

### **Day 1: Depart USA**

Board your overnight transatlantic flights from your hometown. Meals are served on board.

### **Day 2: Arrive in Dubrovnik**

Arrive at the Dubrovnik airport, where you will be met by your driver and transferred to your hotel. Spend the afternoon in this city overlooking the Adriatic at your leisure. Feel free to walk to the Old Town, also known as the “Pearl of the Adriatic.” This evening, you will have dinner at a typical Dalmatian restaurant that serves local delicacies and wines.

### **Day 3: Dubrovnik**

Following breakfast, enjoy a walking tour of the Old City. It will begin at St. Blasius Church, dedicated to the Patron Saint of Dubrovnik. This Baroque-styled church was constructed by Venetian architect Marino Gropelli in 1715; it was styled after the Venetian Church, St. Mauritius. The masterpiece of this church is its large staircase leading to the ornamented main portal and the large dome that decorates the roof. Continue to the Gothic and Renaissance-styled Rector’s Palace, home to the History Department of the Museum of Dubrovnik. Next, stroll by the iconic Bell Tower Clock and Orlando’s Column. To the left of this column is the Sponza Palace. In the sixteenth century, members of the Academia dei Concordi met on the palace’s first-floor hall to discuss literature. As a result, the palace is the most important cultural institution in Dubrovnik. Lastly, you will visit the Dominican and Franciscan Monasteries. The Dominican Monastery is strategically located at the most sensitive point of Dubrovnik’s defense barriers. While at the Franciscan Monastery, you will have the opportunity to visit the Pharmacy. The founding of this Pharmacy was collaborative, as it served as the public pharmacy and for the needs of the monks. This afternoon, you will enjoy lunch on your own at one of the many small, family-owned restaurants along the narrow streets. The remainder of the day is to be enjoyed at leisure. This evening, enjoy dinner and an overnight in Dubrovnik.

### **Day 4: Dubrovnik, excursion to Montenegro**

After breakfast, depart for the Republic of Montenegro, a Balkan country boasting a dynamic landscape of extremely high peaks juxtaposed beside deep canyons, caves, and bays. Begin your excursion by heading towards the mouth of the beautiful Bay of Kotor, the longest and deepest fjord in Southern Europe. Enjoy a boat ride to Our Lady of the Rocks, one of two islets off the coast of Perast. The Roman Catholic Church is the largest building on the artificial island made of rocks and old ships. The island was created by a local fisherman who found an icon of the Blessed Mother and Jesus on a rock here. Now, it is a tradition to throw rocks at the island to increase its size on July 22 each year. Upon return to the coast, we will stop in Perast, an old charming coastal town with just one main street, yet sixteen Churches! Spend time in the city of Kotor, famous for its winding streets and medieval charm, before returning to Dubrovnik for dinner and overnight.

### **Day 5: Dubrovnik - Split**

After breakfast, depart Dubrovnik and travel north along the spectacular Adriatic coast. Pass old fishing villages and new resorts before arriving in Croatia’s second-largest city, Split. The historic inner city of Split was built around the Roman Emperor Diocletian’s Palace, a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site. While exploring, you will have the opportunity to see remnants of Split’s Roman heritage, such as Jupiter’s Temple, the Peristyle of Diocletian’s Palace, and the Cathedral of St. Domnius. The Temple of Jupiter was built around the third century and is dedicated to the highest Roman god, the god of the sky, and the god of

thunder. The Diocletian's Palace had two purposes: half was used for the Diocletian's personal use, and the other half was used as a military garrison. Lastly, you will visit the Cathedral of St. Dominus, which is encircled by twenty-four columns. The oldest monuments in this Holy place are those depicting the life of Christ, which can be found on the entrance doors of the Church. This evening, you will enjoy dinner at a local Konoba (a restaurant in the coastal area of Croatia). Following dinner, you will continue to your hotel, where you will have a restful overnight.

