



IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF ST PAUL: GREECE, EPHESUS, MALTA & ROME

A PILGRIMAGE FOR ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI, MILL PARK

14TH OCT –
2ND NOV 2026

LED BY
FR ANTHONY
GIROLAMI

20
DAYS

PACKAGE PRICE: AUD\$ 11,890*
per person (twin share)

OPTIONAL SINGLE ROOM/
CABIN SUPPLEMENT:

AUD\$ 3,325*

FULLY
ESCORTED

*Conditions apply. Subject to change. Price is based on minimum of 30 paying participants. Prices are estimates only. Confirmed pricing and flights will be known in November 2025. **RESTRICTIONS APPLY: No more than 10% of cabins on the cruise can be single and in Malta and Rome no more than 20% of rooms can be single)

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“St Paul was an inspirational preacher, missionary and apostle to the Gentiles. Still to this day his inspired writings captivate, engage and challenge people to be converted to the Gospel of Christ. If you want to see for yourself the missionary zeal of St Paul, come and join our Parish Pilgrimage as we walk in the footsteps of this great figure of the early Church”

Fr Anthony Girolami

PRICE INCLUSIONS:

- Estimated return economy class airfares from Melbourne into Athens and out of Rome with Emirates Airlines (or similar)
- Estimated One way flights from Athens – Thessaloniki, Athens – Malta and Malta - Rome
- All current estimated airport & departure taxes
- Porterage (where available), tips & gratuities throughout
- 17 nights in total (14 nights hotel accommodation in shared twin rooms and 3 nights on the cruise).
- Continental Breakfasts and dinners daily at hotels
- Lunches on the cruise
- Transport by deluxe air-conditioned motor coach
- All guiding and entrance fees as per the itinerary
- 3 shore excursions on the cruise: Ancient Ephesus, Religious visit to St John’s Monastery, Minoan Palace of Knossos
- Greece Hotel Resilience Tax
- Whisper Headsets
- In Malta and Rome - English Speaking Tour Escort with local guides.
- In Greece Licensed Tour guide for the land component
- Visits with an English-speaking local guide in Malta/ Valletta, Mdina/Rabat/St. Paul’s Bay and Rome
- *Greece port taxes on the cruise
- Celebrate Mass daily



NEXT STEPS

1. Register your interest and obtain a booking form from Elio Desimone, Olive Tree Travel or by [CLICKING HERE](#)
2. To secure your place on the pilgrimage, a deposit of \$1000 is due by 31st October 2025 (unless sold out prior).
3. Final balance will be due in early August 2026

OLIVETREE
Travel

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103A Gardenvale Road, Gardenvale Victoria 3185



DAY 1 WED 14TH OCTOBER

DEPART MELBOURNE

We depart Melbourne today on our flight to Thessaloniki in Greece.

DAY 2 THU 15TH OCTOBER

ARRIVE THESSALONIKI

Upon our arrival at Thessaloniki Airport today we will transfer directly to our hotel for dinner and overnight. (D)

DAY 3 FRI 16TH OCTOBER

THESSALONIKI

Today we will enjoy the day exploring Thessaloniki, built about 315 BC by King Cassander, the brother-in-law of Alexander the Great, who named the city after his wife Thessaloniki. It was a major commercial centre in Roman times as well as the second largest and wealthiest during the Byzantine era. In 50 AD St Paul visited the city and wrote two epistles to the ancient Thessalonians. At present Thessaloniki is Greece's second largest city. We will start with a visit of the Upper City (Ano Poli) where we will view the fortress and Ramparts overlooking the city and its gulf as well as the monastery of Vlatadon known for its connection to Saint Paul, as it is believed to be built near the spot where he preached during his visit to the city. Our orientation tour will then takes us around to see the highlights. We will see the White Tower, the Arch of Galerius, the Rotonda, (the oldest of Thessaloniki's churches), Aristotelous Square, the fortress and Ramparts overlooking the city and its gulf. We also visit the Old Agios Pavlos Church, where the spring of water is that St Paul drank from when he was preaching from that hill. (Now this water is considered holy. Continue to the Byzantine churches of St Sophia and St. Dimitrios, an early convert to Christianity martyred by the Romans. We will also visit the National Archaeological Museum. Dinner and overnight in Thessaloniki. (BD)

