

## NOTES

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*Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs*

# General Information Booklet

For more information:  
[www.franciscanpilgrimages.com](http://www.franciscanpilgrimages.com)

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# NOTES



**Mobile Passport** Mobile Passport enables U.S. citizens and Canadian visitors to save time during the entry process at most major U.S. airports. Download this from your app store.



**Google Maps** Google Maps is a web mapping service developed by Google. It offers satellite imagery, aerial photography, street maps, 360° panoramic views of streets, real-time traffic conditions, and route planning for traveling by foot, car, bicycle and air, or public transportation.



**Rick Steves' Europe** This is a free self-guided walking tour app that covers Europe's most fascinating destinations, including Rome and Assisi. Individual walking tours need to be downloaded to your phone to use.

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# PILGRIMAGE PREPARATION

## Pilgrimage Purpose/Goals

- Focus our attention on God under the guidance of SS. Francis and Clare.
- Broaden our experience of life.
- Probe SS. Francis and Clare's experiences in order to clarify our own.

We try to make our pilgrimage a dramatic expression of God as center, with all that it might imply for our personal lives.

## Pilgrimage vs. Tour

This is a pilgrimage, not a tour. It is a "cross-cultural journeying together in the spirit of SS. Francis and Clare in order to nurture an encounter with Jesus Christ through the spirituality of place."

### *Mission Statement*

## The Pilgrimage Logo Scallop Shell

Recognized even prior to the middle ages as the symbol of Christian pilgrimages and thus, the emblem of every pilgrim.

To this day pilgrims are acknowledged simply by wearing the shell around their neck. One of the purposes was to scoop water from rivers and streams to quench thirst.



## Tau Cross

The symbol used by Francis of Assisi as his signature.

Wearing the Tau is a declaration of commitment to ongoing transformation of life which was at the core of Francis' Spirituality.

This particular Tau is reputed to have been made by St. Francis' own hand on a windowsill in the chapel of St. Mary Magdalene at Fonte Colombo, Italy.



We hope that you will find time to read a biography of SS. Francis and Clare and pray for God's revealing inspiration before your pilgrimage.



**Timeshifter** Developer: Timeshifter, Inc. Price - see below. This app helps fight jet lag. To create a custom travel plan, you simply answer a few questions about your trip and your natural sleep cycle. Timeshifter then presents you with an up-to-date timeline of when you should try to get some sleep, when you should seek light, or when you should drink or avoid caffeine. Timeshifter is a paid app, starting at \$9.99. Your first plan is free. Frequent travelers can also purchase an annual subscription plan for \$24.99.



**Lingopal 44** Developer: Lingopal Holdings Pty, Ltd. Price: Free. There are over 900 phrases in all which is great, but the thing that really separates this app from old school phrasebooks is that each phrase can be played out loud in the local language! This means you don't need to guess at pronunciation or try to sound things out. Lingopal lets you display each phrase in big letters, plus you can add phrases to a "Favorites" list for easy access. No internet access is needed to look things up.



**Flightview Plus** Developer: FlightView, Inc. Price: \$0.99. This is a feature rich app. Let's start with finding flights you want to track. Of course, you could just add the airline (by name of airline code) and flight number, but you can also search for flights. Internet connection required. Highly recommended.



**World Clock** Developer: timeanddate.com. Price: Free. It displays the local time up to 24 locations, selected from a database with more than 192,000 populated places from more than 230 countries around the world.



**CityMaps2Go** Offline Map and Travel Guide. Developer: Ulmon GmbH. Price: Free. It's easy to get lost when you visit a new city and it can be a pain standing around consulting maps, trying to find where you are and then orientating yourself. CityMaps2Go can solve all these problems without the cost of traditional maps. All you need to do is download the latest version of the map for the city you're planning to visit -- all downloads are free once you've bought the app -- and you're good to go. There are presently nearly 3000 cities available including Rome. Once downloaded the maps are completely accessible offline with information on places of interest and the ability to bookmark spots yourself. Very valuable for travelers.

# TRAVEL APPLICATIONS

Pilgrims will receive maps of Rome, Assisi, and Israel, each with updated recommended restaurants that are reasonably priced and reliable. Your pilgrimage leaders know the area and can give you advice.

For those traveling farther, before or after the pilgrimage, the following apps may be helpful. These apps may be available for use on Android, iPhone and iPad. Download to your device before you leave home to avoid using data.



**Get Packed** Developer: LuuX Sftware. Price: \$1.99. Having to come up with a packing list can be challenging, but Get Packed actually creates your list for you and helps keep track of everything you have actually packed and have not yet packed, while you are getting ready to go on the pilgrimage. When you first launch the App, it will ask for your country of origin, this will help it create the personalized packing list.



**Rome 2Go** Developer: Daniel Garcia. Price: Free. This travel guide provides you with interactive zoomable OFFLINE (no internet required!) maps of the region showing the attractions, restaurants, pubs, hotels, hospitals and many other useful points of interest. You cannot get lost!



**FlightBoard** Developer: Impala Studios. Price: Free. This is a single purpose app that provides live airport departures and arrivals information. A single tap on an individual flight listing pops up a sharing bar from which you can quickly share that flight's arrival of departure details via email.



**Weather+** Developer: Impala Studios. Price: Free. This is a full-featured weather app. This very clear full-screen display shows the time along with the current temperature and weather conditions. Also visible on the home screen is an at-a-glance five day forecast with maximum and minimum representations of the expected conditions.



**MyTSA** Developer: Transportation Security Administration. Price: Free. MyTSA gives you 24/7 access to information that passengers frequently request from the Transportation Security Administration.

