

ENCOUNTER THE EARLY CHURCH & THE EVANGELISTS IN

# Greece & Turkey

23 OCT – 9 NOV 2017



**18  
DAYS!**

**WITH 2 FREE  
NIGHTS  
INCLUDED!**

**DAILY FAITH FORMATION WITH REV. DCN DR SHERMAN KUEK OFS  
ACCOMPANYING PRIEST: BISHOP CORNELIUS SIM**

## **HOW SHOULD YOU DECIDE ON A PILGRIMAGE TRIP?**

So you saw some upcoming pilgrimage trips advertised in the local Catholic newspapers or in your parish bulletin. And it looks rather compelling because you've always wanted to go to that particular destination for a pilgrimage, and more so, it seems cheap!

So how can you know if this is a pilgrimage worth going for? Just because a trip is cheap, it doesn't mean that it will be a trip worth going for, and more so, it doesn't mean that the trip will be all it promises to be.

So what criteria should you use to decide if you should participate in an advertised trip or give it a miss? Here are certain points that help the discerning pilgrim to distinguish a potentially fruitful trip from one that may not be so:

### **1. PILGRIMS MUST RECEIVE ADEQUATE AND ACCURATE TEACHING**

On many pilgrimages, too little proper information is given to pilgrims to aid their understanding. Many tour guides, despite the training they claim to have received, thrive on anecdotes. There are also those who deliver facts that are either untrue or inaccurate to unsuspecting pilgrims, or worse still, teachings that contradict the Catholic faith.

This is one important reason why the Splendour Project decided to begin offering formation-based pilgrimages, so that an expert formator could accompany our trips to provide pilgrims with more than adequate teaching and guide their understanding of the places that they visit from the historical, Scriptural, and theological perspectives. Even the tour guides we provide on our trips are very carefully selected.

### **2. PILGRIMS MUST BE GIVEN WHAT THEY PAY FOR**

Because the Malaysian currency has devalued by at least 15 percent this past year and travel has become even more expensive, many travel organisers are forced to cut corners to keep their trips cheap. For example, some components of a trip may be removed, or quality of transportation, accommodation, and food is being compromised, or less time is spent in the more important places because being there is more expensive.

The Splendour Project ensures that this doesn't happen on our trips. On the face of it, it looks like our quoted prices are not cheap. However, we actually ensure that you get what you pay for because we refuse to compromise on the quality of your experience. We believe that since most of our pilgrims are visiting a particular place only once in their lifetime, it is not worth compromising on quality just to save a couple of thousand Ringgit. We want to ensure that pilgrims get the best that can possibly be offered, e.g. enough time at shrines without rushing just because days have been cut short, good morale because food is of good quality and accommodation is comfortable, and safety and security are ensured. Basically, we do our best to make sure you get what has been promised.

### **3. PILGRIMS MUST RECEIVE THE SACRAMENTS AND SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE**

Part of cost-cutting measures is to remove the accompanying priests from the cost equation. This means that many pilgrimage groups travel without an accompanying priest to keep their trips cheap. But having a priest around to provide the sacraments on a daily basis is very integral to a pilgrimage.

The Splendour Project makes it a point to personally invite priests and bishops who are well-respected and reputed for being serious about the Sacraments. They are also priests who are patient enough to offer spiritual guidance on a personal basis to pilgrims who need to receive some spiritual direction for their lives. Such priests would ensure that pilgrims are able to make good confessions at the Sacrament of Reconciliation and have Masses well-celebrated for them on a daily basis throughout our trips.

### **4. PILGRIMS' SAFETY MUST BE A PRIORITY**

Prospective pilgrims are constantly worried about whether their safety is secured if they were to embark on a particular trip. They are usually afraid especially of unsafe socio-political situations in the places they will be visiting. It is important that the organisers of the trip have access to

firsthand knowledge of what is happening in these destinations. Do keep in mind that the mass media is not trustworthy on such issues because they tend to sensationalise matters -- bad news sells!

The safety and security of our pilgrims are very important to the Splendour Project. We have firsthand regular updates from our contacts who live in the very places we are planning to visit, so we are well-aware of the security conditions there. We are therefore able to ensure that your trips are not unnecessarily cancelled or postponed, and also that your safety is not unnecessarily compromised. We also ensure that our pilgrims' insurance policies come with comprehensive coverage.

## **5. PILGRIMS MUST BE AIDED IN THEIR LEARNING**

It would be a pity if you paid all that money for a trip and came back without having learned, or having forgotten, everything that you are supposed to know upon having visited those places in your travel itinerary. And yet, most of the time, this happens because travel organisers are experts in making logistic arrangements, not so much in crafting your learning process to ensure optimal learning.

