

Footsteps of the Virgin Mary Pilgrimage to the Holy Land With Rev. James L. Holland, OMI Sacred Heart Church October 25 to November 6, 2015

For the Catholic visitor, a pilgrimage to the Holy Land can be a spiritual journey of reaffirmation and discovery. To stand within the historical landscape, to visit the holy places and sites mentioned in the Bible and the shrines associated with the life and ministry of Jesus, will provide inspiration for the inner, spiritual journey that each pilgrim hopes to experience during his or her stay. Following a specific theme and narrative will help accomplish this. One such pilgrimage follows in the footsteps of the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus, who was born, lived and whose life most probably ended in the Holy Land. Though she experienced the ultimate sorrow of a mother in witnessing the passion and death of her son, a pilgrimage in her honour is a joyous event for she was blessed by the grace of God, as it is written in the Gospel: "Rejoice, you who enjoy God's favour! The Lord is with you." (Luke 1:28)

In experiencing the presence of the Virgin Mary in the Mystery of Jesus and in the Church, the pilgrim may choose to visit those sites directly associated with her life, or to broaden that experience with an expanded pilgrimage program.

Caesarea • Nazareth • Mount Zion • Mount of Beatitudes
Sea of Galilee • Capernaum • Eim Karem • Bethany • Jerusalem
Cana • Tabgha • Sepphoris • Mount of Olives • Mount Tabor
Haifa • Via Dolorosa • Stella Maris • Muhraga • Bethlehem

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TOUR ITINERARY

Day 1

Depart Canada

Your spiritual pilgrimage begins as you depart Canada on an overnight flight to Tel Aviv, Israel.

Day 2

Arrival Tel Aviv - Netanya

After collecting your luggage, you will be welcomed to the Holy Land by our airport representative. Proceed to Netanya. **Meal:** Dinner **Accommodations:** Netanya

Day 3

Caesarea - Muhraqa - Haifa - Nazareth

The Carmelite monastery of Stella Maris atop Mount Carmel in Haifa is dedicated to the Virgin Mary in her capacity as Our Lady, Star of the Sea (Stella Maris, in Latin). The monastery also serves as the world center for the Order of Carmelites. The church also celebrates the Holy Family and the prophet Elijah. The nearby lighthouse evokes the imagery of Mary in her intercessory role in the Church as a “**guiding light**”. A cave, holy to Christianity, Judaism and Islam, is on the western slope of the Carmel, below the Monastery of Stella Maris. Christian tradition, since Byzantine times, has identified the cave as a place where the **Holy Family rested on its way back from Egypt**. The small Carmelite monastery at Muhraqa on a southern peak of the Carmel ridge. The monastery commemorates the struggle of Elijah against the priests of Ba’al, at the end of which the prophet ascended to the top of the mountain (by tradition identified as this place), where he commanded his servant to look out to see the approaching rain that would end the years of drought (1 Kings 18: 41-46). For the Catholic pilgrim, these showers are symbolic of the good that the Virgin Mary brought unto mankind.

Sites to visit: Caesarea, Church of Elijah, Monastery of Stella Maris (**MASS**) summit walk, Mt. Carmel, Monastery of Prophet Elijah at Muhraqa. **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner **Accommodations:** Nazareth

Day 4

Nazareth – Mt Tabor - Nazareth

Mount Tabor is first mentioned in the accounts of **Deborah and Jael**, that “Most blessed of women” (Judges 5:24). The description of Deborah, who “...arose, mother of Israel” (Judges 5:7), is paralleled in Catholic Church’s view that the Virgin Mary is the mother of the faith community. So too, is the praise for Jael in the Song of Deborah – “most blessed of women be Jael” (Judges 5:24) – echoed in the Magnificat (Luke 1: 46-54), and in Elizabeth’s praise of Mary: “Of all women you are the most blessed...” (Luke 1:42). The city of Nazareth was in the time of Jesus a small village. Its residents were farmers and craftsmen who probably depended on the nearby city of Sepphoris for most goods and services. The villagers led a traditional rural life, far removed from the influence of the occupying Romans (an influence strongly felt in the major cities). They may also have been a bit removed from some of the political, social and religious unrest within Jewish society at the time. In Roman Catholic tradition, it is the place where the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary (Luke 1:26-38).