## Suggested Reading – Assisi

- Assisi in the Footsteps of Saint Francis**, Desbonnets, P. Theophile  
**Clare of Assisi**, Bartoli, Marco, trans. by Sr. Frances Teresa, OSC. (Quincy, IL: Franciscan Press, 1993)  
**Clare of Assisi: A Biographical Study**, Peterson, Ingrid J., OSF. (Quincy, IL: Franciscan Press, 1993)  
**Francis of Assisi**, Fortini, Arnaldo, trans. Helen Moak. (New York: Crossroad Press, 1981)  
**Francis of Assisi**, Frugoni, Chiara. (New York: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1998)  
**Francis of Assisi: A Revolutionary Life**, House, Adrian. (Mahwah, NJ: Hidden Spring, 2001)  
**Francis: The Journey and the Dream**, Bodo, Murray.  
**Franciscan Solitude**, Cirino, André, OFM; Raischl, Josef  
**God's Fool**, Green, Julian.  
**In the Footsteps of Francis and Clare**, Niemier, Roch, OFM.  
**Legend of the Three Companions**, (*Francis of Assisi: The Founder—Early Documents, Vol. II, 61–110*)  
**Prayer of Franciscan Solitude**, Cirino, André, OFM  
**Salvation: Scenes from the Life of St. Francis of Assisi**, Martin, Valerie. (New York: Vintage Books, 2001)  
**St. Francis of Assisi**, Chesterton, G.K., (New York: Image Books, 1957)  
**The Pilgrim's Italy- A Travel Guide to the Saints**, Heater, James & Colleen. (Nevada City, CA: Inner Travel Books, 2003)  
**The Road to Assisi: The Essential Biography of St. Francis**, Sabatier, Paul. Edited with Introduction by J. Sweeney. (Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2003)

**Required Text** - Our official guidebook and text is *Pilgrim's Companion to Franciscan Places*. This book contains all the readings, prayer services, scripture texts, liturgies, and rituals for the Pilgrimage. [A copy of this book will be given to you when you arrive in Italy.](#)

## Suggested Reading – Rome

Fodor's Exploring Rome or any walking guide to Rome.

## Suggested Reading – Holy Land

**Required Text** - Our official guidebook and text is *The Pilgrim's New Guide to the Holy Land* (Doyle, Stephen C) and *Magnificat Holy Land Companion – A Spiritual Guide for Pilgrims*. These books contain all the readings, prayer services, scripture texts, liturgies, and rituals for the Pilgrimage. [A copy of these books will be given to you prior to leaving for the Holy Lands.](#)

To find additional information to read on Assisi, Rome or the Holy Lands, visit the Tau Publishings website.

# GENERAL INFORMATION

All information can also be found on the Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs website – [www.franciscanpilgrimages.com](http://www.franciscanpilgrimages.com).

## REGISTRATION INFORMATION

### Physical Requirements

Pilgrims **MUST** have the ability to:

- walk on uneven surfaces, where footing can be awkward.
- walk up and down steep inclines.
- walk on trails that are hilly and rocky.
- walk up and down flights of stairs.
- carry one's own luggage (from the airport to the bus; from the bus to your lodge room, etc.)
- stand for up to half an hour in one spot for mini-lectures after walking several blocks.
- walk fast enough to keep up with the group while being led from one historical place to another.

\*\*\***The pilgrimage is STRENUOUS!**\*\*\* No wheelchairs or walkers permitted. Please view the video found at our FPP website called [12 second video on the normal street conditions in Italy](#). Individuals with medical or psychological conditions preventing them from participating in the above tasks are discouraged from participating in this pilgrimage due to the amount of physical activity. If you have any health problems that would create difficulty during a pilgrimage, such as heart disease or mental health issues, you must consult with your doctor before deciding to make this journey. We require a certificate from your medical doctor stating that you are capable of taking part in this pilgrimage without assistance.

Staff Leaders have the right to disqualify anyone at any time during the pilgrimage if they feel the individual is incapable of continuing and/or if his/her continued participation jeopardizes the group's or the person's own safety or pilgrimage experience. Under these circumstances, refunds are not given.

### Commitment

Please do not come with any personal agenda that would prevent you from following the daily schedule. *Full participation* in the program, from beginning to end, is a non-negotiable expectation/commitment for all pilgrims.

### Greccio/Rieti Valley (some programs)

Between Assisi and Rome you may pass through the Rieti Valley and Greccio, where St. Francis popularized the custom of the Christmas crib. A Christmas liturgy or prayer service will be celebrated, usually followed by a festive Christmas dinner.

### Israel/Jordan (Holy Land Pilgrimages)

Each day there is Eucharist, time for prayer, reflection, and input. Your journey as a pilgrim and your relationship with Jesus through Scripture and spirituality will deepen each day. You will visit, experience, and pray at some or all of these places:

Bethlehem	Jericho
Calvary	Mount of Beatitudes
Cana	Mount of Olives
Capernaum	Mount Tabor
Dead Sea	Petra
Gethsemane	River Jordan
Holy Sepulcher	Western Wall

While there are many books written on the Holy Land, we have selected [The Pilgrim's New Guide to the Holy Land](#) by Steven Doyle (1999) as a viable and timeless text to support your reflection on the spirit and history of the holy places you will visit.

