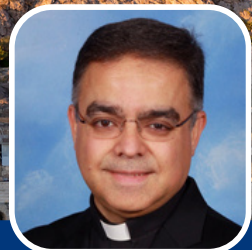


In the Footsteps of St. Paul: Pilgrimage to Greece & Greek Isle Cruise



Athens, Greece



Spiritual Director:
Fr. George Sears

Spiritual Director:
Fr. James Cruz

April 29 – May 09, 2025

Your Pilgrimage Includes:

- Round-trip Airfare
- Airport Taxes and Fuel Surcharges
- 9 Nights Accommodation at Centrally Located First Class Hotels:
 - 2 nights: Apr 30 – May 02: Athens Marriott, Athens
 - 3 nights: May 02 – May 05: Celestyal Discovery Cruise (outside cabins with picture window)
 - 1 night: May 05 – May 06: Hotel Amalia Delphi, Delphi
 - 1 night: May 06 – May 07: Hotel Grand Meteora, Meteora
 - 2 nights: May 07 – May 09: The Met Hotel, Thessaloniki
- 3 nights Optional Post Tour to Turkey:
 - 3 nights: May 09 – May 12: Hotel Barcelo, Istanbul
- Breakfast and Dinner Daily
- Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner while on Cruise
- Wine and Mineral Water with Dinners
- Wine/beer/soft drinks with Lunches and dinners on board 3 day cruise
- Transfers as per Itinerary
- Transportation by Air-conditioned Motor Coach
- Whisper Headsets Where Needed
- Assistance of a Professional Local Catholic Guide
- Sightseeing and Admissions Fees as per Itinerary
- Mass Daily & Spiritual Activities
- Luggage Handling (1 piece per person)
- Port Taxes & Fees
- All Tips Included while on Cruise
- Shore Excursions while on Ship Include:
 - Mykonos (Walking tour), Kusadasi (Ephesus & the house of the Virgin Mary), Patmos (Monastery of St. John & Grotto of Apocalypse), Crete (Palace of Knossos), Santorini (Thira by cable car, walking tour, Mass at Santorini Cathedral)
- Bosphorus Cruise with Dinner and Turkish Show during Optional Post Tour
- Flight Bag & PDF Digital Confirmation of All Travel Documents

\$5,399 per person from New York (JFK)

**All Pricing Based on Double Occupancy.
Pricing available from any airport:
www.206tours.com/airports*

Optional Post Tour to Turkey: May 09 – 12, 2025 \$1,799 per person



Santorini, Greece

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Sample Daily Itinerary

Day 1, Tue, Apr 29: Depart for Greece

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

Day 2, Wed, Apr 30: Arrive in Athens

Welcome to Athens, one of the most glorious cities in the world and the cradle of western civilization as we know it today. Upon landing at Athens Airport, make your way to the baggage claim area and collect your luggage. Proceed to the arrival hall, where you will be greeted by your tour guide and/or driver. Board the bus to transfer to your hotel. Enjoy some time to relax after check-in. After a delicious meal, overnight in Athens.

Day 3, Thu, May 01: Athens – Excursion to Corinth

After breakfast at the hotel, start with a tour of the oldest city in the world, Athens! Visit the rock that has dominated the panorama of Athens for twenty-five centuries, the Acropolis. At the Acropolis, you will see the ruins of the Parthenon, Erechtheum, and Propylaea. After, you will ascend Mars Hill of where Saint Paul spoke to the Athenians about the one and only God (Acts 17:22). While in this city, view the ancient Agora, the former public center of Athenian life. It held the focus of a political, commercial, social, religious, and cultural center. As you are in the former political center, proceed with a drive through the city to view the House of Parliament on Syntagma Square. Also, have the opportunity to view the University of Athens, the oldest higher education institute in Greece and, the National Library of Greece that holds 4,500 Greek manuscripts. Visit Panathenaic Stadium, the beautifully marbled multi-purpose stadium. It is home to the Olympian Zeus and the site of the first modern-era Olympics (1896). You will proceed to ancient Corinth where Saint Paul lived for two years. Saint Paul felt great grief over what the Gentile Church in Corinth has become. As a result, he wrote four letters, all with the overarching theme of love. In Corinth, have the opportunity to view the remains of the first century shops, the site of the Saint Pauls trial by Gallio, the Fountain of Peirene, and the Temple of Apollo. Return to Athens for a delicious meal and overnight.

Day 4, Fri, May 02: Athens – Start 3-day Cruise (Celestyal Cruises) to Mykonos

Following breakfast, proceed to the Piraeus port, where you will board your 3-day cruise. Your first stop will be the Island of Mykonos, the most cosmopolitan of the Greek islands that attract visitors from all over the world. After docking, transfer to Hora, the capital of the island. Enjoy a walking tour that will take you on the narrow cobbled streets of the city. Pass by chic boutiques, elegant nightclubs, and white-washed houses to arrive in Alefkandra. This part of Mykonos, known as the "Venice of Mykonos", as homes have wooden balconies and are built on the sea. Historically, these homes were of the wealthy merchants and captains. Return to the cruise ship for dinner and overnight.