To ensure that our pilgrims understand and remember, the Splendour Project conducts faith formation sessions each morning during our trips. Detailed explanations are also given by our Formation Director at the sites of our visits. At the beginning of each trip, pilgrims each receive a detailed handbook containing all the faith formation content and the necessary information about the places the pilgrims are visiting. This would ensure that they are able to refer to the handbook during, and even after, the pilgrimages instead of losing those precious memories and the knowledge that come together with the visits.

In addition to that, after each trip, the Splendour Project provides all our pilgrims with a professionally produced hour-long video footage of their trip. The purpose of this footage is, again, to assist pilgrims in reinforcing their memory of their pilgrimage trip. It is not possible for other tour organisers to provide footages of such professional quality because it

would cost them too much to do so, but the Splendour Project has the added advantage of our own in-house media crew to provide this for our pilgrims.

## **6. PILGRIMS MUST BE GIVEN A HOLISTIC UNDERSTANDING**

Did you know that the places that the Church considers holy are all connected to one another in some way? But it does take a considerable amount of intellectual expertise and skill to help pilgrims to see this connection. Otherwise, one can only organise a particular pilgrimage trip in isolation from others and would be unable to help pilgrims to understand how a particular place is intricately linked to other places that they may have visited or will be visiting in time to come.

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Hence, choosing among pilgrimage trips is never just a matter of choosing the cheapest trip you can find. There are many factors that need to be considered before making a final decision. Only when a tour organiser can guarantee the above to a reasonable extent that you can be almost certain that you have embarked on a good trip.

# 1

23 OCT (MON)  
KLIA

Assemble at KLIA at 2000 hours to depart for Istanbul at 2335 hours

# 2

24 OCT (TUE)  
ISTANBUL (L, D)

Arrival in Istanbul International Airport at 0515 hours

Proceed for Mass at Church of **St Mary Draperis**

Visit the **Grand Bazaar** in Istanbul is one of the largest and oldest covered markets in the world, with 61 covered streets and over 4,000 shops. The Grand Bazar at Istanbul is often regarded as one of the first shopping malls of the world.

Lunch at Istanbul

Visit the **Egyptian Spice Bazaar** which was endowed to the foundation of the New Mosque, and got its name “Egyptian Bazaar” (Turkish: Mısır Çarşısı) because it was built with the revenues from the Ottoman eyalet of Egypt in 1660.

Dinner and overnight in Istanbul

# 3

25 OCT (WED)  
ISTANBUL / KAVALA (B, L, D)

Breakfast and formation at hotel



Proceed to Turkish border and go to Alexandroupolis for lunch

Continue to Kavala for photo stop

Mass at **St Paul's Church in Kavala**

Dinner and overnight in Kavala

# 4

26 OCT (THU)

**KAVALA / PHILIPPI / THESSALONIKI (B, L, D)**

Breakfast and formation at hotel

Photo stop and short stroll around Kavala

Proceed to Philippi through the plains of Macedonia following the ancient Roman Egnatia Road



Mass at Lydia Baptistry

Visit the **Philippi Archaeological Site** (includes the prison of St Paul, the Agora, the Theatre and three Basilicas and the Octogonal Church)

Drive to **Thessaloniki** for lunch.

Tour around the city of Thessaloniki (Hagios Demetrios Metropolitan Church, White Tower, Statue of Alexander the Great, etc)

Dinner and overnight in Thessaloniki

# 5

27 OCT (FRI)

THESSALONIKI / VERIA / KALAMBAKA (B, L, D)

Breakfast and formation at hotel

Visit the **Museum of Byzantine Culture**, Thessaoniki

Drive to Veria for lunch

Mass at the **Altar of St Paul, Veria**

Drive to **Kalambaka** to shop for icons

Dinner and overnight in Kalambaka

# 6

28 OCT (SAT)

KALAMBAKA / METEORA / DELPHI (B, L, D)

Breakfast and formation at hotel

Mass at the hotel

Visit two **monasteries** in Meteora standing amid striking scenery, perched on top of huge rock, which seems to be suspended in mid air Lunch in Kalambaka

Drive to **Delphi**, the centre of the ancient world

Dinner and overnight in Delphi

# 7

29 OCT (SUN)  
ATHENS (B, L, D)

Breakfast and formation at hotel



Depart for **Hosios Lukas Monastery**, where the main shrine of the monastery is the tomb of St Luke, placed at the juncture of the two churches (Church of the Theotokos, the oldest in the monastery built in the 10th century, and the Katholikon located adjacent to the Church of the Theotokos)

Mass in the vicinity of Hosios Lukas Monastery

Drive to Athens for lunch



Visit the **Acropolis** of Athens, an ancient citadel located on a high rocky outcrop outside the city of Athens which contains the Parthenon, Erechtheion, and ancient Greek temple, and Propylea which serves as an entrance to the Acropolis. It is also there that we see the Areios Pagos, the supreme civil and criminal court of ancient Greece where Paul stood to address the people of Athens.