## Assisi

Each day there will be input and prayer. When you are in Assisi, the city of SS. Francis and Clare, some of the following will be explored:

- **Chiesa Nuova** - This church is built on the place that claims to have been the home and birthplace of St. Francis.
- **San Damiano** - It was here that St. Francis had his memorable experience with the San Damiano Crucifix and also composed the Canticle of the Creatures. St. Clare lived in the monastery for more than 40 years.
- **Porziuncola/St. Mary of the Angels** - This is where Franciscan Gospel living began and developed. Perhaps no other place has so many memories connected with the life or death of St. Francis and the early years of the brotherhood. In addition, here is where St. Clare was received into the order.
- **Basilica of St. Francis** - At this magnificent Basilica you can view the story of St. Francis as it unfolds in the art of Giotto, Cimabue, Simone Martini, and Lorenzetti. Eucharist may be celebrated at, or near, the Tomb of St. Francis.
- **Basilica of St. Clare** - At this Basilica, restored after being damaged by an earthquake in 1997, visit the Chapel of St. Agnes, the Tomb of St. Clare and the San Damiano Crucifix.
- **Piazza del Comune** - This is the central gathering place of the city of Assisi.
- **San Rufino** - Close to St. Clare's paternal home, this church houses the font where SS. Francis and Clare were baptized. St. Francis preached here.
- **Carceri** – This is where St. Francis found seclusion to pray, solitary confinement.

## Immunizations

Some immunizations are required of US citizens. Some are recommended for those who enter Italy and Israel. Go to <https://www.passporthealthusa.com/destination-advice> and select the country you are traveling to in order to find out additional information about travel vaccines.

## Passports

Everyone must have a passport that is valid for at least six months after your return date to travel to Italy or Israel. A photocopy of the signature/photo page of your passport must be sent to our office with your forms and payment. Also, PLEASE MAKE A COPY OF YOUR PASSPORT AND AIRLINE TICKET and keep them with you in a separate place while traveling.

<https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports/apply.html> - This is a government website that may be helpful in applying for a passport.

It is also suggested that you make a copy of the information page of your passport to keep in your carry-on luggage the entire trip. Leave a copy at home with a relative or friend, and make sure you sign your passport. Keep a photocopy of your passport on your person (behind your name tag) and DO NOT carry your actual passport with you.

## Global Entry/TSA Precheck

It is a good idea to apply for Global Entry and/or TSA precheck. It saves a lot of time going through security, passport check, and transferring flights, particularly when returning to the US. <https://www.cbp.gov/travel/trusted-traveler-programs/global-entry>

## Participants

Our pilgrimages are open to all regardless of gender, religion, or race. Age and physical limitations need to be considered by individual pilgrims due to the amount of walking on uneven surfaces and on hills that will be necessary. Many of the major churches and basilicas in Italy are **not** handicapped accessible.

Our programs are not suitable for children under the age of 15.

For High School students a signed parental consent form is required. High School and College students will be asked to sign and abide by contracts that define appropriate conduct.

Pilgrims who are chaperoning High School students must sign chaperone contracts and assume responsibility for those students.

### Liability

The cost of the program does NOT include: a) passport and visa fees; b) extra travel, visits, or excursions not scheduled for the group by the staff as part of the official program; c) gratuities that are not a part of group visits to shrines; d) travel, life, accident or health insurance; e) airport or border taxes (for those making their own travel plans).

FRANCISCAN PILGRIMAGE PROGRAMS is not responsible for any additional costs incurred by participants who miss scheduled departure times for group travel, either by air or surface transportation.

FRANCISCAN PILGRIMAGE PROGRAMS is not responsible for any medical expenses incurred by any member of the group or for any additional costs incurred by participants who cannot complete the program for whatever reason.

### Requirements

- Completed Registration Forms (Travel Plans and Medical Information), along with your non-refundable deposit of \$200.00. (US Dollars)  
*Note: For students there may be additional forms.*
- Full payment before the specified deadline.
- Photocopy of photo page of a valid passport.
- Full participation from beginning to end, with no personal agenda that would separate one from the group.
- Intent to share, enjoy leisure, read, and use the experience in life and ministry.
- The ability to keep up physically with the group without being disruptive of the program.
- If you have chosen the '**Land Only**' option, we request that a copy of your flight itinerary be sent to the FPP office as soon as you have finalized your travel arrangements. Our staff requires this information to be able to track your arrival in case of flight delays or cancellations.

### Travel Days

Your pilgrimage dates include time for travel. You will generally travel the entire first day, into the second. You will need to meet the pilgrimage leaders at the airport by 10:00 AM on the arrival day (day 2) of the pilgrimage, **unless advised differently by your leaders.**

The last day of your pilgrimage will be spent traveling home.

## GENERAL PILGRIMAGE ITINERARY

The following is a generalized itinerary. You will receive a detailed, hourly itinerary, sent from the FPP Office, approximately 4-6 weeks prior to your departure date.

### Rome

Each day there will be input and prayer. You will usually visit the following places special to St. Francis and today's Christians:

- **St. Peter's Basilica**—The seat of Catholicism where a liturgy of praise is celebrated near the Tomb of Peter.
- **St. John Lateran** — The Cathedral Church of the Pope who is Bishop of Rome, and where St. Francis met the Pope.
- **San Francesco a Ripa**—This church is the only sanctuary in Rome dedicated to St. Francis, for he often stayed here on his visits to Rome.

An optional evening walking tour of Rome will acquaint you with many well-known places of interest. You will also have some free time to pursue your own interests such as visiting the Vatican Museum and the Sistine Chapel (if these are open) or doing some shopping. To get a flavor of the city, there will be opportunities to join with companion pilgrims and eat out on your own in local restaurants for a few meals.

This information is only accessible to authorized US Department of State, Embassy, and Consular personnel in the event that emergency assistance needs to be provided to US citizens and nationals who are traveling abroad.

