

MASS WILL BE CELEBRATED DAILY

Day 1: Sunday, April 4, 2021, USA / ROME

Tour members are welcomed at the Louisville International Airport for our overnight flight to Rome via wide body aircraft, arriving the next morning. Meals served on board.

Day 2: Monday 4/5 ROME / ASSISI

Upon our arrival in Rome, we are met at the airport by our driver and full-time tour escort. We board our motor coach and travel north to the peaceful town of Assisi. We visit **San Damiano** and then check in at our hotel for a welcome dinner and overnight. [D]

Day 3: Tuesday 4/6 ASSISI

We spend today exploring Assisi, where we visit one of Christianity's most revered shrines, the **Basilica of St. Francis**, and see the frescoes depicting events in the life of this famous saint. We also visit the **Basilica of St. Clare**, which houses her incorrupt body in a crystal casket in the crypt. Off the main nave of the Basilica is the crucifix from which Christ spoke to St. Francis in San Damiano. St. Francis heard a voice say, "Go Francis, repair my church, which is in ruin." Thinking that God was telling him to rebuild San Damiano, Francis renounced worldly goods and began immediately to repair the building. Only later did the saint realize that God had been speaking of His living Church. **The remainder of today is free to explore on our own.** Suggestions include:

- Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, the "underground" ruins of Assisi
- the fortress of Roco Maggiori, the Cathedral (Duomo) and its museum
- Carceri (St Francis' retreat - an arduous hike up a steep hill - taxis available).
- browse through the shops for souvenirs to take back home.

We return to the hotel for dinner and overnight in Assisi. [B,D]

Day 4: Wednesday 4/7 ASSISI / ORVIETO / ROME

After breakfast, we depart Assisi and proceed to the lower plains to visit the **Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels** which was built in 1569 to protect the Portiuncula, the church that St. Francis and his brothers were given after Pope Innocent III approved their rule. We also



see the statue of St. Francis with live white doves, the thorn-less rose bushes and the cave where St. Francis prayed in solitude. From there, we head to **Orvieto**. In 1263 a pious German priest, Peter of Prague, stopped in Bolsena to celebrate Mass on his pilgrimage route to Rome. While a devout practicing-Catholic servant, Peter couldn't erase the skepticism he felt about Christ being present in the consecrated Host. As he uttered the words of Consecration at the altar above St. Christina's tomb, blood began seeping from the consecrated Host. Blood dribbled across his hands onto the altar and corporal leaving Fr. Peter quite stunned and confused. He interrupted Mass requesting to be taken immediately to the tiny neighboring city of Orvieto (just 10 miles away), where the Holy Father, Pope Urban IV, was residing. An investigation was launched and orders were given to retrieve and transport the Host and blood-stained linen to the Orvieto Cathedral where they were, and still are today, reverently enshrined and exhibited. It was this miracle that prompted Pope Urban IV to commission St. Thomas Aquinas to write a special Mass for what was to become our annual Feast of Corpus Christi. We visit the **Cathedral of Orvieto** (location of the shrine) where the **Eucharistic Miracle** is exhibited. Our journey continues as we proceed to Rome, where we make a **photo stop**



at the Colosseum, a well-known historical site and then at the beautiful **basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls**, which houses the remains of St. Paul under the main altar. We follow the old Appian Way to the **Catacombs**. Today's journey concludes as we proceed to our hotel to check in for dinner and overnight. [B,D]

Day 5: Thursday 4/8 ROME

Good morning, Roma! We begin today with a **guided tour of St. Peter's Basilica**. The Basilica is very impressive with its imposing architecture, rich ornamentation, and marvelous works of art. We view one of Rome's most recognized works of art, Michelangelo's Pietà. From there, we visit the **Vatican Museum and the Sistine Chapel** (where Michelangelo's restored masterpieces adorn the ceilings and walls). This afternoon, we enjoy an **optional walking tour of the Spanish Steps, Piazza Navona, Trevi Fountain, and the Pantheon**. We return to our hotel for dinner and overnight. [B,D]



