceed to the Arrivals Hall, where your tour guide and/or driver will greet you. Following check-in at the hotel, enjoy some free time to unpack, relax or explore Rome on your own. Your tour escort may suggest places to visit. Later this afternoon, your group will meet in the hotel lobby for a meet and greet with fellow pilgrims and your priest. You will depart together for Mass, and following Mass, you will attend a welcome dinner. After dinner you have to opportunity to join in a walk to St. Peter’s Square for the Rosary (optional).

### **Day 3: Rome: Papal Audience - Trevi Fountain - Basilica of St. John the Lateran - Holy Stairs - Basilica of St. Mary Major**

This morning we attend the Papal Audience in St. Peter’s Square or at the Audience Hall. The Audience is celebrated each Wednesday by His Holiness, The Pope (pending the papal schedule). Next Trevi Fountain area for some free time and lunch (on own). This afternoon, visit the oldest of the four major Basilicas in Rome, the Archbasilica of St. John the Lateran, the cathedral church and seat of the Bishop of Rome. Cross the street to the very steps that lead up to the praetorium of Pontius Pilate in Jerusalem which Jesus climbed on His way to trial during his Passion. Holy Mass will be celebrated by our priest at the Basilica of St. Mary Major, dedicated to Our Blessed Mother. Dinner and overnight.

### **Day 4: Rome: St. Peter's Basilica - Vatican Museum - Appian Way - Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls - Catacombs**

Today we tour St. Peter’s Basilica, built on the site where St. Peter the Apostle was martyred. Here, you’ll have the opportunity to view Michelangelo’s Pieta sculpture, pray at the tombs of Pope Benedict XVI and St. John Paul II. Next you will visit the Vatican Museum, where you can see the Tapestry Gallery, Raphael Rooms, and Sistine Chapel. After lunch, continue down the Appian Way, one of the earliest roads built in ancient Rome to the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls and the Catacombs. Dinner and overnight in Rome.

### **Day 5: Rome – Monte Cassino - San Giovanni Rotondo**

This morning, you will board the bus and enjoy the scenic route to the Abbey of Monte Cassino, the principal monastery of the Benedictine Order, founded by St. Benedict around 530 A.D. Continue on to San Giovanni Rotondo, where St. Pio of Pietrelcina (St. Padre Pio) lived for many decades and where thousands of people have flocked in order to be closer to this great saint and to Our Lord. Dinner and overnight in San Giovanni Rotondo.

### **Day 6: San Giovanni Rotondo - Monte Sant' Angelo**

Visit the Old Church of Our Lady of Grace, see the confessional from where St. Pio spent an innumerable number of hours listening to confessions. Next, you will board the bus and travel along the beautiful Gargano Peninsula to the Grotto of St. Michael the Archangel. Return for dinner and overnight in San Giovanni Rotondo. \*Candlelight Procession – Between May and October, attend the weekly candlelight procession at the Sanctuary of St. Pio after dinner, at 9:00 pm.

**Day 7: San Giovanni Rotondo - Lanciano - Loreto - Assisi**

After breakfast, you will leave for Assisi. On the way we stop in Lanciano for private Mass at the Convent/Church of Saint Francis built on top of the antique Church of St. Longinus – the site of a Eucharistic Miracle that occurred in the eighth century. At the time of the miracle, there was a Basilian monk, who struggled with the belief in the Real Presence in the Eucharist. During the time of Mass, the monk, with doubt in his voice, said the words of consecration and the bread and wine transformed into physical flesh and blood. Leave for Marian shrine of Loreto to visit the Holy House of Nazareth and the beautiful Madonna of Loreto. Tradition holds that this is the house in which Mary first prayed the Magnificat, in which Jesus grew to manhood, and in which the Holy Family lived, before it was transported several times by angels, to its current location. End the day in Assisi, hometown of St. Francis and St. Clare, with dinner and overnight at your hotel.

**Day 8: Assisi (St. Francis)**

Tour of the Basilica of St. Francis, where you will see the tomb of St. Francis, and have the opportunity to view a series of frescoes depicting his life, along with a few of the saint's possessions. Next you will visit the Santuario Della Spogliazione where Blessed Carlo Acutis' tomb is, the first millennial to be declared Blessed. Continue tour by walking through this picturesque town, where St. Francis and St. Clare both followed God's call to rebuild his church. Enjoy some free time – for additional prayer, shop and lunch. After lunch, board the bus, which will take you outside of the walls of Assisi, to the Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels. This Basilica is made up of two structures, both of which you will visit. The first structure is the "Porziuncola" and the second is the "Capella del Transito" which is the place where St. Francis died. Return to the hotel for dinner and a restful overnight.