An individual may also enroll in the STEP program on his/her own. For more information about this US Government service go to <https://step.state.gov/step/>

You can also go to <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel.html> , a United States Government website on travel safety. This is the same site the FPP Office consults to receive information on travel safety.

*NOTE: Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs submits the names, phone numbers, emails and dates of birth of pilgrims to the United States Consulates in Italy and Israel as a service to our pilgrims.*

#### **Taxi Travel**

There are robbers and thieves in Italy just as there are in other countries. When you are on your own in Rome, take only taxis that are at regular taxi stands. Drivers may solicit you at the airports and train stations. Walk right by them and look for a legitimate taxi stand. Locate the All WHITE taxis (the legal ones) that have a red and white sign listing the rates from Fiumicino to inside the Aurelian walls as 48 Euros. Taxis running outside the walls have to run a meter- very expensive. Ordinarily there are cards in English in the taxis explaining additional fares. Carry your Itinerary Booklet with you. It has the address of your pensioni and phone numbers of the pilgrimage leaders. In 2019, the set fee from our pensioni to the Rome airport (during the day) is 50€. Always get a receipt from the driver with the taxi number on it. *Note: Uber in Italy can be expensive.*

#### **Weather Information**

Everyone wants to be blessed with good traveling weather. While we can't guarantee sunny skies and balmy sea breezes, we can direct you to the [AccuWeather.com](http://AccuWeather.com) website that will provide you with as up-to-date information as possible. In the search box type 'Rome, Italy' and the latest weather information will display. Another option would be to type the words **weather rome italy** in your browser's search box and this will display pertinent information.

Holy Land Pilgrimages: According to the internet, the average high temperature in Jerusalem in March and April is 58-68 F, the low 80's in May-July, and the high 70's in October.

#### **Cost Overview**

Pilgrimage cost includes: lodgings that are lean, comfortable, secure and well located; three meals per day with few exceptions; transportation by air-conditioned coach; all tips, offerings and sanctuary fees; full services of staff; daily input with lectures, conferences, prayers and rituals. Snacks and shopping are not included.

Full Program - If you elect to purchase the Full Program, the FPP Office will book your flights. Your eTicket will be sent to you via the email address you provided on your Travel Plans form. You should receive it from our travel agent approximately 2-3 weeks before your departure date. If you do not receive your eTicket two weeks prior to departure, please contact Barbara at Rex Travel: 1-800-777-7739.

*Note: If you want or need a paper ticket, the airlines charge an extra fee. If you make any changes to your airline ticket after it is written, you will be charged a \$100 fee plus any airline penalties. This includes name changes or destination changes.*

Land Only Program - If you want to make your own travel arrangements, you would choose "Land Only" on your Travel Plans form in the First Communication packet. After your flight plans are finalized, we ask that you send us a copy of your itinerary. Our pilgrimage leaders need to be able to track your arrival in case of flight delays or cancellations, and for transportation plans.

Flight Deviations - If your travel request deviates from the departure/return dates of the pilgrimage group flight, you will be asked to make your own flight arrangements and the pilgrimage becomes a Land Only Program, paying the Land Only Program fee. Flight deviations change the class of your ticket from group fare to an individual ticket, which can result in a higher airfare. All other parts of the pilgrimage are still managed by FPP, just not your flight arrangements. If you do not have a travel agent of your own, we can connect you to ours. You will be asked to pay the travel agency directly for your flight arrangements. We ask that you provide us a copy of your itinerary so we can inform your pilgrimage leaders of your travel arrangements.

Private/Single Rooms - We travel as pilgrims and are invited to be flexible.

Because of the nature of our pilgrimage, please understand that there are only a few single rooms available. Additional fees will apply to single rooms (average cost \$350). All rooms have their own bathroom. We try our best to meet individual needs. If you find that you are not compatible with the roommate assigned to you, please confer with your pilgrimage leaders and they will do their best to make adjustments, if possible.

Connecting Flights - A connecting flight is defined as the leg of your flight from your home city to the official departure airport (usually JFK or ORD) and back. Connecting flight costs are not included in the pilgrimage fee and are at the expense of the pilgrim.

Please indicate on your Travel Plans form if you require a connecting flight. After receiving your request, we will contact our travel agent for a suggested itinerary and cost. You will then be contacted by email for approval. After your approval, the tickets will be purchased, and the cost will be added to your pilgrimage balance. The flight will be booked all together as an international flight for smoother travel.

Your balance must be paid 90 days prior to the departure date of the pilgrimage. Once tickets are purchased, they are non-refundable and non-transferable. Should you cancel the pilgrimage after tickets are purchased, you will still be required to pay for the tickets. E-tickets will be sent by email 2 weeks prior to the start date of the pilgrimage by Rex Travel.

**Please note:** *For those who take the Land Only option, we strongly suggest that you have our travel agent, Rex Travel, arrange any connecting flights. You will be contacted for approval of the proposed flight itinerary and cost. Airlines sometimes change their flight schedules and our travel agent would make the necessary adjustments so that you will not miss your international flight connection. Neither Rex Travel nor Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs can be responsible for missed connections if you make your own connecting flight arrangements.*

## **Lodging – Amenities**

Bathrooms - All rooms come with their own bathroom.

Food - The food offerings are well balanced and representative of all basic food groups. Some refer to these meals as a “Mediterranean Diet”. The pilgrimage staff carefully reviews your medical information forms and they will try to ensure that food accommodations are made for allergies and medical conditions. However, it is difficult to expect those who prepare our meals to provide elective diet options. If foods you prefer are not sufficiently available, the pilgrimage staff will tell you where these items can be purchased at your own expense.