DAY 4 SAT 17TH OCTOBER

PHILIPPI, KAVALA

Today we will we travel to Philippi and Kavala. Philippi, as its name implies, was established by Philip II of Macedonia in 358 BC. It was here that Octavian and Anthony defeated Brutus and Cassius, last defenders of the Roman Republic in 42 BC. It was also one of the first European cities to accept Christianity. St Paul first arrived at Philippi around 50 AD and it was here he delivered his first sermon and baptized the first Christian convert, Lydia, on European soil. We will view the baptismal site and visit a crypt dating from the Roman period that is thought to have served as a prison for Paul. We will also see the famous Acropolis, the Market Place, Basilica, and the Theatre. We will then travel onto Kavala, an ancient Neapolis, it was the main port of Philippi and where St Paul accompanied by Silas, Luke and Timothy, first set foot in Europe and sowed the seeds of Christianity. Aside from the great panoramas of Kavala, the city has a Byzantine castle, aqueduct, and museum containing finds from Ancient Amphipolis and Philippi. Follow the Via Egnatia, remnant of Rome's highway system, viewing Roman and Greek tombstones and ruts of ancient chariot wheels. Dinner and overnight in Thessaloniki. (BD)

DAY 5 SUN 18TH OCTOBER

VERIA, VERGINA, KALAMBAKA

Today will be a day trip to visit Veria and Vergina. The town of Verias is dubbed "Little Jerusalem" for the many churches that are built across it. Here we will visit the Bema of St Paul where the Apostle stood and preached the Gospel to the Veroeans in 49 AD. Afterwards we will head to Vergina (ancient Aegae), which was the first capital of the Kingdom of Macedon. Although the capital was later transferred to Pella, Aegae remained the city where sacred rituals and ceremonies would take place. Here we will visit the very impressive site of the Royal Tomb of King Philip II, the father of Alexander the Great. Displayed within this tomb are the finds such as the gold ossuary with the 16-pointed Macedonian star, gold leaf wreaths, frescoes and ornaments. We will continue our drive to Kalambaka for dinner and overnight. (BD)

DAY 6 MON 19TH OCTOBER

METEORA, DELPHI

This morning we visit the Byzantine Meteora Monasteries. Dating from the 14th century they are set amongst striking scenery, perched high on sheer-sided gray rock pinnacles of varied and spectacular shapes and appear to be suspended in mid-air. The monasteries contain beautiful Byzantine art and offer an insight into the mystic world of

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the monks still residing there. We continue our drive south to Delphi where we enjoy dinner and an overnight stay. (BD)

DAY 7 TUE 20TH OCTOBER

DELPHI, ATHENS

This morning we visit Delphi. In antiquity Delphi was known as the navel of the earth for it was believed that when Zeus released two eagles from opposite sides of the world they would meet in Delphi. It reached its height in power in the 4th century as the sanctuary to the God Apollo, and pilgrims would gather here to seek advice from the great oracle, Pythia, on various matters including waging wars. We explore the sanctuary by walking up the Sacred Way to see the Treasuries, the Theatre and the Temple of Apollo. We will also visit the Museum of Delphi and marvel at the unique collection of artefacts from the excavation, including the bronze "Charioteer", one of the best preserved ancient works of metallurgy. We continue to Athens for dinner and overnight. (BD)

DAY 8 WED 21ST OCTOBER

ATHENS

Athens, the capital of Greece, is one of the oldest cities in the world spanning a history of 3,400 years. Home of the great minds, philosophers and teachers of ancient times such as Plato, Socrates and Aristotle, Athens is the birthplace of democracy and the cradle of Western Civilization. Enjoy a full day exploring Athens on our bus tour, which will guide us through the highlights; House of Parliament, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the Presidential Palace, Panathenaic Stadium, Hadrian's Arch, the Temple of Olympian Zeus, and the world-renowned Acropolis. We will walk through the architectural wonders of the Golden Age of Pericles; the Propylaia, the Parthenon and the Erechtheion and will also walk to Areopagus or Mars Hill, the site where trials were heard before the Council of Elders and where St Paul delivered his speech to the Athenians. Our visit is not complete without a tour of the New Acropolis Museum, which houses the findings of the Acropolis of Athens. Dinner and overnight in Athens. (BD)

