

Day 1: Depart for the Holy Land

Make your way to your local airport where you will board your overnight flight. Your meals will be served on board.

Day 2: Arrive in Tel Aviv

Upon arrival at Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv, make your way to the baggage claim area and collect your luggage. Proceed to the Arrival's Hall, where you will be greeted by your tour guide and/or driver. Transfer to your hotel in Tel Aviv to check-in. Enjoy dinner at the hotel before retiring for the evening.

Day 3: Tel Aviv - Caesarea - Nazareth - Cana - Tiberias

Theme: The Annunciation

Depart Tel Aviv to Caesarea Marítima, one of the three largest ports in the Roman world, next to Alexandria and Piraeus "Athens", which were built by Herod the Great between 21 B.C. and 9 B.C. It was in Caesarea where St. Peter baptized the first gentile convert Cornelius, and where St. Paul gave his defense of the church. From here, we will see the Roman Theater, Herod's Palace, view the Hippodrome, and the harbor from where St. Paul sailed on his journeys. Continue north to Haifa, located on Mt Carmel, where we will visit the Carmelite Shrine dedicated to Our Lady of Mt Carmel, and pray at the cave which Elijah the prophet took refuge. Continue to Nazareth for lunch, and then visit the Church of the Annunciation. Visit the museum and archaeological garden where we can see the remains of Nazareth at the time of Christ, as well as St. Joseph's workshop – which is now known as St. Joseph's Church. Within the Church of the Annunciation, you will make our way down to the Grotto to see the remains of the house of the Blessed Mother, and where the Angel of the Lord announced the good news to Mary. Celebrate Mass in this Church, and then continue to Cana. It was here that Jesus performed His first miracle, changing water into wine. During your visit to the Wedding Church, married couples will have the chance to take part in the ceremony and renew their wedding vows. From there, we continue to Tiberias, located on the Sea of Galilee, for dinner and overnight.

Day 4: Tiberias: Sea of Galilee

Theme: The Ministry of Christ in the Galilee

Today, begin with breakfast at the hotel, followed by a boat ride on the beautiful and scenic Sea of Galilee (Luke 5:1). Upon docking the boat, you will have the opportunity to view the remains of a boat that dates back to the time of Jesus. Following the Sea of Galilee, we continue to the Mount of Beatitudes, where Jesus proclaimed His great Sermon on the Mount (Luke 6:20-49). Near the Mount, is Tabgha, one of Jesus' miracle sites. At Tabgha, Jesus fed the crowd of 5,000 people from five loaves of bread and two fish (Luke 9:10-17). Also, in Tabgha is St. Peter's Primacy where Jesus bestowed church leadership upon Peter (John 21:9). Continue to visit the birthplace of Mary Magdalene in Magdala. During the time of Jesus, this village was a prosperous fishing village that exported fish and garum (a fish sauce reduction; popular in Roman cooking). Your day concludes at Capernaum, the launching place of Jesus' ministry. In Capernaum, see the Synagogue where Jesus taught (Mark 1:21-29) and gave His sermon on the Bread of Life. Return to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

Day 5: Mt. Tabor - Jericho - Jerusalem

Theme: The Transfiguration

After breakfast, drive to the site of the Transfiguration, Mount Tabor (Matthew 17:1-50). You will have time to reflect on Christ's Divinity at this site. Celebrate Mass at the Basilica of the Transfiguration and then continue south towards the Jordan Valley, to the world's oldest inhabited city (Jericho (Joshua 6:12-25). In

Jericho, you view the exact location, the Mount of Temptation, where the Devil tempted Jesus during his forty-day fast (Luke 4:1). Drive up to Jerusalem to check in to your hotel for dinner and overnight.

Day 6: Jerusalem: Bethlehem & Ein Karem

Theme: The Visitation and Nativity

This morning, enjoy breakfast before we start our day in Jerusalem, which houses the temple to which Jesus was Presented (Luke 2:22). Visit a model of the Second Temple as it was in the time of Jesus. Following this visit, you will take a short drive to the village of Ein Karem, the birthplace of John the Baptist. It is known that there are two churches in Ein Karem, representing the two homes of Zechariah and Elizabeth. The first is in a valley where the birth of St. John the Baptist is commemorated (Luke 1:39-80) in the Church of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist. The second is on a hill where Elizabeth spent five months in seclusion (Luke 1:24) at the Church of the Visitation. You will have a chance to visit both of these churches and have the opportunity to pray the Mystery of the Rosary as you walk up the hill to the Church of the Visitation. In the afternoon, transfer to Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus. In Bethlehem, you will have the opportunity to view Shepherd's Fields (Luke 2:8). In the caves of these fields, you are still able to see the soot marks of fires that shepherds lit to keep warm. The tour concludes at the Manger Square, which stands in front of the Church of the Nativity. As you enter the Church, you will proceed down to the Grotto of the Nativity which marks the spot of Our Savior's birth (Matthew 2:1-18). Beneath the altar, there is a silver star and a Latin inscription that states: HIC DE VIRGINE MARIA JESUS CHRISTUS NATUS (Here Jesus Christ was born to the Virgin Mary). Following Mass in this Sacred space, return to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

Day 7: Jordan River - Qumran - Dead Sea

Theme: Early Years in Jerusalem & the Wilderness.