Sites to visit: Tabor, Basilica of the Annunciation (**MASS**), St. Joseph’s Church, Franciscan Museum, Spring of the Virgin Mary, St. Gabriel Church, Synagogue Church. **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner **Accommodations:** Nazareth

Day 5

Cana –Sepphoris - Tiberias

The ruins of the city of Sepphoris are located 6 km northwest of Nazareth. It was the administrative center of the Lower Galilee from the time of the Second Temple to the 4th century. According to an early-church tradition, it was here that Mary was born and the place her parents lived. At the foot of the ancient city, a Crusader church was built in the 12th century dedicated to **Sts. Anne and Joachim**, Mary’s parents. The Church is in ruins today. The site belongs to the modern Franciscan Monastery of St. Anne and Joachim. Cana, also located not far from Nazareth, is mentioned in the Gospel of Saint John “On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee. The mother of Jesus was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited.” (John 2:1-2) Cana became famous because, as the Evangelist tells us, it is the scene of the **first miracle of Jesus**, where he turned the water into wine (John 2:3-9). “Mary is present at Cana in Galilee as the Mother of Jesus and in a significant way she contributes to ‘the beginning of the signs’” (John 2:11).

Sites to visit: Church of Sts. Anne & Joachim, National Archaeological Park, Church of the First Miracle (**MASS**). **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner **Accommodations:** Near the Sea of Galilee

Day 6

Capernaum - Mount of Beatitudes - Tabgha - Sea Of Galilee

The site of the ancient fishing village of Capernaum is located on the north western shore of Lake Kinneret (the Sea of Galilee). The town is important in the Marian pilgrimage. According to the Gospel, Mary accompanied her son to Capernaum: “After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother and his brothers and his disciples, but they stayed there only a few days.” (John 2:12) Both Mathew (12:46-50) and Mark (3:31-35) relate an episode in which Jesus’ mother tried to approach him, unsuccessfully, because of a large crowd gathered outside the “home” of Jesus (Mark 3:20), which most probably refers to the house of Simon, called Peter (Mark 1:29).

Sites to visit: Church of the House of St. Peter (**MASS**), Ancient Synagogue, Church of the 12 Apostles, Church of Multiplication, Mount of Beatitudes, Boat ride on Sea of Galilee. **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner **Accommodations:** Near the Sea of Galilee

Day 7

Jordan Valley - Jericho - Qumran - Bethlehem

Drive through the Jordan valley towards the baptismal site on the Jordan River, where John the Baptist had his ministry and where Jesus was baptized, renewal of baptismal promises. Continue to Jericho, the lowest city on earth and the first city that was destroyed by the Israelites in the Promised Land, view mount of temptations, sycamore tree and Tel Jericho. The town of Jericho is the oldest continuously inhabited town in the world dating back some 10,000 years. Continue to Qumran, the site of the Essense, where the Dead Sea scrolls were found. Enjoy floating at the Dead Sea. Continue to Bethlehem. Bethlehem is under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority.

Sites to visit: Mass: Church of the Good Shepherd, Jericho, Baptismal site, Qumran, Dead Sea, **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner **Accommodations:** Bethlehem

Day 8

Bethlehem

We begin the day at the Church of the Nativity. The cave, believed to be the place where Jesus was born is the focal point of the Basilica of the Nativity, one of the earliest and most important of all Christian shrines. The Grotto of the Lady Mary, the so-called "Milk Grotto", is located a few minutes' walk from Manger Square. The cave, located in the crypt of a small Franciscan chapel, celebrates the tradition that the cave was used as a place of refuge by the Holy Family before their flight into Egypt. The legend is that while the Virgin Mother was nursing Jesus, a drop of her milk fell to the ground and miraculously turned the walls of the grotto white.