DAY 9 THU 22ND OCTOBER

CORINTH, ATHENS

This morning we travel to the Peloponnese where we cross the Corinth Canal and enjoy a visit to Ancient Corinth. Drive through the coastal road to the Corinth Canal, which separates Peloponnese from the Greek mainland and connects the two seas, the Ionian and the Aegean. Continue to Ancient Corinth, one of the most important trading cities of ancient Greece dating back to the 6th century BC. Visiting the archaeological site we will come across the Temple of Apollo, the Agora, the sacred spring and the Peirene Fountain. The Apostle Paul resided in Corinth for 18 months in 51–52AD. Here he wrote the First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians. We shall visit the site of the Bema of St Paul, where he preached before we return to Athens for an afternoon of leisure. (BD)

DAY 10 FRI 23RD OCTOBER

BOARD CRUISE, MYKONOS

This morning we will transfer to the port of Piraeus to board our ship. Our first port of call is Mykonos where we have free time to explore on our own. You may wish to walk along the narrow cobbled streets of the town, passing by chic boutiques, elegant nightclubs and white-washed houses until reaching Alefkandra, a charming corner of Hora, known also as the "Venice" of Mykonos. Here the houses are built on the sea, with wooden balconies that evoke Venice. These were built from the mid -18th century onwards and were once homes of wealthy merchants and sea captains. Dinner and overnight is on board our ship. (B, L, D)

DAY 11 SAT 24TH OCTOBER

KUSADASI, EPHEBUS, PATMOS

Next stop on our cruise is the city of Kusadasi, gateway to ancient Ephesus, the Ionian colony, which is one of the largest open-air archaeological museums and one of the 7 ancient wonders of the world. Our visit to Ephesus commences with Celebrating Mass at the House of the Virgin Mary, where it is believed Mary spent her final year living. The house on a mountain top overlooking Ephesus harbour is a tranquil and holy place. Entering the excavated city, we'll explore the famous Library of Celsus, and the Great Theatre, where St Paul would have preached to the Ephesians. In the afternoon our ship sails to the island of Patmos where we visit the Monastery of St John the Evangelist, founded in 1088 by St Christodoulos. As we walk up the hill towards the entrance to the monastery, marvel at this magnificent structure, which

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was built over 900 years ago. View the courtyard, the monks' dining room and the old bakery before we visit the main church noted for its outstanding frescoes, mosaics and icons. Next stop is the small museum where priceless treasures such as books, manuscripts, medieval textiles, sacerdotal vestments and jewellery are housed. Continue to the nearby Grotto of the Apocalypse. Walk down the steps to the Grotto of the Apocalypse. Here we will see the niches in the wall that mark the pillow and ledge used as a desk by the author of the Book of the Revelation and the crack in the rock where St. John heard God dictating to him the Apocalypse. Dinner and overnight on board our ship (B, L, D)

DAY 12 SUN 25TH OCTOBER

CRUISE: HERAKLION, SANTORINI

This morning, we arrive in Heraklion (Crete) where we join the excursion to the Minoan Palace of Knossos. The ancient city of Knossos, near Crete's capital Heraklion, was the place that 'gave birth' to the very first civilization of Europe, the Minoans. Our excursion will open up the world of the Minoans as we visit one of the continent's most important archaeological treasures. Explore the large Central Court, the wonderful Throne Room, the imposing Grand Staircase and see the fresco of the 'Prince of the Lilies.' As you stroll through the palace apartments and view the archaeological finds, we think you will be just a little in awe of the rich cultural heritage of the Minoan civilization. You will undoubtedly hear the Cretan legend of the Minotaur, half man, half bull who lived in the Labyrinth and was slain by Theseus. But that's another story. Exploring from room to room we will relive time in the Hall of the Royal Guard and the King's Chamber, hearing about the extraordinary rule of King Minos. In the afternoon we sail to Santorini. where you will have free time to explore the island, if you wish. Once again, disembarking to find a good spot to enjoy a magical sunset is highly recommended. Return to the ship before sailing overnight back to Athens. (B,L,D)

DAY 13 MON 26TH OCTOBER

DEPART ATHENS, MALTA

The ship will return to the port of Piraeus this morning. We will disembark and transfer to Athens Airport for our flight to Malta. Upon our arrival to Malta we will be met by our driver and guide and transferred to the hotel for dinner and overnight. (BD)