Following breakfast at your hotel, you will travel down the Jordan Valley to Qumran. Qumran is made up of 2,000-year-old ruins from the days of the Second Temple and also the site where the Dead Sea Scrolls were written and discovered (Ezekial 47:8-10). These writings have helped further the understanding of Jewish background in Christianity. Time and weather permitting, you will have the opportunity to take a float in the Dead Sea, the lowest and saltiest spot on Earth. Continue as you travel through the Judean wilderness, the site where Jesus spent His 40 days of fasting. The day of touring culminates with a transfer to Bethany. Bethany is the site where Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead which foreshadows His Resurrection (John 11:38-44). Return to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

Day 8: Jerusalem: Mt. Of Olives - Gethsemane - Mt. Zion (Upper Room)

Theme: Palm Sunday and the Agony in the Garden

After breakfast, you will make your way to the Mount of Olives, where you will be able to take in the beautiful, panoramic view of Jerusalem. Historically, the Mount of Olives was a mandatory transit point for Jesus during many iconic moments. Visit the Pater Noster Shrine where Jesus taught His disciples the Lord's Prayer (Pater Noster) (Luke 11:1-4). You will have the opportunity to stop at Dominus Flevit which is a Church that commemorates where Jesus wept for Jerusalem (Luke 19:41). Continue to Gethsemane, a garden at the foot of the Mount of Olives. Jesus brought His disciples here to pray the night before He was crucified (Luke 22:29-53). The Garden still contains trees with roots that date back to the time of Jesus. Your next stop, the Church of All Nations, is built over the "Rock of Agony". This is where Jesus prayed alone on the night of His arrest. Throughout this time, you are invited to remain in prayer and to reflect on Christ's agony that He experienced. You will have the opportunity to visit the Western Wall, which is the last remnant of the Jewish Temple after it was destroyed in 70 A.D. Continue with a visit to the house of the High Priest Caiaphas (Church of St. Peter in Gallicantu). This Church commemorates where Jesus was examined and eventually imprisoned before the Council in Jerusalem. It also commemorates Peter's Denial of Christ (John 18:15-18), Peter's repentance, and Jesus' forgiveness of Peter. You will also visit the Upper Room on Mt.

Zion. The Upper Room is where Jesus and His disciples celebrated the Last Supper (Matthew 26:17-30) and where Jesus appeared to His disciples after His Death and Resurrection (Mark 16:14). Also, visit the nearby Benedictine Church of the Dormition. Tradition tells us that this Church is where Mary, the Mother of Jesus, “fell asleep.” At the end of this prayerful day, return to your hotel for dinner and an overnight.

Day 9: Jerusalem: Via Dolorosa - Holy Sepulchre- Western Wall

Theme: The Way of the Cross, The Crucifixion, The Resurrection

This morning you will have a very early wake-up to begin the Via Dolorosa (The Way of the Cross) at the Antonia Fortress. This is the spot where Jesus was condemned to death by Pontius Pilate (John 18:28-19:16). Following His condemnation, He was taken (on the Road to Calvary) to His place of Crucifixion. Reflect upon the Stations of the Cross as you travel through the markets of the Old City to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher (Luke 23:26-33). This sacred destination is the site of Calvary (Jesus’ crucifixion place) and His tomb (Luke 23: 50-55). Celebrate Mass at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Following Mass, we will return to the hotel to enjoy breakfast. You will continue your day with a visit to the Church of St. Anne’s, the home of Jesus’ maternal grandparents (Anne and Joachim); and the Pool of Bethesda, where Jesus healed the crippled man (John 5:1-9). This afternoon, enjoy a revisit to the Old City. Following this visit return to the hotel to enjoy dinner and overnight at your hotel.

Day 10: Jerusalem - Tel Aviv - Rome

Today you depart from the Holy Land for your flight to Rome. Upon arrival in Rome, you will be met by your driver and transfer to the hotel where you will meet the rest of your group. This afternoon, you will be introduced to your fellow pilgrims and priest who will be with you for the rest of the journey. Next, make your way to Mass, which will be followed by a welcome dinner with wine. This evening, you may walk to St. Peter’s Square for Rosary (optional).