Sites to visit: Bethlehem, Church of the Nativity, Manger Square, the Manger, Sheppard's Field, **Mass at grotto church of the Franciscan's**, Milk grotto. Opportunity to do shopping and support the Christian minority. **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner **Accommodations:** Bethlehem

Day 9

Mt. of Olives - Mt. Zion - Jerusalem

Mary, especially as an adult, may have visited Jerusalem at least once a year, either at Passover or perhaps during the autumn festival of **Sukkot** (the Feast of Tabernacles), which was possibly the most well-attended of the three pilgrimage festivals because the harvest was over and the rural population was free to travel. The New Testament accounts tell us that Mary was present in Jerusalem during the last week before the arrest and trial of Jesus and that she witnessed the Crucifixion and Resurrection. It was there that her life probably ended, even though one 4th century tradition says that she followed the Apostle John to Ephesus (in today's Turkey), spending her last days in that city. However, the earliest known traditions all locate the Dormition of Mary as having taken place in Jerusalem. The traditional Tomb of the Virgin is located at the foot of the Mount Olives in the **Valley of Jehoshaphat**, an arm of the **Kidron Valley**, adjacent to the Garden of **Gethsemane** and the Church of All Nations. The impressive façade is the 12th century Crusader entrance. A long staircase then leads down to the Byzantine crypt. A chapel to the right contains the Tomb of the Virgin. The Benedictine Abbey of Hagia Maria Sion (the **Dormition Abbey**) contains a large Byzantine-style mosaic in the central apse picturing Mary holding the Infant Jesus. The church has a large and impressive crypt dedicated to the Dormition. At the center of the crypt is a carved wood and ivory statue of the sleeping Mary. The dome of the crypt is decorated with mosaics picturing Jesus surrounded by six women from the Old Testament: Eve, Miriam, Yael, Judith, Ruth and Esther. 12 pillars of the outer ambulatory represent the 12 Disciples who were present during Mary's last hours.

Sites to visit: Mount of Olives, Garden of Gethsemane, Church of All Nations, Tomb of Virgin Mary, Mount Zion, The Cenacle, Tomb of King David, Hagia Maria Sion Abbey, Western Wall, (**MASS** TBD). **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner **Accommodations:** Jerusalem

Day 10

Temple Mount - St. Annns - Via Dolorosa - Holy Sepulcher - Wailing Wall

The Gospel of St. Luke lists numerous occasions when the Holy Family visited the Temple. The first time was 40 days after the birth of Jesus when Mary and Joseph went up to the Temple to present the Infant Jesus to God. It was during this event that they were approached by Simeon the Priest and Anna the Prophetess (Luke 2:22-39). In the course of Jesus' childhood Mary would have made many more pilgrimages to the Temple with her family during the feast of Passover – as it is written: "Every year his parents used to go to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover." (Luke 2:41) The last mention of Mary visiting the Temple with Jesus and Joseph was when Jesus reached the age of twelve: "...they went up for the feast as usual. When the days of the feast were over and they set off home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem without his parents knowing it." (Luke 2:42-43). The present course of the **Via Dolorosa** (the Way of Sorrows) begins near the arch of **Ecce Homo** in the Muslim Quarter and ends at the Holy Sepulcher (Golgotha) in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in the Christian Quarter. The devotional route commemorates events as Jesus carried the cross from the place of condemnation by Pontius Pilate to his place of crucifixion at **Golgotha** (Calvary) and entombment, places which at that time would have been outside the walls of the city. Of the fourteen stations, **four** are directly or indirectly connected to the Virgin Mary who was present and witnessed the ordeal. The **Fourth Station**, situated at the Armenian Catholic church, recalls the place where Mary suffered seeing her son burdened by the cross on his way to Golgotha. The church incorporates remains from earlier periods including a mosaic floor from a Byzantine church with an image of two footprints or sandals at its center, considered to indicate the place where the Virgin Mary was standing, watching her son. This church together with the adjacent Third Station is the center of the (Uniate) Armenian Catholic Church in Israel. Three other Stations associated



with Mary – X, XII and XIII – are found within the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

Sites to visit: Temp Mount, St. Anne’s Church, Pools of Bethesda, Via Dolorosa, Church of the Holy Sepulcher (**MASS**), Church of the Redeemer, Crusader Church of Santa Maria Latina, St. Mark’s Church. **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
Accommodations: Jerusalem

Day 11

Israeli Museum - Ein Karem

In Christian tradition, Ein Karem is considered to be the birthplace of St. John the Baptist and the place where his parents Zachariah and Elizabeth resided. The New Testament tells of Mary’s visit to her cousin Elizabeth while they both were pregnant. The Church of Visitation is the traditional site of the home of Mary’s cousin Elizabeth and her husband, Zachariah. The façade of the present church is decorated with a mosaic showing Mary riding a donkey led by an angel. On the right-hand wall of the forecourt are more than 40 ceramic plaques with the text of the **Magnificat** (Luke 1:46-55) in different languages.

