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## **13-DAYS: IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF PAUL, JOHN & MARY A PILGRIMAGE TO GREECE & TURKEY INCLUDING GREEK ISLE**

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### **DAY 1: DEPART USA**

We depart USA en route to Athens, with complimentary meals and beverages served aloft.

### **DAY 2: ATHENS**

Upon our arrival we are met by our Catholic guide and escorted to our private motor coach for transfer to our hotel. Dinner will be at the hotel. (D)

### **DAY 3: ATHENS: CITY TOUR**

This morning we make our way outside the city to the Monastery of Kaisariani, founded in the 11th century AD and consecrated to the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple. After a prayer service, we have a brief tour of the grounds, then some time for reflection and our Pilgrims' prayer to Mary with some time for the pilgrims to share their hopes for the pilgrimage. We then tour the city of Athens, including the agora, where Paul addressed the Athenians, the famed Acropolis and Parthenon, Hadrian's Arch and the Temple of Zeus. We will have lunch in the Plaka area and return to the hotel. The rest of the day is at leisure to explore the city and its museums. (B, L)



#### **DAY 4: ATHENS: CORINTH EXCURSION**

We journey to Corinth, the largest city in the land now known as Greece. Here Paul spent 18 months, preaching to the Jews and Gentiles. The site is overlooked by an Acropolis housing the remains of the Temple of Aphrodite, goddess of love. In Corinth, Paul worked with Aquila and Priscilla and his trial by Gallio took place in the agora. The community he founded here caused him much grief and prompted him to write at least four letters. We celebrate our liturgy today in Corinth with a reflection on Paul the Missionary. We have lunch in Nauplion and complete our day in Epidaurus, one of world's best-preserved amphitheatres with remarkable acoustics. We return to Athens with dinner on our own. (B, L)

#### **DAY 5: CRUISE: MYKONOS**

This morning we transfer to the port of Piraeus for our Greek Isle Cruise. Our first stop of the day is the island of Mykonos, a beautiful island of white washed houses and beautiful vistas. This evening we leave for Rhodes. (B, L, D)

#### **DAY 6: CRUISE: RHODES**

We arrive in Rhodes this morning with the day at leisure to explore the island and its charm. Our private included excursion includes a visit to the town of Lindos with its famed Acropolis and then to Rhodes' Old Town. The afternoon is free for sightseeing or a swim. This evening we sail for Turkey. Before dinner, we celebrate the Eucharist on board ship. (B, L, D)

#### **DAY 7: CRUISE: PATMOS / KUSADASI**

This morning, our ship will dock in Patmos, which was considered sacred and often called the Jerusalem of the Aegean. It was here that John the Evangelist received the inspiration to write the Apocalypse. We will have a private included excursion to visit the island of Patmos, including the Monastery of St. John, a huge fortress-like building dating from the 11th century, and the grotto where tradition says that John wrote the Book of Revelation. We will have a prayer service on the island together. We return to our ship for lunch as we continue to Kusadasi, Turkey where we leave the ship and make our way to our hotel. The afternoon is at leisure. We will have a prayer service at our hotel before dinner. (B, L, D)

#### **DAY 8: KUSADASI: EXCURSION TO EPHESUS**

We begin our day with a visit to Ephesus, where Paul founded the Church in 53-56 AD. From here, he wrote letters to Galatia, Philippi, and Corinth. We visit the great theatre where St. Paul addressed the crowds and the scene of the riot from which Paul escaped, plus the Temple of Diana, one of the Seven Wonders of the World. After lunch, we visit the Cathedral of St. John, the museum of Ephesus, and then to the House of Mary where we celebrate the Eucharist. Tonight, dinner is at our hotel. (B, D)



### **DAY 9: KUSADASI / PERGAMUM / ASSOS**

This morning we depart for ancient Pergamum to visit the acropolis, including the theatre and Zeus temple, and the Asclepion, an ancient healing center, dedicated to Apollo with rich archaeological remains. We have a prayer service at Pergamum. We travel along the Aegean and end the day in Assos by the sea with dinner at the hotel. (B, D)

### **DAY 10: ASSOS / TROY / ISTANBUL**

We visit the ancient theatre at Assos and a lovely fishing village and continue through Alexandria Troas to ancient Troy, settled as early as 3,000 BC and made famous in Homer's Iliad and the legendary story of the Trojan War. After a prayer service, we have lunch on our own in Troy before crossing the Dardanelles by ferry to European Turkey. We then drive to Istanbul (ancient Constantinople). Dinner is at the hotel. (B, D)

### **DAY 11: ISTANBUL: CITY TOUR**

Istanbul is a rich quilt of cultures, Eastern Orthodoxy and Islam being the main fabrics. We begin at Santa Sofia, at one time the premier church in Christendom and now a mosque. Nearby are the Hippodrome and the Ahmet Mosque (Blue Mosque). The underground cistern is otherworldly. The afternoon is devoted exclusively to the opulent riches of the sultans in our tour of the Topkapi Palace. Later in the afternoon we can visit the famous covered bazaars to meander among the thousands of shops with time to bargain. We have an early evening cruise on the Bosphorus with dinner by the Sea. (B, D)

### **DAY 12: ISTANBUL: CITY TOUR**

Today we will visit the Church of St. Saviour in Chora, housing a magnificent display of Eastern iconography and mosaics. Afterwards, we make our way to the Church of St. Anthony and celebrate our closing Eucharist. We then visit a government-sponsored rug making factory where we learn the art of the oriental carpet. The afternoon is at leisure. This evening we enjoy a festive dinner at a local fish restaurant. (B, D)

### **DAY 13: RETURN TO USA**

We transfer to the Istanbul airport for our return flight to the USA. (B)

**NOTE:** While no changes are anticipated, there might be occasions when certain alterations become necessary to this itinerary due to changes in airline schedules or for other reasons. All Masses are subject to final church schedules.