

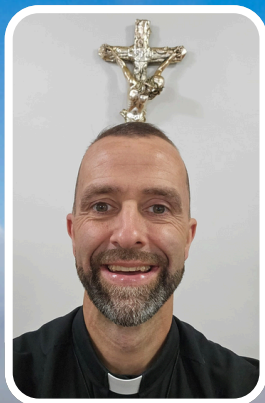
ITALY

In the Footsteps of St. Francis: *A Walking Pilgrimage*

October 23 – November 1, 2025

\$6,290 per person
from New York (JFK)

*All prices based on double occupancy.
Pricing available from any airport: www.206tours.com/airports*



Franciscan Spiritual Director:

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Your Pilgrimage Includes:

- Round-trip airfare
- Airport taxes and fuel surcharges
- 8 nights accommodation at centrally located first class hotels as follows: (or similar)
 - 1 nights: Oct 24 – 25: Hotel Orazio Palace, Rome
 - 2 nights: Oct 25 – 27: La Foresteria, La Verna
 - 2 nights: Oct 27 – 29: Hotel Tiferno, Citta di Castello
 - 1 nights: Oct 29 – 30: Hotel Gattapone, Gubbio
 - 2 nights: Oct 30 – Nov 1: Hotel Dal Moro Gallery, Assisi

- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner daily
- Wine and Mineral Water with Dinners
- Transfers as per itinerary
- Transportation by air-conditioned motor coach
- Whisper Headsets where needed
- Assistance of a professional local Catholic Guide(s)
- Sightseeing and admissions fees as per itinerary
- Mass daily & Spiritual activities
- Luggage handling (1 piece per person)
- Flight Bag & Digital documents

Sample Daily Itinerary

Day 1: Thu, Oct 23 - Depart for Rome

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

Day 2: Fri, Oct 24 - Rome

Upon your arrival in Rome, you will be greeted by your tour guide and/or driver. They will escort you to the bus and your group will be transferred to your hotel for check-in. 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. Celebrate Mass and then return to your Hotel for dinner and an overnight stay. *A visit to Basilica of St. John the Lateran is pending the time and availability.

Day 3: Sat, Oct 25 - Rome - La Verna

Today we begin our Franciscan pilgrimage. After breakfast this morning we will drive to La Verna (approximately four hours). Following check-in, we will soak in the sacred grounds of La Verna Sanctuary. St. Francis of Assisi visited this site six times in his life, the last time being in 1224. In 1224 St. Francis visited La Verna to pray and fast for 40 days, and it was during this time that he received the stigmata. The rock he was sitting on when he received the holy marks of Christ's wounds can still be seen and venerated. At La Verna, we will pray in the Chapel of the Stigmata, the Basilica, and the Chapel of St. Mary of the Angels. We will also get the chance to admire the beautiful artwork of Andrea della Robbia. Following this visit, we will enjoy dinner and a restful night's sleep in La Verna.

Day 4: Sun, Oct 26 - La Verna - Pieve Santo Stefano

(Walking Day 9.4 mile / 15 km)

Today our walking pilgrimage to Assisi officially begins! Following breakfast we will venture through the mountains of Tuscany. With the guidance of Our Lord, and through the spirit of St. Francis, you will become an authentic pilgrim. You will be taken on a deep spiritual journey as you walk along the physical one. Your first official day of walking will culminate in Pieve Santo Stefano. Historically, Pieve is mentioned as early as 723. We have documentation that a gentleman of Citta di Castello donated a monastery to the Benedictine monks. In 1589, a supernatural event brought Pieve into the limelight. Hordes of angels bearing burning torches were seen at nighttime, heading in procession toward a sacred image painted on the wall along the road to Sansepolcro. There you can still find the Sanctuary of the Madonna dei Lumi (Virgin of the Lights). In the parish church, dating back to 1200, you can admire a beautiful glazed terracotta altar frontal by Andrea della Robbia. End with dinner and an overnight stay in La Verna or Sansepolcro.

Day 5: Monday – October 27 - Pieve Santo Stefano - Sansepolcro

(Walking Day, 11.2 mile / 18 km)

This morning we will journey from Pieve Santo Stefano, alongside the river Tiber (the same that flows through Rome!), to Sansepolcro. This town owes its name and its foundation to two pilgrims. Arcano and Egidio – a Greek and a Spaniard – returned from a trip to Jerusalem with some precious relics. They stopped at a locality in the Tiber Valley and spent the night near a spring in the walnut-tree woods. During the night, Arcano had a vision. God called him to stay and found a town in honor of the Holy Sepulcher of Christ. Around the year 1000, a church was built on the site of the first chapel. While dedicated to St. John the Apostle, the church has always been known as "Santo Sepolcro": the Holy Sepulcher. Conserved inside the Cathedral of Sansepolcro is a valuable representation of Christ on the Cross in priestly and royal attire. Named "Volto Santo" (Holy Face), the crucifix is a 12th-century copy of the original, which represents one of the first artistic portrayals of Christ on the cross. This image has always been venerated as an acheiropoieta (a sacred image not made by human hands!). Enjoy dinner and stay overnight in either Sansepolcro or Citta di Castello.