DAY 14 TUE 27TH OCTOBER

MALTA

This morning we will visit Valletta, the capital city of Malta. Valletta is named after its founder, the respected Grand Master of the Order of St. John, Jean Parisot de la Valette. The magnificent fortress city grew on the arid rock of Mount Sceberras peninsula, which rises steeply from two deep harbours, Marsamxett and Grand Harbour. Started in 1566, Valletta was completed, with its impressive bastions, forts and cathedral, in the astonishingly short time of 15 years, even more remarkable in that mechanical tools did not exist at the time and the whole city was built entirely by hand. Valletta is abundantly rich in sites to see and explore, intriguing historical buildings around every corner: votive statues, niches, fountains and coats of arms high up on parapets and narrow side streets full of tiny quaint shops and cafés. Our tour will include the Upper Barrakka Gardens, St John's Co-Cathedral and the Grandmaster's Palace. We will have a free afternoon. (BD)

DAY 15 WED 28TH OCTOBER

MDINA, RABAT, ST PAUL'S BAY

In the morning we will visit Mdina. Lamp lit by night and referred to as "the silent city", Mdina has a history that traces back more than 4000 years. According to tradition it was here that in 60 AD. that the Apostle St Paul is said to have lived after being shipwrecked. Furthermore it is said that St. Paul resided inside the grotto known as Fuori le Mura (outside the city walls) now known as St Paul's Grotto in Rabat. It was home then, as now, to Malta's noble families; some are descendants of the Norman, Sicilian and Spanish overlords who made Mdina their home from the 12th century onwards. Impressive palaces line its narrow, shady streets and it is one of Europe's finest examples of an ancient walled city and extraordinary with its mix of medieval and baroque architecture. The St Pauls Catacombs are a typical complex of interconnected, underground Roman cemeteries that were in use up to the 4th century AD. They are located on the outskirts of the old Roman capital Melite (Mdina) and represent the oldest and largest archaeological evidence of Christianity in Malta. Our tour will also include Wignacourt Museum, St Paul's Bay and St Paul's Shipwreck and a visit to San Anton Gardens. Dinner and overnight at our hotel. (BD)

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DAY 16 THU 29TH OCTOBER

DEPART MALTA, ROME

Today we depart Malta for Rome. We will transfer to the airport for our flight. Upon arrival to Rome we will transfer to the hotel and in the evening we will take a tour of Rome on foot. Our tour will include Piazza Navona, the Roman Pantheon and Trevi Fountain. Dinner and overnight in our Rome hotel. (BD)

DAY 17 FRI 30TH OCTOBER

ROME

This morning

we will explore Rome further, and will take a visit to Mamertime Prison, the Colosseum and the Roman Forum. In the afternoon we will visit the Basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls and the Tre Fontane Abbey. Dinner and overnight at our hotel. (BD)

DAY 18 SAT 31ST OCTOBER

ASSISI DAY TRIP

After breakfast, we will journey to Assisi. Enjoy a half-day panoramic city tour (with local guide) of this beautiful medieval city including the Basilicas of St. Clare and St. Francis (with the Tomb of the Saints). Visit the tomb of recently canonized Saint, Carlo Acutis inside the Church of St Mary Major. Time to visit freely the Basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli (where "Portiuncula" is located). Celebrate Mass. Return to Rome for dinner and overnight. (BD)

DAY 19 SUN 1ST NOVEMBER

FINAL MASS, DEPART ROME

Our tour concludes today. Visit Basilica of Saint Mary Major for a final farewell Mass and to visit the resting place of Pope Francis. We will be transferred to Rome Fiumicino Airport for our flight home to Melbourne. (B)

DAY 20 MON 2ND NOVEMBER

ARRIVE MELBOURNE

We arrive home today with wonderful memories of our trip.

Itinerary subject to change

NOT INCLUDED:

- Drinks with meals
- Personal payments
- The services that are not mentioned in "Inclusions"
- Travel insurance
- Lunches (except on the cruise)
- Europe Visa (if operational)

HOTELS (OR SIMILAR):

GREECE

Hotel Capsis Thessaloniki 4****

Hotel Amalia Kalambaka 4****

Hotel Amalia Delphi 4****

Hotel Stanley Athens****

Celestial Discovery (XC Category – outside facing with portholes)

MALTA

Hotel Cavalieri Art 4**** (St. Julian's Bay)

ROME (outskirts)

Hotel Artis 4****

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