Laundry- There are no washing machines or dryers available in the lodges. Some lodgings have a laundry service for a fee (Rome and Assisi). We suggest bringing a small supply of laundry soap and a traveler’s clothes line (available where you buy luggage) so you can do it yourself. In some pilgrim lodges there are outdoor clotheslines available.

Security - A few of our lodgings have a curfew at night that requires you to be in at a designated time. Exceptions can be made; ask your pilgrimage leader in case of necessity. Most locations also have security camera systems in place for common areas. Most rooms have small safes in them.

## **Pilgrimage Punctuality**

**A pilgrimage is a group endeavor.** Your Itinerary Booklet indicates the time and place to meet for various events. **Please be prompt.** Failure to do so can result in you being left behind. If for some reason you choose to leave earlier than the scheduled time, please inform your pilgrimage leader or fellow pilgrims.

## **Safety in Travel - STEP**

Many travelers overseas are naturally concerned about their safety. The Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs has enrolled in the United States STEP Program. The Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) is a free service to allow US citizens and nationals traveling abroad to enroll their trip with the nearest US Embassy or Consulate.

Benefits of enrollment include:

- Receive important information from the Embassy about safety conditions in your destination country, helping you make informed decisions about your travel plans.
- Help the US Embassy contact you in an emergency, whether natural disaster, civil unrest, or family emergency.
- Help family and friends get in touch with you in an emergency.

### **Dietary Requirements/Food Allergies**

Food allergies and medical dietary restrictions such as ‘gluten-free’ or ‘lactose intolerant’ should have been reported on your medical form returned to the FPP Office. Our lodgings do make allowance for elective vegetarians IF NOTIFIED BY US IN ADVANCE. If you did not inform us, please do so immediately.

### **Drinking Water**

In Rome, and some parts of Israel, the water is fine to drink. However, the minerals (excess chlorine or other chemicals) that are used to treat it might taste strange and take a bit of adjustment. It could cause some queasiness or have an adverse effect on your health since you are not used to it. Therefore, you might want to stick to bottled water for your comfort. There are markets nearby all hotel locations where bottled water can be purchased.

### **Eating Out**

You will be provided the opportunity to eat out at your expense throughout the pilgrimage. At that time, you can order what you want. When eating out at FPP’s expense, you may be provided 2-3 choices, often made in advance. This is due to traveling in a group.

*The founder of Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs, Damien Isabell, OFM, once wrote: “The pilgrim often feels that he/she is not in control as one is at home. This is true. Others plan daily schedules, others prepare your food, others arrange your accommodations, others are with you with whom you would not choose to live. Loss of control heightens one’s sense of anxiety which is displayed in the constant pressing of the pilgrim leaders for information, help and attention.” [Workbook for Franciscan Studies, pp.253-256]*

*We encourage pilgrims to enter into a sense of pilgrimage to a foreign land, where in Francis’ words, you are “gathered under a roof that belongs to another,” [2 Celano: 59] and are invited to “eat all foods which people can eat.” [Early Rule 9:13]*

### **Internet/WiFi**

Internet service and WiFi is available in most of the places you will visit. However, the service is often unstable and irregular. There are locations -- usually associated with cafes -- that provide internet service for a fee. The pilgrimage staff will provide direction to help in this area.

### **Payment**

You are encouraged to send in your full payment with your completed forms as soon as possible. There is a deadline given in the First Correspondence packet which is based on the requirements of the airlines. Payment reminders are not sent out at this time.

Full payment must be received in our office, along with other required forms, a minimum of 90 days prior to departure. We must provide information to the airlines 90 days in advance and we do not confirm final reservations until payment is received. Tickets will not be sent out until full payment is received. Payment can be made by check, bank draft, money order, credit card, or by electronic funds transfer. Please contact the FPP Office for information on this process.

### **Late Registration**

Late registrations require immediate full payment. You will also be added as a Land Only pilgrim, requiring you to make your own air travel arrangements. See the Pilgrimage – Land Only Program section of this booklet.

### **Overpayment**

Those who send in final payments without deducting their deposit or previous payments, resulting in an overpayment, will be refunded the overage amount after the pilgrimage is completed.

### **Cancellation by a Pilgrim**

This covers both the Full Program and Land Only Program options.

If you cancel after you have paid in full, but before your ticket has been issued:

- Land Only Program - Your program payment will be refunded, minus the non-refundable deposit and a USD 50 processing fee.
- Full Program - Your program payment will be refunded, minus the non-refundable deposit and a USD 50 processing fee.

If you cancel after you have paid in full, but after your ticket has been issued:

- Land Only Program - You will need to contact the agency where you booked your ticket. Your program payment will be refunded, minus the non-refundable deposit and a USD 50 processing fee.
- Full Program - Most connecting flights and international ticket are non-refundable. It might be reusable depending on the airline’s policies. If we are able to cancel any tickets purchased, then your program payment will be refunded, minus the non-refundable deposit, any airline penalty fees, and a USD 50 processing fee.

**Note:** *The cost of your international ticket might be refunded if cancellation is due to sudden serious illness or death of an immediate family member. Policies vary from airline to airline, and in this instance the airlines might reduce their penalty. Documentation of illness/death is required.*

- If you decide to transfer to another pilgrimage program, your program payment can be transferred to the new pilgrimage. Any fees associated with this movement will need to be paid by you. If the program you are transferring to is more expensive, you will also need to pay the difference in that cost. A processing fee of USD 50 will be charged.

### **Cancellation of the Pilgrimage Program**

If a pilgrimage is cancelled by Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs, those currently registered will receive a full refund. If you cancel prior to an “official” cancellation, your ticket will be subject to airline penalties. Pilgrimages will be cancelled for the following reasons: an insufficient number of registrations; natural disasters that would impede running the program; or Travel Warnings from the United States Department of State.