#### **Day 6: Split - Trogir - Plitvice Lakes**

After breakfast, we head north along the coast to Trogir, the center of artistic activities where scholars worldwide gather to study and paint. Trogir is a small island connected to the mainland of Croatia by bridges. Some remnants of Medieval walls remain here, while much of the island boasts Gothic and Renaissance influences. Our journey continues towards the beautiful Plitvice Lakes, where we will enjoy dinner and overnight after a full day of touring.

#### **Day 7: Plitvice Lakes**

Today, we enjoy Plitvice National Park, listed in UNESCO's World Heritage list, and the breathtaking scenery of this natural wonder. Founded in 1949, the park spans 295 square kilometers and preserves an incredible landscape that includes 16 terraced lakes, countless waterfalls, mountains, and limestone canyons. The mountainous region of the park borders Bosnia and Herzegovina. Wildlife like the European brown bears, wolves, eagles, owls, lynx, and wild cats roam this scene. After a full day of exploring, enjoy dinner and overnight in Plitvice.

#### **Day 8: Plitvice Lakes, Opatija, Postojna to Bled**

Today, we will return to the coast to the beautiful bay of Kvarner and its popular tourist town, Opatija. An orientation tour of Opatija will present the highlights of this former Imperial resort city. After your visit here, drive across the border into Slovenia to Postojna Caves, home to one of the largest caves in Europe. Tour the fantastic subterranean world by miniature electric train. Over 38 million people have visited these caves in the past 200 years. In 1872, the first cave rails were laid, and overhead electric lighting was installed in 1884 – before electric lighting was added to the city of Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia. Afterward, continue to Bled for dinner and overnight.

#### **Day 9: Bled - Ljubljana**

Bled is a stunning Alpine lake surrounded by high peaks in northwestern Slovenia at the southern foot of the Karawanks mountain, just about 30 miles from Ljubljana. A sightseeing tour features the charming town and lakeshore, and visits Bled Castle, a medieval castle perched on a cliff high above the lake. Bled Castle is the oldest Slovenian Castle, first mentioned in a 1011 deed. This afternoon, enjoy an excursion to Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia. View the Central open-air Market, Baroque Town Hall, Robba's Fountain, the Three Bridges, and the Parliament here. You will have a farewell dinner and overnight in Ljubljana.

#### **Day 10: Ljubljana - Warsaw**

After breakfast, transfer to Ljubljana airport for your flight to Warsaw. Upon arrival in Warsaw, make your way to the baggage claim area and collect your luggage. Proceed to the Arrivals Hall, where you will be greeted by your tour guide and/or driver. Transfer to your hotel. Following check-in at your hotel, your pilgrimage will officially begin with Mass. Following Mass, enjoy a delicious dinner and have the opportunity to explore the city of Warsaw before retiring for a restful overnight.

### **Day 11: Warsaw**

Your day will begin with breakfast followed by Mass at St. James Church, which is iconic for its tower and square base. This church is where Helena Kowalska prayed extensively upon entering Warsaw. It is also where she confessed all that burdened her soul and asked for the advice of Rev. James Dabrowski, which eventually resulted in the Saint entering the convent. Following this prayerful morning, your day of sightseeing begins. Your group will explore the Old Town, comprised of beautiful maze-like cobblestone streets and picturesque architecture that are symbols of Poland's successful rebuild following its destruction during World War II. Some of the sites will include the Market Square (the center of the city filled with restaurants, cafes, and shops), the Barbican, defense-like structures rebuilt following World War II, and the Warsaw Ghetto monument that commemorates the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of 1943 during World War II. You will also take in the Lazienki Park, a beautifully landscaped park, the Chopin Statue (a large bronze statue of musician Frederic Chopin), and the Royal Castle (the official residence of the Polish monarchs). In the afternoon, visit the Stanislaw Kostka Church and view a special exhibit dedicated to Fr. Jerzy Popieluszko. This priest was a great personality of the Catholic Church and was killed by communists in 1984. In 1987, Saint John Paul II visited here to pray in front of Fr. Popieluszko's tomb. Your tour of Warsaw will conclude by returning to the hotel for a delicious meal, followed by an overnight at your hotel.