Day 6: Tuesday – October 28 - Sansepolcro – Citerna – Citta di Castello

(Walking Day, 12.4 mile / 20 km)

Today we will walk the winding roads through the lowland crossing the Tiber Valley – today, we enter Umbria! The pilgrimage will lead us through the fields of the valley up to the gates of Citerna. Citerna is a small medieval town founded by the Etruscans. The fortress and medieval walls that surround the town will transport you to another age, along with the covered communication trench that stretches along them. According to tradition, when St. Francis stayed here he blessed the hill, calling it "the sacred mountain." The Church of St. Francis and that of St. Michael the Archangel, which conserves a beautiful panel by Pomarancio, are well worth a visit. We will enjoy dinner and an overnight stay in Citta di Castello.

Day 7: Wed, Oct 29 - Citta di Castello – Pietralunga – Gubbio

(Walking Day, 17.4 mile / 28 km)

You have now reached the second half of your walking pilgrimage! Walking out of Citta di Castello, we will be able to see one of the most famous former tobacco curing plants in all of Italy. During the 1950s this area became very important for Italian tobacco production. Today we will be leaving the Tiber valley. Umbria is at its best here! We will reach the small town of Pietralunga, founded by local Umbri populations. Numerous traces of villas and aqueducts remain from the Roman period. Pietralunga retains the appearance of a medieval town, encircled by walls and clustered around a Lombard fortress from the 8th century. The growth in Christianity here is associated with the figure of St. Crescentinus, to whom tradition attributes the killing of a dragon. The remains of St. Crescentinus are now buried in Urbino Cathedral. The mighty remains of the Lombard fortress can be admired in the piazza. Dinner and an overnight stay in Gubbio.

Day 8: Thursday – October 30 - Gubbio – Valfabbrica – Assisi

(Walking Day, 8 mile / 13 km)

Today concludes the walking portion of your journey! We will stop in Valfabbrica, known for the Benedictine monastery of Santa Maria in Vado Fabrice. The ancient abbey, documented from the year 820, stands near the River Chiascio. In the Middle Ages, the alliance with Assisi brought great prosperity to the abbey and the castle. In the early 13th century, clashes with the Perugian feudal lords led to Perugia's destruction of the town. From Valfabbrica, we will climb through adense thicket and reach the crest of a hill. From this hill you will clearly see Mount Subasio above Assisi. As we draw closer to Assisi, you'll be able to make out the bell tower of the upper basilica (to the right of Mount Subasio). After a last steep slope, we will finally enter Assisi through the St. James gate. This is the gate through which pilgrims going to Santiago de Compostela will walk. Descending along a narrow alley we will reach the square in front of the upper basilica of St. Francis. There, beneath the two great churches, lies St. Francis – the companion of our pilgrimage. We will have dinner and a restful night's sleep in Assisi.

Day 9: Friday – October – 31 - Assisi

This morning your group will enjoy breakfast followed by a full day of touring the hometown of St. Francis! St. Francis is the patron saint of animals and the environment. He is also responsible for founding the Franciscan Order, and he is the inspiration for our Holy Father, Pope Francis. Our pope chose his name in admiration of the saint of nature and servant to the poor. Known for being a humble man himself, Pope Francis has long denied the luxuries of life. He prefers to live simply: giving up worldly possessions, just as St. Francis did. As your group visits the birthplace of St. Francis, you will be captivated by the unchanged 13th-century atmosphere in which St. Francis began his ministry. We will stroll into the magnificent basilica erected in his honor to gaze upon a series of frescoes depicting his life. Inside the church, we will have a chance to venerate a few of the saint's possessions as well. Our visit to the Basilica of St. Francis will culminate in honoring his body. His tomb is on display in a small and silent crypt beneath the lower basilica. The ambiance of prayer and reverence is overwhelming in this sacred space. As our day continues, we will visit St. Mary of the Angels Basilica. This basilica is where St. Francis spent most of his life. Inside, we will visit both the Porziuncola and the Capella del Transito. The Porziuncola is where St. Francis founded his order of the Friar Minor (Franciscans), and the Capella del Transito is the place of St. Francis' death. During this visit we will have the opportunity to visit where St. Francis and other friars lived, marked by a beautiful rose garden, as well as the cave where the saint retired to pray. The last stop on our tour today will be to honor 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. We will visit the church erected in her honor. Head back to the hotel, where you will have some additional free time to explore the area, shop, or pray. We will then gather back together for a farewell dinner at the hotel and our final overnight stay in Assisi.

Day 10: Sat, Nov 1 - Return Home

After an early breakfast and heartfelt farewells, your group will leave by motor coach and be transferred to the Rome Fiumicino 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.*