**Note:** *Airline refunds can take up to two months to process. If, after that time you have not yet received your refund, please contact the FPP Office for a status report.*

### **Priests/Deacons Attending**

It is church policy that we submit the names of priest celebrants well in advance of the pilgrimage. For Francis, participation at the Holy Eucharist, as in the Liturgy of the Hours, was a celebration of the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, bonded with the community and with the Roman Church. Thus, all pilgrims are invited to participate fully—as they are able—in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. It is our custom for a member of the staff to preside at all prayer (including the Holy Eucharist) and for no concelebration. Priests may talk to pilgrimage leaders for special situations.

Ordained presbyters and deacons are invited to abide by the admonition of St. Francis: “I admonish and exhort you in the Lord, therefore, to celebrate only one Mass a day according to the rite of the Holy Church in those places where the brothers dwell. But if there is more than one priest there, let the other be content, for the love of charity, at hearing the celebration of the other priest.” (*A Letter to the Entire Order*, 30–31.) If you have a concern, please consult with the pilgrimage leaders.

## **PILGRIMAGE INFORMATION**

### **ATM Machines**

ATMs are available in many places, but they do not always work. You need to be aware that in addition to the ATM fee there is also an exchange fee and interest for most cards. A 4-digit pin number will be required. DO NOT use debit cards in Italy.

### **Cell Phones and Phone Cards**

If you want to purchase phone cards to use for calling home from Italy, wait until you get to Italy and buy the cards there. You will not be able to use your US phone cards in most Italian phones.

There are some US cell phones that work in Italy, but the roaming charges may be very high. Your phone may have to be “unlocked” to work in Europe. Check with your cell service provider at least two weeks before the pilgrimage. Tell them where you will be on pilgrimage to make sure your cell phone will operate when you land! Tourist SIM Cards are available for rental in Italy. These can be purchased at the airport.

### **Credit Cards**

All banks and most restaurants and shops accept Mastercard and Visa. Your credit card is the most convenient means of payment to avoid carrying cash. However, note that most credit card companies add a 2% currency exchange transaction fee. Check with your credit card company for their policy. Keep a list of your credit card numbers and emergency bank contact with you in case your wallet is lost or stolen. **IMPORTANT: Be sure to notify your credit card company that you will be out of the country.**

### **Currency Exchange – Euros/Shekels**

In Europe, pilgrimage leaders will be able to exchange a limited amount of USD (**in 50 or 100 USD increments**) for Euros. Pilgrims travelling to the Holy Land (Israel and Jordan) may exchange US currency for shekels at the airport. Consult the “currency converter” website [www.xe.com/ucc](http://www.xe.com/ucc) for up-to-date currency exchange rates. Note, however, that the website does not distinguish between the rates for buying or selling the currencies nor does it calculate service fees or foreign transaction fees. Major airports have Currency Exchange (Cambio) offices and ATMs (Bancomat in Italy) throughout the terminal areas.

## ARRIVAL INFORMATION—ROME

### Arrival at Leonardo Da Vinci Airport

You arrive in Terminal 3, pass through **PASSPORT CONTROL**, collect your luggage, and finally, pass through **CUSTOMS** by going through the line which says “Nothing to Declare”. It should take about one (1) hour to get through this entire process. Keep on the alert because there is a special line for US, Can, UK and AUS passports, but it is not always open. Please DO NOT use the line marked European Union.

You will meet your Pilgrimage Leaders just **outside of Customs in Terminal 3**. Look for the “Ground Transportation Information” sign after you go through the Customs exit. Meet your pilgrimage leaders at the information desk (marked with a sign with the letter “i”) by the assigned time provided to you. Look for the Franciscan Pilgrimages sign with the FPP logo. Please remember to wear your name tags. It helps the leaders identify you.

If your bags do not arrive with your flight, let one of the other pilgrims know to tell the FPP pilgrimage leaders that your luggage has not arrived yet and that you are waiting for it. If you have a phone, contact your FPP pilgrimage leaders directly to inform them of the situation. You may need to file a lost baggage claim and that will take some time. We do not want you to miss your transportation connection, especially if starting in Assisi.

If you know your flight is going to be late, it is always good to contact your pilgrimage leaders. Usually, the pilgrimage leaders are following the flight times either on their phone apps or at the airport. Their phone numbers can be found on page 2 of your Itinerary Booklet.

Should you need to take a taxi from the airport to the hotel, be aware that you need to locate All WHITE taxis (the legal ones) that have a red and white sign listing the rates from Fiumicino to inside the Aurelian walls as 48 Euros. Taxis running outside the walls have to run a meter- very expensive. Always get a receipt from the driver with his/her license number on it. The license number is also posted in the taxi.

## PRE-PILGRIMAGE INFORMATION

### Airline - Baggage Fees

Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs, Inc. is not responsible for luggage fees charged by the air carriers.

### Airline - Cancellations

Deposits are non-refundable. Exceptions can be granted in cases of sudden serious illness or death of an immediate family member. Documentation (hospital bill, letter from a doctor on office stationery, or copy of a death notice) is required. A penalty fee may be applied to any cancellation.

### Airline - Confirmation and Check-In

Confirm flight times and numbers online the day before you leave. The airlines sometimes surprise us with last minute changes! You may check-in with your airline carrier 24 hours prior to your departure time. You may select your seat assignments at this time if you have not already done so.