### **Day 12: Warsaw - Niepokalanow - Swinice Warckie - Czestochowa**

You will enjoy breakfast this morning, followed by a transfer to Niepokalanow. This Franciscan Monastery is in the community of Teresin and was founded by martyr St. Maximilian Kolbe. This remarkable saint was arrested by the Nazis and died in Auschwitz, giving his life for the life of another prisoner. Following your visit to this Holy Monastery, transfer to the village of Swinice Warckie. In Swinice Warckie, visit the church of St. Casimir. This historically rich parish is the site of baptism for St. Faustina (formally known as Helena Kowalska). Little Helena received her first confession and First Holy Communion at this parish. Additionally, she and her family attended Sunday Mass and other services at this church. After visiting this simple yet elegant church, we will continue to Czestochowa. Upon arrival in Czestochowa, you will check in to your hotel and enjoy a magnificent dinner and a restful overnight.

### **Day 13: Czestochowa - Wadowice - Krakow**

Today, you will awake in the home of the grandest pilgrimage shrine in Poland since the 14th century! You will begin your day with breakfast and Mass at Jasna Gora Monastery. This hill-top monastery is home to the beloved icon of the Black Madonna. Additionally, Saint John Paul II is said to have frequently visited this monastery throughout his life. Tradition tells us that this icon was painted by Luke the Evangelist, discovered by St. Helen, and later enshrined. While here, you will have the opportunity to venerate not only the Holy Icon but also many other priceless treasures that are contained within. Following your prayerful visit to the Chapel of the Black Madonna, you will continue on to Wadowice, the birthplace of Karol Wojtyla (Saint John Paul II). While in the small city of Wadowice, you will have the opportunity to visit the church where this beloved Saint was baptized and attended Mass as a child. Following this historically captivating experience, continue on to Krakow. Enjoy dinner at the local restaurant before resting up for the next day of activities.

### **Day 14: Krakow - Zakopane - Krakow**

After breakfast, you will drive through the mountains to the breathtaking yet small and remote village of Zakopane. Take a cable car ride to the nearby mountaintop. At the top, you will truly experience God's magnificent Glory when you look out at the magnificent panoramic view. Following the many photos captured atop the mountain, head to the Jaszczorowka Chapel. The young Karol Wojtyla (Saint John Paul II)

visited this architecturally distinct chapel many times. Karol Wojtyla often used the walking paths surrounding the Jaszczorowka Chapel for prayer and reflection as a young boy. After you experience this beautiful site that assisted in Saint John Paul II's Holy journey, you will continue your tour to the colorful Krupowki Street. While on this street, you will have the opportunity to do some shopping at the local bazaar before returning to Krakow. Enjoy a beautiful dinner and an optional stroll through the old city before retiring for the evening.

#### **Day 15: Krakow - Auschwitz - Krakow**

After breakfast, you will explore Krakow's Market Square as the sound of the silver trumpet from St. Mary's Tower fills the air. The captivating beauty of this square is mainly because it has remained unchanged for almost 700 years. It contains several buildings that hold significant historic value, such as the Town Hall Tower, the Cloth Hall, and the Burgher's houses. Following your time in this longstanding square, you will make your way to Wawel Hill, where you will visit the beautiful Cathedral and Coronation Chapel. These are among the most important sites in Poland, as the Cathedral was the coronation site of the Polish monarchs and held numerous pieces of Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque, Classicist, and Modern art. At this site, you will have the opportunity to pray at the tomb of the patron saint of Poland, St. Stanislaus. Next, a short drive to Auschwitz, notoriously known as a Nazi concentration camp during the Second World War. Upon arriving at the former camp, you can feel the darkness and sorrow that overtakes the atmosphere as numerous unspeakable atrocities occurred at this site. During this visit, you can also view the cell that imprisoned the Christ-like St. Maximilian Kolbe and visit the Martyrdom Museum. After this reflective day, return to your hotel in Krakow for dinner and a restful overnight.