Day 5, Sat, May 03: Kusadasi – Ephesus (Mary's House) – Patmos

Enjoy breakfast on board in the lively Turkish port of Kusadasi. Transfer to the small village of Mt. Kossos. Visit the stone chapel situated upon the site, where the Virgin Mary spent her last days following the crucifixion of Christ. Following this visit, walk through the Magnesian Gate to the ancient Ephesus. Enjoy a walking tour that will take you through the most magnificent excavations in the world. Some of the sites include the Odeon (concert hall), the Fountain of Trajan, the Scholastica, the Temple of Hadrian and the Latrines, the Library of Celsus. The last stop on the walking tour is the Great Theatre. The largest ancient theatre with a capacity of 25,000 people and is a site where Saint Paul preached. Follow the exact route that Mark Anthony and Cleopatra once rode in procession via the Arcadian Way. This main street runs from the Great Theatre to the city harbor. On your transfer back to Kusadasi, have the opportunity to view the Basilica of Saint John. In the sixth century, Emperor Justinian erected this structure over the grave of the evangelist, John. Upon arrival in Kusadasi, enjoy free time to explore on your own before returning to the ship. Continue to Patmos, where you will transfer to the village of Chora. While in this capital, visit the monastery of Saint John the Theologian, built nine-hundred years ago. View the beautiful courtyard, dining room, and bakery. Visit the small museum, where you will view priceless ecclesiastical treasures such as books, manuscripts, mosaics, icons, textiles, vestments, and jewelry. Board the bus and transfer to the monastery. Visit the Grotto of the Apocalypse believed to mark the spot where John of Patmos received his visions that he recorded in the Book of Revelation. The silver niches in the wall mark the pillow and ledge were used as a desk by the author. View the three-fold crack made by the voice of God, who emphasized the importance of honoring the Holy Trinity. Your day will culminate with a transfer to the port of Scala. Enjoy free time before returning to the ship.

Day 6, Sun, May 04: Heraklion – Santorini

This morning awaken and transfer to the largest city on the island of Crete, Heraklion. While in this administrative capital, visit the in 1899 discovered ancient ruins of the Palace of Knossos. The palace is currently partially reconstructed and believed to have been the mythical Labyrinth of King Minos and the seat of ancient Minoan culture. Here is where Saint Paul met the owner/and captain of the ship and was warned by him of continuing his journey to spread Christianity in Rome. Following this historical visit, embark by ship to the idyllic island of Santorini. Santorini is definitely the most breathtaking island of all of the Greek Islands. Visit Thira with its iconic white-washed houses, narrow streets, open-air cafes, and boutiques that cling to cliffs. This evening enjoy your last dinner and overnight on the cruise ship.

Day 7, Mon, May 05: Athens Port – Delphi

This morning, leave Athens and proceed to Delphi also known as the center of the ancient world (navel) of the earth. Its prestige extended far beyond the boundaries of the Hellenic world. On the slopes of Mount Parnassus in a landscape of unparalleled beauty and majesty, lie the ruins of the Sanctuary of Apollo Pythios. Visit the site and museum. Continue to Delphi for dinner and overnight.

Day 8, Tue, May 06: Delphi – Meteora

After breakfast, board the motorcoach for a short drive to the Meteora Monasteries. In the eleventh century, some monks settled within caves. As the Turkish occupation increased, the monks were forced to move their settlements higher upon the rocks until they were unreachable by any opposing enemy. These settlements became Monasteries by bringing building and lifting materials by ladders and baskets. Notorious for preserving the Hellenic religion as well as their academics and arts. View stunning Byzantine art, as well as the breathtaking scenery that surrounds the monastery. Dinner and overnight in Kalambaka.

Day 9, Wed, May 07: Kalambaka – Thessaloniki City Tour

Start your day with breakfast at the hotel and then transfer to Thessaloniki. In the winter of 49–50 A.D., Saint Paul wrote two epistles to the Thessalonians. While in Thessaloniki, you will witness several ancient artifacts, such as the triumphal Arch of Galerius found at the start of Via Egnatia. Due to the convenient location, this arch was once a strategic artery of the Roman Empire and constructed to honor the Roman Emperor Galerius following the Roman victory over the Persians. Check into the hotel and enjoy some free time before group gathers for wonderful dinner. Relaxing overnight in Thessaloniki.