### Europe’s Voltage (Italy and Israel)

Europe’s voltage is 240/250 watts. Electronic items, such as laptops, tablets, cell phones, etc., are made to travel and they convert both European and American electric current into the voltage they need to operate. Some, but not all lodgings are equipped with USB wall outlets, so you will need to travel with an “**outlet adapter**” that allows flat-pronged plugs to fit into European round-prong outlets. These are readily available at travel stores in the USA, Italy, and Israel. Please note, if your appliance has a three-pronged plug you need to make sure it will fit into your outlet adapter. It is suggested that you have a travel electrical “**converter**”. These are rated for devices under and over 1,000 watts. Please be sure to read the label before purchasing.

### Helpful Websites

- [www.franciscanpilgrimages.com](http://www.franciscanpilgrimages.com) This site contains the latest news about Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs staff members, programs and events, terms, travel tips, packing tips, etc. and a “Pilgrimage Follow-Up” section that has newsletters on important Franciscan sanctuaries of Assisi and Rome and other items of interest. A printable registration form is also available.
- [www.travel.state.gov/passport](http://www.travel.state.gov/passport) This site contains all the information you will need in order to apply for or renew a passport.
- [www.accuweather.com](http://www.accuweather.com) Go to this site, click on the search function and type in the name of the city and country (such as Rome, Italy) you are going to visit. On the next screen you have a choice to see many views including a whole month at a glance. This is helpful when it comes to packing. Unfortunately, Assisi is not a large enough city to be listed on that site, but the nearby city of Perugia, Italy, would be a good indicator of what to expect.
- [www.xe.com/ucc/](http://www.xe.com/ucc/) This site gives information on the various bills and coins you will be encountering in Europe.
- <https://www.google.com/maps> A great site to use while in Italy or the Holy Lands. It also provides verbal walking directions, if used.

### Luggage

Generally, the maximum weight of a carry-on is 22 pounds. The dimensions for the carry-on can be no larger than 22"x16"x8" so that it can fit under the seat or in the overhead bin. Some domestic carriers may limit you to slightly smaller dimensions (20"x12"x8"). The average weight limit for checked baggage is 50 pounds. There may be a baggage fee for checked luggage.

Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs, Inc. is not responsible for luggage fees charged by the air carriers, delayed luggage or lost luggage.

### Maps in Italy

Maps of Rome and Assisi will be provided to you by your pilgrimage leaders when you arrive at your hotel. If you want to download the maps sooner, you can find them at our FPP website: <https://www.franciscanpilgrimages.com/>

### Travel Insurance – **IMPORTANT!**

Travel Insurance, also known as Trip Cancellation Insurance, is not included in this pilgrimage. **We highly recommend taking out travel insurance** which covers risks associated with traveling such as trip cancellation, trip interruption, loss of luggage, trip and baggage delays, and some medical expenses occurring before you leave and while in a foreign country. Please contact Barbara Witkowski at Rex Travel at 312.641.6633 or 800.777.7739 or [barbara@rextravel.com](mailto:barbara@rextravel.com).

### Traveler’s Checks (Not Recommended)

If you purchase traveler’s checks (in US dollars-NOT IN EUROS) such as American Express, AAA, or Visa, they are only accepted in some places, and not necessarily accepted at equal value. Always make sure you copy the serial numbers of your checks and carry them separately from the checks themselves.

### Visas

For citizens of the USA, no visas are required for entrance into Italy or Israel at this time. Beginning in 2021 you will be required to obtain Electronic Travel Authorization. You will need to use the ETIAS (Europe Travel Information Authorization System) to obtain your visas. Go to <https://www.etiasvisa.com/etias-requirements/americans> for additional information on how to apply for ETIAS.

If you hold a passport from a country other than the USA or the European Union, please check with the local consulate in Italy or Israel to find out if you need a visa. If you need a visa, you will need to initiate the process several months in advance in order to assure that your visa arrives in time. The FPP Office can send a letter confirming your participation in a pilgrimage. You may want to check on the availability of a visa service in your country. Such a service can assist you (for a fee) in obtaining the necessary documents for your visa.

One such office is:

Expert Visa Service Inc.  
28 E. Jackson Blvd., Ste. 1520  
Chicago, IL 60606-2281  
Tel: 312.663.6667

## Personal Spending

Meals at your own expense - You will have the opportunity to eat 3-5 meals at your own expense. A decent meal is about 30-60€. For 5 meals, you are looking at 150-300€. Plan accordingly for this expense.

Snacks/beverages, including water – on *some* airlines are no longer free and you may need to purchase any desired items. At many of the lodges, you will need to pay for any coffee, beverages or snacks between meals or after the evening meal. Don't be surprised if you spend about 20€ per day for snacks.

Covered meals - Look carefully at your itinerary. Every meal is provided unless stated otherwise. Some lodges have a breakfast buffet while others serve a continental breakfast. The evening meal is usually served later than in the USA. The meals are very adequate, but time in between is quite long and you may get hungry.

Gifts/souvenirs - Plan what you intend to spend for gifts/souvenirs, post cards and stamps (about 1.50€ per card). Many pilgrims say that a good rule of thumb is about 400€ to cover EVERYTHING for one week (700€ for two weeks). These are generous but safe figures. Whatever you don't spend you can bring home. The fluctuation of the dollar needs to be taken into consideration.

Water Closets – In America, this is known as a bathroom. Most public water closets charge a small fee (approx. 50 coin Euros) to use. It is always good to carry small coinage for this need.

## Communication from FPP

There are several correspondence mailings from the FPP Office with every pilgrimage – registration documents and information about the pilgrimage. Registration includes forms we need back and general information about traveling. The second mailing is a packet which includes last minute information, a rooming list, and a detailed itinerary. IMPORTANT: Carry the Itinerary Booklet with you at all times. It contains the addresses of the pensioni and the phone numbers of the staff.

