

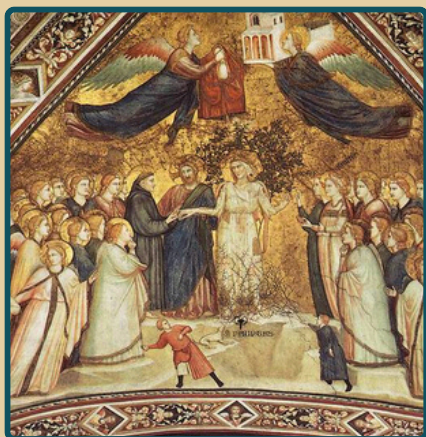


The Pilgrim's Companion:

Sharing the Franciscan Journey

June, 2024

Contemplative Corner



Francis weds Lady Poverty, Basilica of San Francesco

Francis and Poverty
these two lovers...

The love, the wonder, and the
sweet regard,

They made to be the cause of
holy thoughts;

So much so that the venerable
Bernard
First bared his feet, and after
so great peace

Ran, and, in running, thought
himself too slow.

O wealth unknown! O veritable
good!

Dante -
Writing of St. Francis
Paradiso 11, Divine Comedy



Pilgrimage Discoveries and Destinations

From September through May, The Pilgrim's Companion provides a contemplative moment in your inbox. We will return to that format in September but this summer, we're switching things up so as to share information on some specialty pilgrimages. For information on these and more, visit our website at franciscanpilgrimages.com. Feeling ready for Franciscan adventure? Read on!

Our traditional pilgrimage follows the footsteps of Francis and Clare to Rome and Assisi. Pilgrimage is an interior journey mirrored by an exterior one. Through prayer and reflection, fraternitas and historical visits, we are invited into the Franciscan story. We may find new understanding or have a hunch there is a new direction calling us. We make room within the inn of our hearts and stay open to possibilities. If that is the journey that is calling you, please take time to consider one of our Assisi pilgrimages.

For travelers who wish to combine a reflective visit to Assisi with casual visiting of other sites in Italy, one other offering is our "Tourgrimage." Led by Fr. Gregory Plata, OFM this year's Tourgrimage, October 18th-26th, starts in Florence, the hometown of Dante Alighieri. Dante, was a Secular Franciscan himself, and Florence has numerous associations with Franciscans. On your journey, you will have the chance to wander this beautiful city and continue on to Assisi, Greccio and Rome. This is a great opportunity to experience the cities as a casual visitor, as well as to have prayer and quiet reflection time. See the next page for a few words from Fr. Greg.

Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs started with three priests leading their fellow clergy to visit the sacred sites of St. Francis and St. Clare. As word spread, schools, hospitals, and various organizations began requesting FPP to guide their staffs in the footsteps of Francis and Clare, deepening their understanding of the Franciscan charism and mission. Today, over 50 years later, FPP continues to expand pilgrimage opportunities to provide sacred time in the sacred places of Francis and Clare. Choose the journey that is right for you. Hope to see you soon. Peace and Good!

Tourgrimage Dates

October 18-26, 2024

March 7-15, 2025

October 17-25, 2025

CLICK HERE

Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs
Journeying together in the spirit of St. Francis and St. Clare
Deepening one's life in the Spirit

On the Road of Tourgrimage with Father Gregory Plata, OFM

As far as I can remember, I've always had wander lust. During the first 10 years of my life, I was an Air Force brat, having lived in France for several years, then over to San Antonio, TX. One of my fondest family memories was of my dad taking us for extended Sunday drives after Mass, where I was fascinated, even at a young age, with the various typographies meeting my eyes. In adult life, those memories would come back, now mixed with both a historical and cultural curiosity.

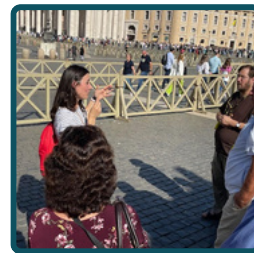
I had the privilege of working with Fr. Roch Niemier, OFM back in the early nineties, and laying out the first edition of the Pilgrim's Companion Book was one of my first experiences with him. I tried to learn as much as possible as I helped proof read Roch's text, but the opportunity to visit Assisi and the sanctuaries provided a blessed and incredible experience. This was pure gift, and in my opinion, every gift needs to be shared.

The idea of the Tourgrimage came from wanting to share my love of St. Francis, and our Franciscan life, vision and values with others while traveling through Italy. It was created for lay people who have a devotion to St. Francis and who also want to see, taste and experience a bit more of Italy's rich cultural heritage. As the spiritual director for the group, I offer Mass each day while Dr. Manuela Manfré provides historical and cultural insights with her expertise. I offer a deeper insight into the life of St. Francis as we explore Assisi, the Portiuncula, Rivo Torto and Greccio during our journey.

One of the great pleasures I experience on a Tourgrimage is watching the faces of our guests as we "walk and talk" throughout Assisi. To learn about Francis through various forms of media are one thing, but when they learn the history of the San Damiano cross and actually see it, or pray at the tomb of il poverello, it immerses them in the spirit of what FPP intends: a connection with our founder in a more profound way.

The spirit of Assisi lingers as we head to Rome. Manuela, who is a licensed professional tour guide, has gotten us so close to the Pope during his Wednesday audience that you can almost touch him! To watch the expression on the pilgrim's faces is priceless as we tour the Vatican, go to the Coliseum and have Mass at the catacombs of San Sebastian.

One of the key reasons I love my vocation as a friar is because I belong to and live within the dynamics of a Franciscan community. My goal is to somehow bring that spirit of community with those who participate in our Tourgrimage, as we pray together, journey together and reflect on the days events over a glass of wine or other libations. In essence, to be a part of the Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs is a gift, and I so much enjoy sharing that gift with others.



Join us:
October 18-26, 2024
March 7-15, 2025
October 17-25, 2025



Franciscan Resources

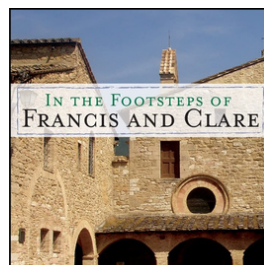
Click on pictures for online links

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General Questions can be sent to InfoFPP@thefranciscans.net

Do you have a story or picture to share?

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