#### **Day 16: Krakow - Lagiewniki (Shrine of Divine Mercy) - Wieliczka - Krakow**

On your last day of touring, after breakfast, depart for your excursion to Lagiewniki, the capital of the Divine Mercy. Through the mediation of St. Faustina, Christ passed on the message of Divine Mercy at Lagiewniki. While here, you will have the opportunity to visit the Shrine of Divine Mercy, which contains images of the Merciful Jesus, relics of St. Faustina, as well as the Saint's convent chapel and her Tomb. Visit and celebrate Mass at the Shrine of Divinity, which was visited by Saint John Paul II in 2002. Following Mass, you will have the opportunity to pray by a relic of Saint John Paul II. Continue to Wieliczka and visit Europe's oldest salt mine, which UNESCO has listed as a World Heritage Site. Return to Krakow for your farewell dinner and overnight stay in Poland.

#### **Day 17: Krakow - Prague**

After breakfast, depart for our scenic motor coach ride (or short flight) to the enchanting city of Prague, a city of domed rooftops, soaring steeples, and countless spires. Dinner and an overnight in Prague.

#### **Day 18: Prague**

After breakfast, make your way to the Church of Our Lady Victorious, home of the famous Child Jesus statue called the Infant Jesus of Prague. The statue, a 16th-century depiction of infant Jesus holding a globus cruciger (an orb and cross), was donated to the Carmelite friars in 1628. Following Mass, enjoy a walking tour of Old Town Prague. Walk along the Royal Route to the Old Town Square. In beautiful Prague's Castle district, visit St. Nicholas Church, St. Vitus Cathedral, St. George Basilica, Loreto Church, and Strahov Monastery. Continue along Karlova Street to Charles Bridge, crossing the Vltava River adorned with many baroque statues. Enjoy the breathtaking view of the magical Prague Castle. View the Astronomical Clock of Prague and walk on Wenceslas Square, one of the main city squares. The square is named after Saint Wenceslas, the patron saint of Bohemia. It is part of the historic center of Prague, a World Heritage Site.

Return to the hotel for dinner and a restful overnight.

#### **Day 19: Prague - Altotting - Salzburg**

Following breakfast, we will depart Prague for Altotting, one of Germany's most celebrated shrines and a city whose purpose is pilgrimage. Upon arrival, celebrate Mass at the center of the pilgrimage complex, the Chapel of Mercy. The chapel houses a 13th-century statue of the Blessed Virgin, to which numerous miraculous cures are credited. At the Shrines, you will have the opportunity to visit the Basilica, the Panorama of the Crucifixion, and St. Konrad's Monastery. We will continue to Salzburg, the lovely birthplace of the famed composer Mozart. Salzburg, also known as "Alt Stadt," is known for its beautiful baroque architecture and its amazing views of the Eastern Alps. You will enjoy some free time before dinner and an overnight in Salzburg.

#### **Day 20: Salzburg**

After breakfast, your full-day tour begins with Mass at St. Peter's Abbey. Following Mass, explore the historic center of Salzburg on foot. Its narrow streets and secluded passageways are evidence of its medieval roots. The heritage of the Catholic Church is evident in the Archbishop's Residence at Domplatz. Visit Mirabell Palace with its beautiful gardens. Mirabell Palace is one of the most prominent shooting locations in the famous Hollywood musical "The Sound of Music." Maria and the children dance around the Pegasus Fountain before the palace, singing "Do Re Mi." Experience the unique views across Mirabell Gardens towards the Hohen Salzburg Castle. You will have a chance to visit the mighty Romanesque Cathedral and the Nonnberg Convent of Benedictine nuns. In the Getreidegasse, view Mozart's birthplace, now one of the most visited museums in Austria. Stop at Hellbrunn Palace to enjoy its gardens and hidden trick fountains. Enjoy a delicious dinner before retiring for the evening.