Dinner and overnight in Athens

# 8

30 OCT (MON)  
ATHENS / CORINTH / ATHENS / PIRAEUS (B, L, D)

Breakfast and formation at hotel



Drive to **Corinth**, the ancient city where St Paul Worked with Aquila and Priscilla. Visit the archaeological site to see the Bema of St Paul.

See the **Corinth Canal**

Back to the Athens for lunch



Mass at the **Catholic Cathedral of St Dionysus**

Visit the **Benaki Museum** to view the artefacts of the Greek civilisation as well as that of the Christian faith as it arrived at the shores of Greece Early dinner and then depart for Piraeus, the port from which the ferry departs for Patmos.

# 9

## 31 OCT (TUE)

### PATMOS / KUSADASI (B, L, D)



Arrive in **Patmos**, disembark from ferry and board coach for transfer to Patmos Skala Hotel for rest

After breakfast at hotel, proceed for visit to the **Holy Grotto of Revelation**. Mass will be celebrated in the vicinity.

Visit the **monastery of St John**, a fortified orthodox monastery

Lunch and depart for the port to board ferry (private charter) to **Kusadasi**, Turkey

Dinner and overnight in Kusadasi

# 10

01 NOV (WED)  
EPHESUS / IZMIR (B, L, D)

Breakfast and formation at hotel

Visit the **house of Mother Mary** where she stayed until she was assumed into heaven

Mass is celebrated at a chapel there

Visit the **Ephesus Archaeological Site** where you see the splendid façade of the Library of Celcus, the conspicuous amphitheatre, the commercial agora, the brothel, and the Temple of Hadrian, among other structures



Lunch in Ephesus and drive to Izmir

Photo stop at Artemis Temple

Dinner and overnight in Izmir

# 11

02 NOV (THU)  
SMYRNA / BERGAMA / THYATIRA / SALIHLI (B, L, D)

Breakfast and formation at hotel

Visit **St Polycarp Church**, the oldest church in Izmir and represents ancient Smyrna's role as one of the Seven Churches of Revelation. Mass is celebrated here.



Visit ancient **Smyrna** (one of the Seven Churches of Revelation).

Visit **Pergamum** (one of the Seven Churches of Revelation). See the Red Basilica and the archaeological site of the Egyptian Gods Serapis, Isis and Harpocrates. After that, visit the church of Revelation inside the Acropolis were, where the Altar of Zeus and the Temple of Trojan also were.



Lunch in Bergama

Visit **Thyatira** (one of the Seven Churches of Revelation)

Drive to Salihli

Dinner and overnight in Salihli

# 12

03 NOV (FRI)

**SARDIS / PHILADELPHIA / LAODICEA / PAMUKKALE**  
(B, L, D)

Breakfast and formation at hotel

Mass at hotel

Visit **Sardis** (one of the Seven Churches of Revelation)

Depart for **Philadelphia** (one of the Seven Churches of Revelation)

Visit the ancient city of **Laodicea** (one of the Seven Churches of Revelation)



Visit the **Travertine (Cotton Castle)** in Pamukkale, famous for the healing properties of the thermal sacred pool and beautiful cascading snow white terraced cliff side basins and waterfalls

Visit the ruins of **Hierapolis** where St Philip the Apostle was martyred in 1 AD. The city also had a significant Jewish community and was mentioned by St Paul in his letter to the Colossians

Dinner and overnight in Pamukkale.

# 13

**04 NOV (SAT)**

**PAMUKKALE / KONYA / CAPPADOCIA (B, L, D)**

Formation and breakfast at hotel

Mass at hotel

Drive to Konya (Iconium)

Visit **Caravanserai** - which have been used since the 10th century. Trade across Turkey in medieval Seljuk times was dependent on camel trains (kervan, anglicized as caravan), which stopped by night in inns known as kervansaray or caravanserai , literally 'caravan palaces'.

Drive to Cappadocia

Dinner and overnight in Cappadocia

# 14

05 NOV (SUN)  
CAPPADOCIA (B, L, D)

Formation and breakfast at hotel

Mass at hotel



Visit the **Goreme Open Air Museum** which resembles a vast monastic complex composed of scores of refectory monasteries placed side-by-side, each with its own fantastic church. It contains the finest of the rock-cut churches, with beautiful frescoes (wall paintings) whose colors still retain all their original freshness.