Sites to visit: Ein Karen, Mary’s Spring, Church of Visitation (**MASS**), Church of St. John the Baptist, Abbey of St. Mary of the Resurrection. **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner **Accommodations:** Jerusalem

Day 12

Ein Karen - Jerusalem

In Christian tradition, Ein Karem is considered to be the birthplace of St. John the Baptist and the place where his parents Zachariah and Elizabeth resided. The New Testament tells of Mary’s visit to her cousin Elizabeth while they both were pregnant. The Church of Visitation is the traditional site of the home of Mary’s cousin Elizabeth and her husband, Zachariah. The façade of the present church is decorated with a mosaic showing Mary riding a donkey led by an angel. On the right-hand wall of the forecourt are more than 40 ceramic plaques with the text of the **Magnificat** (Luke 1:46-55) in different languages. The **Abbey of St. Mary of the Resurrection** within the village of Abu Ghosh is a Crusader foundation built in the 12th century by the Knights Hospitaller of St. John of Jerusalem. The surviving portions of the important medieval frescoes have been restored. Two of the frescoes have depictions of the Virgin Mary. In the half-dome of the north apse, Mary and St. John the Baptist stand on either side of Jesus. The second bay of the north wall depicts the Dormition of the Virgin.

Sites to visit: Ein Karen, Mary’s Spring, Church of Visitation (**MASS**), Church of St. John the Baptist, Abu Ghosh, Abbey of St. Mary of the Resurrection. **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner **Accommodations:** Jerusalem

Day 13

Jerusalem - Return Home

Transfer to Ben Gurion airport for flight back to Canada. **Meals:** Breakfast

Package Includes:

- ◆ Daily mass with Rev. James L. Holland, OMI
- ◆ Host Julian Hnatiw
- ◆ Private deluxe air-condition motor coach with an English speaking guide
- ◆ 4* hotels as listed below, hotel taxes and service charges
- ◆ 2-nights hotel Nazareth, Rimonim Ma’ayan Hotel or similar
- ◆ 2-nights hotel Tiberias, Royal Plaza Tiberias or similar
- ◆ 1-night hotel Netenya, TBD
- ◆ 2-nights hotel Bethlehem, Saint Gabriel Hotel or similar
- ◆ 4-nights hotel Jerusalem, Grand Court or Ramada Hotel
- ◆ All entrance fees included at all sites enumerated in the itinerary.
- ◆ Porterage of (luggage handling) of 1 suitcase per person at hotels
- ◆ All transfers included, boat ride on Sea of Galilee, taxis up/down Mt. Tabor
- ◆ Meals: 11 breakfasts, 10 lunches, 11 dinners

Package Excludes:

- ◆ Drinks during meals
- ◆ All personal expenses
- ◆ Tips for guides and driver
- ◆ Medical/Trip insurance
- ◆ Anything not indicated in “Package Includes”

Rates!*

Occupancy	Land/Tours Only** (per person)	Land/Tours with air (per person) (Edmonton Departure)
double	\$3070	\$4620
single	\$4145	\$5695

*Certain conditions apply. All prices in CND dollars. The prices advertised in this brochure include all taxes and service charges. The prices shown include HST. The contribution to FICAV of \$1.00 per \$1,000 of tourist products or services purchased is additional. In the event of an increase in taxes, duties or other charges authorized by a recognized public authority, the prices shown could increase accordingly. The price may also vary in case of an increase in the fuel surcharge imposed by the carrier. Refer to the general conditions appearing in the registration form. Rates are per person, based on 25 participants, and include excursion listed herein, specified meals, hotel stays and admission to attractions listed herein. Prices valid until June 30, 2015. Only 50 land seats available. Additional gateways (Calgary, Toronto, Ottawa) available.

**Purchase of Land/Tour Only package does not include transfers. If your arrival time to Tel Aviv is before or after the group arrival or your departure time is before or after the group departure, special transfers can be arranged for a fee. Effective Date: February 18, 2015.



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