Day 6: Friday 4/9 ROME

The cathedral church of the pope, **St. John Lateran** is our first stop today. Here we see the Altar that holds the relics of Sts. Peter and Paul. Next to the Basilica is the Baptistery and across the street we see **la Scala Santa** ("the Holy Stairs") from Pilate's Palace. Each step is prayed on your knees or the option to take the side stairs on foot is also available. Then, we visit the **Basilica of St. Mary Major**. Inside the Basilica we view relics of Jesus' manger from Bethlehem. **The remainder of the day is free to explore on your own.** Suggestions include:



Churches (a couple of the endless options):

- Sacred Heart Church and Museum of the Souls of Purgatory~Located in a small room beside the Church is a museum exhibiting objects and photos that display traces of apparitions made by various souls residing in Purgatory.
- Church of St. Alphonsus (near St. Mary Major)~ was built and named in honor of the founder of the Redemptorist Congregation, St. Alphonsus Liguori, but was dedicated to the Most Redeemer. The church contains the original Picture of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Visit there to venerate this Holy icon.



Museum / Art / History / Other:

- Tour the Colosseum and/or Roman Forum. Or, check out Villa Borghese (an incredible collection of paintings, statues and other pieces that became known as one of the finest in Europe).
- As we exit the basilica, we are in front of the Vatican Post Office. Feel free to stop in and purchase postcards and stamps to send to family and friends (bring the addresses). Send one to yourself as a keepsake! Remember, although Vatican City is located with the city limits of Rome it is, in fact, its own state. With 110 acres and fewer than 900 residents, Vatican City State boasts the title of the smallest, international state that is recognized by the rest of the world. Therefore, the stamps will be quite unique.
- The 312-step climb to the "cupola" Dome of St. Peter's Basilica is worth the effort and energy as views from the top are magnificent. An elevator/lift to the roof level is available but the roof to the top is step by step.
- Take a Scavi tour (subject to the spiritual director's confirmation for the group or individuals / your

tour escort or Spiritual Director will have to have requested confirmation (upon your arrival in Rome) from those interested in participating). This includes touring the excavations and labyrinth of tunnels beneath St. Peter's Basilica. St. Peter is buried there. Again, it is optional and any expense will be the responsibility of those who opt to participate.

This evening, sample the Eternal City's authentic culinary treasures or feast on some pizza margherita at the restaurant or trattoria (local diner) of your choice as **dinner is on your own**. Overnight in Rome. [B]

Day 7: Saturday 4/10 ROME / NETTUNO / CASTEL GANDOLFO / ROME

On our final day of sight-seeing, drive south of Rome to **Nettuno**, where we learn more about the young **Maria Goretti**. Her life and death were focused intensely on defending her chastity, protecting her assailant from grave sin, and ultimately learning forgiveness. We visit the **Basilica of Our Lady of Graces and Saint Maria Goretti**, location of the relics of her body encased in wax. We also visit the **farmhouse where she lived and died**. From there, we **proceed to Lake Albano** where we will stop to **enjoy lunch with a lake view**. Then, we visit **Castel Gandolfo**, site of the pope's summer retreat palace. The 17th-century papal palace and gardens were private but visitors can now enjoy the splendor of the Palace's **Barberini Gardens** as guided tours have been made available by Pope Francis as a gift to the public. We will tour the gardens and then gain the "regal" feel as we visit the church and **Piazza della Liberta** out front. Our journey concludes as we return to Rome for a **farewell dinner at Papa Rex**. Overnight in Rome. [B,L,D]



Day 8: Sunday, April 11, 2021, ROME / USA

Today we bid farewell to Italy (Arrivederci Italia!) as we transfer to the **airport** for our return flight to the United States. Our pilgrimage offers the mind and soul a new and treasured canvas of memories inspired by God's majestic landscape and a world we explore one pilgrim-age at a time. [B]