## Medications

If you are taking prescription medications, bring along enough medicines to last the trip, plus a little extra. Some bring medication for diarrhea or constipation. You may want to consider bringing small amounts of over-the-counter medicines for headaches, colds, etc. if you normally use these items.

**Do not put your medications into your checked luggage.** Please take all your medications with you in your carry-on bag. *In the event of misplaced luggage, it can be difficult or impossible to get replacements.* It would be helpful to write out a list of your prescription medications, their dosages and when you take them and keep this information with your passport. *Please contact your medical insurance provider in order to understand what kind of coverage may be available for you in Europe.*

If you take a medication that requires the use of syringes, a general rule is that a limit of five syringes can be put in your carry-on luggage, with the rest of the supply packed in your checked luggage. Your name should be written on the prescription label, and it would be advisable to obtain a note from your physician stating your name, the name of your injectable medication, and the purpose for its use.

## Packing Tips – Carry-on Luggage

Be sure to keep the following items with you during your flight:

- Tickets (include a photocopy of your ticket in your pocket or purse)
- Passport
- Medications
- Medication list - keep a list of all current medications you are taking
- Passport copy - keep a copy of your passport with you at all times
- Itinerary Booklet (on the inside front cover are addresses and phone numbers of your lodges and cell phone numbers of the staff)
- One change of clothing (should luggage be delayed)
- Personal grooming items— TSA regulations dictate travel-size liquids be less than 4.0 ounces and placed in a quart size clear zipper bag. This includes small bars of soap, travel size tubes of toothpaste, etc. (Remember you can get everything in Italy and Israel that you can get at home: shaving items, toothpaste, shampoo, soap, etc.) Remember to put manicure items in your *checked* baggage. Scissors or other pointed items may be confiscated if you leave them in your carry-on. Go to [www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov) for the latest regulations regarding items that are permitted in your carry-on.
- Umbrella, poncho, and/or raincoat
- Snacks for the plane
- Sweater, light jacket, or cover-up for on the plane
- YOUR MONEY

### Packing Tips – Checked Luggage

*Note: Dress is mainly casual, although you will want to dress respectfully for all church visits. You are not permitted to enter most churches in Europe if you are wearing shorts above the knees or a sleeveless shirt. Coat and ties are not required. Dress in layers. Light or medium weight clothing with a jacket is recommended. A raincoat and/or umbrella is recommended. Irons are not available in many of the lodges, nor do they have washers and/or dryers, so plan accordingly.*

- Two pairs of comfortable walking shoes are the most important item to pack. Italy and the Holy Lands have narrow, uneven, cobbled streets and many storied monuments which can be a challenge for travelers.
- Washcloths, in a plastic bag (towels are provided, but Europeans generally don't supply washcloths).
- Liquid or powder detergent (small plastic bottle), 6-12 small plastic clothes pins, string/rope for hanging (available in a travel store or luggage department) for hand washing and drying your clothes.
- Plastic bags for packing dirty shoes or laundry.
- Travel alarm.
- Ball-point pen/pencil.
- Sunglasses.
- Insect repellent (optional for use during the summer months).
- Extra film, if you bring a camera (film is costly in Europe) or additional memory cards if digital.
- Small packets of facial tissues.
- Individual hand wipes.
- Shower thongs, if desired.
- An adapter and/or converter for any electrical items (outlets in Italy and Israel run on 220 volts). Be aware that most Americans damage plug-ins even when converters are used. It is cheaper to buy electrical items there with their wattage.
- Night wear/underwear/socks.
- Women - a couple of skirts or pairs of slacks/washable pants.
- Women - shirts or blouses that have at least short sleeves (no tank tops).
- Sweater or sweatshirt, windbreaker or jacket, scarf, gloves, hat or earmuffs, depending on the time of year.
- Make sure all clothes are easily washable and fast drying.

### Additional Travel Tips

- Wear loose-fitting clothing on the plane. Soft slipper socks can also add to your comfort while you sleep during the flight.
- Leave home as many of your electrical devices as possible. Check with a travel store regarding what kind of adapter/converter you may need. *Note: Many lodges do supply hair dryers, but not irons.*
- If you need a morning dose of caffeine, you may want to bring a jar of instant coffee or coffee packets for yourself. Hot water is available. There is a regular coffee machine available for a slight fee.
- Many airlines are no longer providing free snacks on shorter flights. Airport food and food purchased on the planes can be expensive. Before you leave home, purchase a few breakfast bars or granola bars to pack in your carry-on to use as snacks. If you carry a small plastic water bottle, it can be refilled at airport water fountains.
- **Remember that you must handle your own luggage, so pack lightly, and remember to leave room for items you purchase. You will need to carry your own suitcase on and off buses and in and out of our places of lodging. Please do not expect others to carry your luggage for you.**  
*Suggestion: Pack your suitcase, take out half and you will still have too much. Walk with this around the block and you will get some idea of what we mean by 'travel lightly'. Try to manage with one small carry-on and one average-sized checked suitcase.*
- The weather in Italy and Israel can be like the weather in New York or Chicago. Summer months are warm while spring and fall can be cool. Early spring and late fall *can* be cold and wet. Bring things that could be layered when the weather is cool and peeled off when it is warm. A light sweater is generally sufficient for summer evenings. If you are traveling in very early spring or late fall, bring warm clothing.
- Nighttime room temperatures can be variable.
- You might want to bring your own notebook if you intend to take notes or write down reflections.
- Telescope walking sticks a plus.
- Summer months—mosquito repellent.