Visit **Underground City**. The local Christians were persecuted, first by the Romans and then raiding Muslims, and they often had to hide from hostile forces. When they heard hoof beats, they would abandon the cave churches and go underground - quite literally. Beneath Cappadocia's rock formations is a network of subterranean cities, which housed up to 10,000 people each. The largest discovered are almost ten levels deep, with narrow passages connecting the floors like hamster tunnels.

Lunch at Cappadocia

Local sightseeing around Cappadocia after lunch

Overnight in Cappadocia

# 15

06 NOV (MON)  
CAPPADOCIA / ANKARA / BOLU (B, L, D)

Formation and breakfast at hotel

Mass at hotel

Depart for Ankara - the capital city of Turkey and the second largest city in the country after Istanbul. It is located at the heart of both Turkey and Central Anatolia



Visit the **Salt Lake**, occupying a tectonic depression in the central plateau of Turkey, which is fed by two major streams, groundwater, and surface water, but has no outlet. Brackish marshes have formed where channels and streams enter the lake. Arable fields surround the lake, except in the south and southwest where extensive seasonally flooded salt-steppe occurs

Lunch in Kulu

Visit **Ankara Ataturk Mausoleum**. Anitkabir (literally, “memorial tomb”) is the mausoleum of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the leader of the Turkish War of Independence and the founder and first President of the Republic of Turkey. The mausoleum was depicted on various Turkish banknotes during 1966–1987 and 1997–2009.

Dinner and overnight in Bolu City

# 16

07 NOV (TUE)

BOLU / IZNIK / ISTANBUL (B, L, D)

Formation and breakfast at hotel



Depart for Iznik, formerly known as **Nicaea**, to visit the site of the two Councils of Nicaea, where the Nicene Creed was formulated and recited until today

Lunch in Iznik

Depart for Istanbul via Orhangazi Bridge

Celebrate Mass at **Cathedral of St Esprit**

Dinner at local restaurant

Overnight in Istanbul

# 17

08 NOV (WED)

ISTANBUL (B, L, D)

Breakfast and formation at hotel



Celebrate Mass at the **Church of St Anthony of Padua**, the biggest active Catholic Church in Turkey. It is under the custody of the OFM Conventuals

Cruise along the **Straits of Bosphorus** which abridges the Black Sea to the Sea of Marmara and forms the boundary between the Asian and the Western parts of Turkey



Visit the **Hagia Sophia**, the former See of Constantinople during the Byzantine era which was seized during the Ottoman Empire and converted into a mosque, and which now stands as a museum.



Visit **St George's (Orthodox) Patriarchate** (the Great Martyr and Trophy-Bearer) is the fifth church in Constantinople to house the Ecumenical Patriarchate since the 15th century. It is the principal Greek Orthodox cathedral still in use in Istanbul, the largest city in Turkey

Dinner at local restaurant

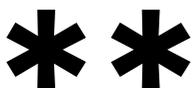
After dinner, transfer to airport for flight departure to KLIA

# 18

**09 NOV (THU)**  
**ISTANBUL (B)**

Departure for Kuala Lumpur at 0205 hours

Arrival in Kuala Lumpur at 1725 hours



**PRICE: MYR 15,590**

per person (twin accomodation)

*(For single accomodation, please contact us to enquire.)*

Price is inclusive of return air tickets ex-Kuala Lumpur International Airport (inclusive of fuel charges & airport taxes), accommodation, all meals, coach transportation, travel insurance, tipping. Subject to change resulting from fuel charges and airport tax increases and foreign exchange fluctuations.

Kindly take note that price stipulations are based on the present Euro currency exchange rate. In the event that currency exchange rate fluctuates, Item 8 of the Terms & Conditions stipulated in the Registration Form applies.

Our trips are usually sold out way ahead of time and registration will be closed when all seats have been filled up. First come, first served.

As seats are limited, your seats are reserved only upon payment of deposits to accompany the submission of your registration forms. Non-refundable deposit payments are **MYR3,000** per person.

Kindly contact us for more information or to request for registration forms:

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# EMAIL

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# CALL

(+6) 016.4432.783 (Matthew)

## **SOME SPECIAL FEATURES OF THE SPLENDOUR PROJECT'S FORMATION- BASED PILGRIMAGES:**



Faith formation sessions daily by Deacon Dr Sherman Kuek to form your minds and hearts



A specially invited priest who is well-reputed to dispense the sacraments daily on each trip



A complimentary full-length video footage of every trip professionally produced for pilgrims



A certificate for every pilgrim stipulation the amount of faith formation they have received



Thorough research is done in the organising of all these trips



The only formation-based pilgrimages of such kind in this region!

*This trip is organised by*



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