



A PILGRIMAGE TO GREECE

With Fr. John Hoang & Fr. Manny Rodriguez **Departure from San Francisco, CA** **May 8th - 18th, 2023**

MAY 8: Depart for Greece - Make your way to your local airport, where you will board your overnight flight. Onboard, meals will be served to you.

MAY 9: Arrive in Athens - Greece - Upon landing at Athens Airport; 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. Dinner at the hotel and overnight in Athens.

MAY 10: Athens - 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. 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. 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. See 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). Free afternoon. Dinner at the hotel and overnight in Athens.

MAY 11: Athens, Corinth - Today you will proceed to ancient Corinth. Under the shadow of the towering Acropolis, Saint Paul lived in Corinth for two years. 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. Dinner at the hotel and overnight in Athens.

MAY 12: 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". Historically, these homes were of the wealthy merchants and captains. Return to the cruise ship for dinner and overnight.

MAY 13: Kusadasi - Ephesus (Mary's House) - Patmos - Enjoy breakfast on board in the lively Turkish port of Kusadasi. We then transfer to the small village of Mt. Koressos. Visit the stone chapel situated upon the site. 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. On your transfer back to Kusadasi, have the opportunity to view the Basilica of Saint John. The cruise journey continues to Patmos, where you will transfer to the village of Chora. While in this capital, visit the monastery of Saint John the Theologian. In addition to the stunning main church that contains outstanding frescoes, you will have the



opportunity to view the beautiful courtyard, dining room, and bakery. Visit the small museum, where you will view priceless ecclesiastical treasures. Your day will culminate with a transfer to the port of Scala. While in this quaint and picturesque harbor, enjoy free time before returning to the ship.

MAY 14: Heraklion - Santorini - Visit the in 1899 discovered ancient ruins of the Palace of Knossos. 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. Upon arrival, visit Thira with its iconic, white-washed houses, narrow streets, open-air cafes, and glittering boutiques that cling to cliffs. Then enjoy your last dinner and overnight on the cruise ship.

MAY 15: Delphi - Kalambaka - After breakfast, you disembark the cruise ship and you visit the center of the ancient world (navel) of the earth, Delphi. Visit Mount Parnassus site and the museum and continue to the breathtaking rocks of Meteora. Dinner and overnight at your hotel in Kalambaka.

MAY 16: Meteora-Veria, Vergina, Thessaloniki - After breakfast, board the motorcoach for a short drive to the Meteora Monasteries. During your visit, you will be able to view stunning Byzantine art, as well as the breathtaking scenery that surrounds the monastery. Traveling northward into Macedonia we visit King Phillip's (Alexander's father) tomb in Vergina, one of the most outstanding finds in all of Greece. A stop will be made in Berea to view the ancient synagogue. En route to the hotel we will view the old city ramparts; the newly excavated Forum, St. George Church, an ancient Roman monument which was transformed into a church and the Galerius Arch which rises over the famous Via Egnatia. We spend two nights in Thessaloniki.

MAY 17: Philippi - Kavala - Thessaloniki - After breakfast, start your journey with the first stop of the day in Philippi. Philippi was the city where Saint Paul the Apostle delivered his first sermon and, he established the 1st church 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. After enjoying this city by the sea, return to Thessaloniki for your dinner at the hotel and restful overnight.

MAY 18: Return Home - Today you will say your heartfelt farewells to a journey that will last in your memory forever. Transfer to the Thessaloniki airport for your return flight home.



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