

An 11 Days Pilgrimage to Greece and Turkey

with Fr. Brent Kruger - St. Thomas More June 9th, 2025 - June 19th, 2025

Day 1

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

Day 2

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. Dinner at the hotel and overnight in Athens.

Day 3

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 Propylene. 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. 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.

Day 4

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 Aleikandra. 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

Enjoy breakfast on board in the lively Turkish port of Kusadasi. We then transfer to the small village of Mt. Koresos. 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. 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. 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. While in this quaint and picturesque harbor, enjoy free time before returning to the ship.

Day 6

This morning awaken and transfer to the largest city on the island of Crete, Heraklion. While in this administrative capital, visit the ancient ruins of the Palace of Knossos discovered in 1899. 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 definitively the most breathtaking island of all of the Greek Islands. Upon arrival in Santorini, visit Thira with its iconic white-washed houses, narrow streets, open-air cafes, and glittering boutiques that cling to cliffs. This evening enjoy your last dinner and overnight on the cruise ship.

Day 7

After your breakfast, you disembark the cruise ship and you will proceed to ancient Corinth. Under the shadow of the towering Acropolis, Saint Paul lived in Corinth for two years. While here, 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. Following your visit to Corinth, return to Athens hotel for dinner and overnight.



Day 8

After your breakfast, you visit the center of the ancient world (navel) of the earth, Delphi. 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 the museum and continue to the breathtaking rocks of Meteora. Dinner and overnight at your hotel in Kalambaka.



Day 10

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. "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 your dinner at the hotel and restful overnight.



Day 9

After breakfast, board the motorcoach for a short drive to the Meteora Monasteries. In the eleventh century, some monks settled within caves. However, 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. 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 where Paul spoke and the Bema surrounded by mosaics of Paul and the plaque of scripture regarding the "more noble" church. The New Testament books of I & II Thessalonians will come alive to us today as we arrive in the delightful harbor city of Thessalonica. 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.

Day 11

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.



**If you are satisfied with the services of your local team and would like to tip, we recommend \$7.00 per day per person to the Tour Guide, \$5.00 per day per person to the Bus Driver, and \$3.00 per day per person to the Hotel Team.*

\$4,495 per person
on double occupancy basis

**\$899 extra per single room*

The price includes:

- Round trip airfare, including all airlines/tax fuel surcharges
- Deluxe Accommodation hotels
- All hotels taxes and portages
- 2 meal daily (Breakfast and Dinner)
- Land transportation by deluxe motor coach
- European Transformer Adapter (if requested)
- Comprehensive sightseeing with a bi-lingual licensed guide
- All entrance fees as per itinerary
- Daily Mass/Service (if requested)
- Tour Brochure

The price does NOT include:

- Trip cancellation protection (recommended)
- Passport & visa costs, if any
- Gratuities to the tour manager, guides, and driver
- Items of personal nature (hotel extras, laundry, phone calls)
- Meals not specific in the program (lunch, snacks, etc.)
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