#### **Day 21: Salzburg – Mariazell – Melk - Vienna**

After breakfast, board the motor coach and travel east through the mountain of Austria to Mariazell, the most important pilgrimage place in Austria. Visit the Mariazell Basilica, also known as Basilica Mariä Geburt (Basilica of the Birth of the Virgin Mary). Mariazell Basilica is a Marian basilica that holds the miraculous statue in the Lady Chapel or Chapel of Miracles, built directly over where Magnus established his monastic cell in 1157. Continue to Melk, best known as the site of a massive baroque Benedictine monastery named Melk Abbey. Overlooking the Danube River, the Abbey holds the tomb of Saint Coloman of Stockerau and the remains of several members of the House of Babenberg, Austria's first ruling dynasty. Enjoy free time in the lovely town of Melk before continuing to Vienna, Austria's capital, for dinner and a restful overnight.

#### **Day 22: Vienna**

After breakfast, enjoy a sightseeing tour of Vienna, home of Johann Strauss and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Visit the spectacular St. Stephen's Cathedral, the symbol of Vienna. Construction commenced in the 12th century. Today, it is one of the most important Gothic structures in Austria. At St. Stephen's, see the miraculous image of Our Lady of Mariapoch and tour the Cathedral and its catacombs. Those brave enough may climb the 343 steps to the top of the Cathedral spire. Continue with a visit to the Schonbrunn Royal Palace, a summer residence with 1,441 rooms, including a Hall of Mirrors where Mozart performed at the age of six before a young Marie Antoinette Louis. Schonbrunn Palace was put on the list of UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Sites in December 1996. Continue your journey in Vienna and view the Belvedere Palace, which is well-known for its beautiful gardens. Back in the city center, go to Karlsplatz with its Church of St. Charles Borromeo and Otto Wagner's Stadtbahn pavilions. Somewhere along the way, have a little coffee break to enjoy the famous Vienna pastries such as Sacher cake. Your day will end with dinner and an

overnight in Vienna.

**Day 23: Vienna - Pannonhalma Abbey - Budapest**

After breakfast, we depart Vienna. En route to Budapest, we will make a stop at the Pannonhalma Abbey, which is rich in religious and historical importance and sits atop St. Martin Hill. In 1996, Pope John Paul II made a pilgrimage to the mountaintop to join the monks in celebrating the 1000th anniversary of the monastery's founding. Next, we visit Our Lady of Remete, the site of a miraculous image of the Virgin Mary. It was here that in 1991, Pope John Paul II kneeled and prayed before the image. We also take time to stroll through the outdoor Marian sanctuary located on the grounds. We continue on to Budapest; this glamorous city has something to offer every visitor. Overlooking the Danube River in the heart of Buda's Castle District, the neighboring sites of Matthias Church and Fisherman's Bastion are two of Budapest's most iconic historic buildings. Enjoy some time at leisure discovering the breathtaking architecture and mesmerizing views of the city. Your day will end with dinner and a restful overnight.

**Day 24: Budapest**

This morning, we will celebrate Mass at the 13th-century Cathedral of St. Matthew. Next, visit the old city of Budapest. You will see the Citadel on Mount Gellert, the Royal Castle, the Parliament, Heroes Square, the Church of St. Stephen, and Fisherman's Bastion, which were constructed between 1895 and 1902. The seven towers of the bastion represent the seven Magyar tribes that initially settled in the Carpathian Basin in 895. The towers offer sweeping vistas over the city and the Danube and are a popular choice for panoramic photos overlooking the Danube. Budapest is opportunely located on a fault line that happens to be fed by over 120 natural hot springs, prompting the city to open an impressive assortment of thermal baths. Return to hotel. We will enjoy a farewell dinner and a last overnight stay in Europe.

**Day 25: Budapest - USA**

Depart from Budapest Airport for your return flights to the USA.

**\*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.