**Day 9: Assisi - Orvieto - Assisi**

This morning, you will ride through the beautiful Umbrian mountains to Orvieto. This incredible town sits on a volcanic high rock formation. Here we visit one of the most beautiful and most renowned Cathedrals in Italy. Because of its strategic location, its Christian history officially started in 1004, but Orvieto was built over preexisting Etruscan era cave tunnels dating back 2,500 years, which some historians believe Christians used to celebrate Mass when Christianity was forbidden. Return to Assisi for dinner and overnight.

**Day 10: Assisi - Siena - Florence**

Breakfast, followed by a scenic drive to the Tuscan city of Siena. This medieval city is the birthplace of St. Catherine "Doctor of the Church", and the Apostle of Italy, St. Bernardine. Visit the Basilica of St. Catherine (which is also known as the Basilica of St. Domenico). St. Catherine passed a large part of her life inside the walls of this Basilica. It is here you will also view the incorrupt head of St. Catherine. After, visit the Shrine of St. Catherine, which occupies the site of her family home. Enjoy your walking tour through the Siena including a visit to its Cathedral (Duomo di Siena). Conclude at one of Italy's finest squares, the Piazza Del Campo, where you will be given free time to spend at your own leisure. There are a number of restaurants surrounding the square to have lunch, as well as shops for gifts and souvenirs. Continue on to Florence. Upon arrival in Florence, you will notice immediately that it is the land for art lovers. Some of the most world-renowned artists are from Florence such as Dante, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Raphael, Botticelli, Donatello, and many others. For the remainder of the afternoon, you will have the opportunity to explore the streets of Florence at leisure. In the evening gather for dinner, followed by an overnight.

**Day 11: Florence**

In Florence, your day begins with breakfast, followed by a guided tour. The tour starts at the Church of the Holy Cross, the Santa Croce, where many nobles are buried, such as Michelangelo, Galileo, and Machiavelli. Continue to walk by Piazza Signorina, Palazzo Vecchio, Uffizi, Ponte Vecchio, and Republic Square to the Santa Maria del Fiore. This Cathedral is an iconic piece of architecture of the city of Florence. It was designed by Filippo Brunelleschi in the 13th century. Next, a visit to L'Accademia, the well-known art gallery. At this gallery, you will have the opportunity to view the work from artists such as Botticelli, Ghirlandaio, Pontormo, and the ever famous sculpture by Michelangelo, David. This afternoon you will have time to explore Florence on your own. Return to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

**Day 12: Florence - Padua**

Following breakfast at your hotel, board the motorcoach for your transfer to Padua. This Northern Italian city honors the "Patron Saint of Lost Things and Causes", St. Anthony. You will begin a sightseeing tour of the city, including a view of one of the oldest Universities in Italy, the University of Padua, as well as the Basilica of Santa Giustina, the "Patron Saint of Padua." The tour will conclude at the Basilica of St. Anthony, where you will have the opportunity to visit his tomb. Return to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

**Day 13: Padua - Venice (Full Day Excursion)**

Today, you will have early breakfast and then board your bus to depart to the magical city of Venice. After Mass, enjoy a tour of the "city paved with water!" Your walking tour includes a visit to St. Mark's Square, the largest square in the city and the site of many government buildings; the Golden Basilica of San Marco, known for the great mosaics that depict the Old and New Testament of the Bible; the Bridge of Sigh, a bridge that will bring eternal love to those who drift below it. You will also have the chance to view the Doges' Palace (Duke's Palace), which served as the seat of the Government for the Republic of Venice for centuries. Return to Padua for dinner and overnight.

**Day 14: Return Home**

After an early breakfast and heartfelt farewells, transfer to Venice airport for return flights home.

**\*206 Tours Disclaimer:**

Occasionally local religious and national holidays, weather, traffic conditions and other events may necessitate changes in the sequence of events or the missing of certain events/places. Though every effort will be made to follow the itinerary, it should be considered as an indication, rather than a contract of events and places to be visited.