

SHRINES OF ITALY

10-day itinerary



St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican City



San Giovanni Rotondo



Assisi



St. James Church, Medjugorje

ITINERARY

DAY 1 USA - Rome Transatlantic flight to Rome, Italy

DAY 2 ROME - ASSISI Upon arrival your escort will greet you. Transfer to Assisi. Settle in your hotel. Orientation tour of Assisi. Visit the Family Home and Birth Place of St. Francis. Mass at the Chiesa Nuova where Francis was imprisoned. Dinner in your hotel.

DAY 3 ASSISI Visit and tour of St Francis Basilica. Celebrate Holy Mass at the Crypt Tomb of St. Francis. Tour the relics of St. Francis, his stigmata and tunic. Visit San Damiano Church. Pray in the chapel where Jesus spoke to St Francis from the Cross. Visit St Mary of The Angels Basilica where St. Francis spent most of his life. Here we will see: the Chapel, Portiuncola, the rose bush, and the cave where St Francis retired for prayer. Dinner in your hotel.

DAY 4 ASSISI - LORETO - LANCIANO - SAN GIOVANNI ROTONDO Enjoy breakfast in your hotel. We head towards Loreto to visit the Holy House of Nazareth and the beautiful Madonna of Loreto. It is said that this is the house where the Holy Family live, and where Jesus grew up. It was transported by angels to his hill back in 1924. Continue to Lanciano to visit the Eucharistic Miracle and celebrate Holy Mass. Then, on to San Giovanni Rotondo for dinner and overnight.

DAY 5 SAN GIOVANNI ROTONDO - Michael The Archangel Cave Breakfast. Celebrate Holy Mass at the tomb of Padre Pio. Tour the sanctuary, the old church, Padre Pio's confessional, and the crucifix from which he received the stigmata in 1918. Visit the Grotto of Michael the Archangel, a shrine consecrated by St Michael himself in 490. St. Francis and many Popes have knelt in prayer at this grotto. Return to San Giovanni Rotondo for some free time, dinner and overnight.

DAY 6 SAN GIOVANNI ROTONDO - MONTE CASSINO - ROME Breakfast. Depart San Giovanni for Rome. On the way, stop at Monte Cassino, a gorgeous town founded by St. Benedict in 529. Celebrate Holy Mass in Monte Cassino. Arrive Rome late afternoon. Dinner in your hotel.

DAY 7 ROME Enjoy a tour of Rome's Basilicas which includes: the Basilica of St. Mary Major, the Holy Stairs, the Basilica of St. John the Lateran, St Paul Outside the Walls, and the Appian Way -- the oldest road from Roman times-- (we will celebrate Holy Mass in one of the Basilicas) plus the famous Domino Quo Vadis Chapel; see the ancient Baths of Caracalla, Arch of Drusus; Tomb of Celilia Metella, and the catacombs of St Callixtus where the early Christians hid themselves to escape persecution. Enjoy a visit of the Trevi Fountain before dinner in your hotel.

DAY 8 ROME Today, we visit the Vatican's Museums filled with art treasures and the unique Sistine Chapel (Michelangelo's Masterpiece). Then we will visit St. Peter's Basilica (the largest church in all of Christianity) built on the site where St. Peter was martyred. We will also visit the grave of Pope John Paul II located underneath St Peter's Basilica. Celebrate Holy Mass at St. Peter's Basilica. Enjoy some time on your own before dinner and overnight.

DAY 9 ROME (Pope's audience) This morning we go the Vatican to attend the weekly Papal Audience or blessing given by His Holiness Pope Benedict (depending on the Pope's schedule and health). Enjoy an afternoon free for personal activities. Dinner. (Those going to Medjugorje will depart this evening).

DAY 10 ROME - USA Morning transfer to Rome's Airport to catch our return flight home.