Day 10, Thu, May 08: Thessaloniki – Philippi – Kavala – Thessaloniki

After breakfast, start your day with visit to Philippi. Philippi was the city where Saint Paul the Apostle delivered his first sermon and, he established the 1st church in Europe. "And from there (He went) to Philippi, which is the leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman Colony. We remained in this city some days". (Acts 16:12–18). It is also the site where Saint Paul baptized a woman named Lydia, the first convert to Christianity in Europe. Visit the Roman Forum, where Saint Paul cast a spirit out of a fortune-telling woman. View the prison (now in ruins) where Saint Paul and Silas were thrown into by the owners of the fortune-tellers. Continue to the modern port city of Kavala, which was once the ancient Neapolis. This port is where Saint Paul, Silas, Luke, and Timothy landed when they sailed into Europe. After enjoying this city by the sea, return to Thessaloniki for a delicious meal and restful overnight.

Day 11, Fri, May 09: Thessaloniki Airport – USA

Following breakfast, transfer to Thessaloniki airport for your return flight(s) home

Or for pilgrims taking Post Tour to Turkey:

Day 11, Fri, May 09: Thessaloniki Airport – Istanbul

Fly to Istanbul which once was the capital to two major Empires. Drive over Galata Bridge to the old town which was once known as Constantinople, continue to the Hippodrome, the center of activities during the Byzantine era and Ottoman Empire time for four hundred years. See the Constantine Obelisk, the Serpentine Column which was a memorial, was brought from Greece and Egyptian Obelisk which was once located at the Karnak Temple in Luxor. Enter to the Blue Mosque (The Mosque of Sultan Ahmet I), world-renowned for the thousands of blue glazed tiles covering the walls. See the grandeur of a 17th Century old masterpiece. Walk to St. Sophia which was a mighty church at the center of Byzantine Constantinople. The building dates to 535 AD and was built by Emperor Justinian. It was converted to a Mosque in 1452. Today it is a museum. See the largest cupola and fine Byzantine mosaics of the Church. Visit The Basilica of St Anthony of Padua the most prestigious Catholic Church in Istanbul. The church was rebuilt by the architect, Giulio Mongeri and completed in 1912, and stands as a fine example of the Italian neo-Gothic and Tuscan-Lombard styles. Celebrate Mass and continue the day with a tour of Basilica Cistern, the largest of several hundred ancient cisterns beneath the city that provided a water filtration system for the buildings nearby. Today it's popular tourist attraction. Dinner and overnight at your Hotel.

Day 12, Sat, May 10: Istanbul

Morning drive thru Golden Horn and visit Church of Chora. The first Church of the Holy Saviour in Chora (as it was originally known) was built during the reign of Justinian (527–565) on the site of a former chapel that was located just outside the first city walls (but within the Theodosian Walls that still exist today) that surrounded the capital of the Byzantine Empire, Constantinople. The word chora is the ancient Greek word for countryside – a reference to the fact that the original chapel was outside the city walls, in what would have been fields. The mosaics of the former Chora Church tell biblical stories, which can be followed like a graphic novel. On the North wall of the inner narthex there are 17 images depicting the life of the Virgin Mary, including her birth, first steps, and marriage. Next, visit Balat old Jewish neighborhood. Visit Cathedral of Holy Spirit ;the Cathedral, built in Roman style in 1845–46, has been the See for ten years, from 1934 to 1944, of the Apostolic Delegate Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli, who later became Pope with the name of John XXIII. and in 2016 has been canonized. This cathedral is the main spiritual center for the Latin Catholics of the Vicariate of Istanbul, who is the Pastor (Apostolic Vicar – Bishop) of the Latin Community. The Holy Spirit Cathedral gave a warm welcome to four popes, whose names are written on the commemorative plaques on the church walls. Celebrate Mass. In the evening cruise Bosphorus between 2 continents, Europe and Asia. Dinner with Turkish show during the cruise. Overnight at Hotel.

Day 13, Sun, May 11: Istanbul

Start our day at Topkapi Palace, a huge walled complex hugging the Bosphorus. Built in 1468 by Mehmet the Conqueror, the imperial residence of Ottoman sultans is now a museum that houses the artifacts dating back six centuries. The extraordinary collection includes the imperial treasury, weapons, calligraphy, Chinese porcelain, art, artifacts and jewels. Arrive and visit famous Spice Market (Egyptian Bazaar) It is one of the oldest bazaars in the city dated 17th century. Spice market took its name from the fact that goods from the Far East and India arrived here from Egypt on the so-called Misir Kervani (Egyptian Caravan) Finally, you will be taken to the Grand Covered Bazaar, a bargain-hunters paradise with its tantalizing maze of nearly 4000. The narrow alleys are filled with shops offering jewelry, carpets, leatherware, copper goods, spices, herbs and more. This promises to be one of the most rewarding shopping experiences. Farewell dinner and restful overnight.

Day 14, Mon, May 12: Istanbul – USA

Following breakfast at your Hotel transfer to the Airport for your return flights home.

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