Day 11: Rome: Papal Audience - Trevi Fountain – Pantheon - Basilica of St. John the Lateran – Holy Stairs - Basilica of St. Mary Major

We begin with the Papal Audience in St. Peter’s Square! The Audience is celebrated each Wednesday by His Holiness, The Pope (pending the papal schedule). Following the Audience, we will visit the Trevi Fountain, where you may enjoy some free time on your own for lunch. This afternoon, you will visit the oldest of the four major Basilicas in Rome, and the home to the relics of Peter and Paul, the Basilica of St. John the Lateran. This Basilica is where The Pope was installed as Bishop of Rome. Next, you will cross the street to visit the Holy Stairs. These Holy Stairs are the very steps leading up to the praetorium of Pontius Pilate in Jerusalem on which Jesus stepped on his way to trial during his Passion. The Stairs were brought to Rome by Saint Helena in the fourth century. Ascending these stairs on your knees, in memory of Christ’s agonizing Passion. We conclude your day, with a Mass at the Basilica of St. Mary Major. Church dedicated to Our Blessed Mother, St. Mary Major reigns as the only Basilica that has kept its original structure and is an authentic jewel in the crown of Roman Churches. This Basilica contains a relic from the Manger of the Infant Jesus. Return to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

Day 12: vatican-pilgrimage-Tomb-of-Pope-Benedict-XVI

Celebrate Mass. Tour St. Peter’s Basilica, built on site where St. Peter, was martyred. Pray at the tomb of St. John Paul II. View the Michelangelo’s Pieta, a sculpture depicting the Virgin Mary holding Christ after His crucifixion. Visit Vatican Museum, to view the Tapestry Gallery, Raphael Rooms, Sistine Chapel and Michelangelo’s Masterpiece. After lunch, we continue down the Appian Way, the earliest road from Ancient Rome. This road leads to the Domino Quo Vadis Chapel, the Baths of Caracalla, the Arch of Drusus, the Tomb of Cecilia Metella, and the catacomb of St. Callixtus. The day concludes with a visit to the Basilica of

St. Paul Outside The Walls. Originally founded by Emperor Constantine in the 4th century this Basilica is the burial place of Saint Paul the Apostle. Dinner and overnight.

Day 13: Rome - Montecassino - San Giovanni Rotondo

Following breakfast, you will board your bus to enjoy the scenic route to Montecassino. Passing through the Roman countryside is known for its villas and vineyards. During the bus ride, your tour escort will share interesting information regarding the spiritual, historical, and cultural aspects of Italy. Montecassino, the principle monastery of the Benedictine Order, was founded by Saint Benedict around 530 A.D. Following the tour, there will be an opportunity to visit the gift shop, before you board the bus to continue toward San Giovanni Rotondo, the hometown of Saint St. Padre Pio. Upon arrival in San Giovanni Rotondo, you will check-in, enjoy dinner in a restaurant, and overnight.

Day 14: San Giovanni Rotondo - Monte Sant' Angelo
(view incorrupt body of St. Padre Pio)

This morning, after breakfast, you will visit the Old Church. After Mass, you will tour the sanctuary, it is here you will view the crucifix, in front of which St. Pio received the stigmata. Visit the confessional from where St. Pio spent an innumerable amount 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, a shrine consecrated by St. Michael. At this grotto, St. Michael appeared to a Bishop to assure him that his diocese would not be annihilated as he feared. Following the visit to the grotto, enjoy free time. On the way back to San Giovanni Rotondo, view breathtaking views of the ocean and surrounding countryside. Upon arrival, you will have time for devotion and reflection. 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. These processions are lit by candlelight and are guided by the Most Holy Rosary. Following this prayerful experience, you will return to your hotel for a restful overnight.

Day 15: San Giovanni Rotondo - Lanciano - Loreto - Assisi

After breakfast, you we 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 16: Assisi (The Life of a Saint that inspired a Holy Father)

As you visit the birthplace of St. Francis, you will become captivated as the atmosphere has not changed since St. Francis began his ministry, in the early 13th-century. You will start your tour at the St. Francis Basilica, visit his 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. Followed by a visit to the Santuario Della Spogliazione where Blessed Carlo Acutis' tomb is placed. Carlo is the first millennial to be declared Blessed who loved the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. From there, you will continue on a walking tour through this picturesque town, including the birthplace of St. Francis, and end with a tour of the Church that honors St. Clare, the

foundress of the Poor Clare Sisters. This Saint followed the teachings of St. Francis very closely by also living a life of poverty and humility. Enjoy some free time on your own – you may take this time for additional prayer, shop in the many gift shops, or enjoy a nice lunch. After lunch, you will board the bus, which will take you outside of the walls of Assisi, to the Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels. This is where St. Francis spent most of his life. This Basilica is made up of two structures, both of which you will visit. The first structure is the “Porziuncola”, which is where St. Francis founded his order of the Friar Minor (Franciscans). The second is the “Capella del Transito”, which is the place of St. Francis’ death. During your time here, you will have the opportunity to visit the beautiful Rose Garden where St. Francis and other friars lived, as well as the cave where the Saint retired to pray. Return to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

Day 17: 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, it’s 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 18: Return Home

After an early breakfast and heartfelt farewells, your group will leave by motorcoach and transfer to the Rome Fiumicino 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.