

Please Join Fr. Alfred Obiudu on a Pilgrimage to:

GREECE



In the Footsteps of St. Paul with Greek Island Cruise



October 6-16, 2023



\$3,999 PER PERSON FROM **WASHINGTON DC (IAD)**

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SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR:
Fr. Alfred Obiudu



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Day-by-Day Itinerary

Day 1: Friday, Oct 6, 2023 | Depart for Greece
Make your way to your local airport where you will board your overnight flight(s). Your meals will be served on board.

Day 2: Saturday, Oct 7, 2023 | Arrive Thessaloniki
Upon landing at Makedonia Thessaloniki Airport, make your way to the baggage claim area and collect your luggage. Proceed to the arrivals hall, where you will be greeted by your tour guide and/or driver. You will be escorted to the bus to be transferred to your hotel. Enjoy some time to relax after check in. This evening, enjoy a delicious meal. Overnight in Thessaloniki.

Day 3: Sunday, Oct 8, 2023 | Philippi - Kavala - Thessaloniki
After breakfast, start your journey in Greece with the first stop of the day in Philippi. Philippi was the city to which Saint Paul the Apostle delivered his first sermon and where he established the first church in Europe. "And from there (He went) to Philippi, which is the leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman Colony. We remained in this city some days..." (Acts 16:12-18). Also, it is the site where Saint Paul baptized a woman named Lydia, the first convert to Christianity in Europe. Visit the Roman Forum where Saint Paul cast a spirit out of a fortune-telling woman. While here, you will have the opportunity to view the prison (now in ruins) that Saints Paul and Silas were thrown into by the owners of the fortune-tellers. Continue to the modern port city of Kavala, which was once the ancient Neapolis. This port is where Saints Paul, Silas, Luke, and Timothy landed when they sailed into Europe. After enjoying this city by the sea, return to Thessaloniki for a delicious meal and restful overnight.

Day 4: Monday, Oct 9, 2023 | Thessaloniki - Kalambaka
Start the day with breakfast at the hotel. In the winter of 49-50 A.D., Saint Paul wrote two epistles to the Thessalonians. These letters urged Christians to "live blamelessly" and to refrain from living idly while they wait for the second coming of Christ. While in Thessaloniki, you will witness a number of ancient artifacts, such as the triumphal Arch of Galerius that is found at the start of Via Egnatia. Due to the convenient location, this arch was once a strategic artery of the Roman Empire. It was originally constructed in order to honor the Roman Emperor Galerius following the Roman victory over the Persians. Following your city-tour, transfer to Kalambaka. This evening, you will have a wonderful meal and a relaxing overnight in Kalambaka.

Day 5: Tuesday, Oct 10, 2023 | Delphi—Athens
Visit Delphi, the center of the ancient world (navel) of the earth, whose prestige extended far beyond the boundaries of the Hellenic world. On the slopes of Mount Parnassus, in a landscape of unparalleled beauty and majesty, lie the ruins of the Sanctuary of Apollo Pithios. Visit the site and the museum and continue to Athens. "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are religious. For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: "to an unknown God". What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you..." Athens is one of the most glorious cities in the world and the cradle of western civilization as we know it today. Dinner and an overnight at your hotel in Athens.

Day 6: Wednesday, Oct 11, 2023 | Athens
After a nice breakfast at the hotel, you will start with a tour of the oldest city in the world, Athens! Visit the rock that has dominated the panorama of Athens for twenty-five centuries, the Acropolis. At the Acropolis, you will see the ruins of the Parthenon, Erechtheum, and Propylae. After, you will ascend Mars Hill where Saint Paul spoke to the Athenians. At this site, Paul spoke to the Athenians about the one and only God (Acts 17:22). While in this city, you will be able to view the ancient Agora, the former public center of Athenian life. It held the focus of a political, commercial, social, religious, and cultural center. As you are in the former political center, proceed for a drive through the city to view the House of Parliament on Syntagma Square. Also, you will have the opportunity to view the University of Athens, the oldest higher education institute in Greece, as well as, the National Library of Greece that holds 4,500 Greek manuscripts. Then, visit Panathenaic Stadium, the beautifully marbled multi-purpose stadium. It is home to the Olympian Zeus, and is the site of the first modern era Olympics (1896). Dinner and overnight in Athens.

Day 7: Thursday, Oct 12, 2023 | Athens - Excursion to Corinth
After a nice breakfast at the hotel we will start with a tour of one of the oldest cities in the world, Athens! Visit the rock that has dominated the panorama of Athens for twenty-five centuries, the Acropolis. At the Acropolis, you will see the ruins of the Parthenon, Erechtheum, and Propylae. Following that, you will ascend Mars Hill, where Saint Paul spoke to the Athenians. At this site, Paul spoke to the Athenians about the one and only God (Acts 17:22). While in this city, you will be able to view the ancient Agora, the former public center of Athenian life. It held focus as a political, commercial, social, religious, and cultural center. Since you are in the former political center, proceed for a drive through the city to view the House of Parliament on Syntagma Square. Also, you will have the opportunity to view the University of Athens, the oldest higher education institute in Greece, as well as the National Library of Greece, which holds 4,500 Greek manuscripts. Then, visit Panathenaic Stadium, the beautifully marbled multi-purpose stadium. It is home to the Olympian Zeus, and is the site of the first modern era Olympics (1896). Dinner and overnight in Athens.

Stadium, the beautifully marbled multi-purpose stadium. It is home to the Olympian Zeus, and is the site of the first modern era Olympics (1896). Following your visit to Athens, you will proceed to ancient Corinth. Saint Paul lived in Corinth for two years. While here, Saint Paul felt great grief over what the Gentile Church in Corinth had become. As a result, he was prompted to write four letters, all with the overarching theme of love. In Corinth, you will have the opportunity to view the remains of the first century shops, the site of Saint Paul's trial by Gallio, the Fountain of Peirene, and the Temple of Apollo. Following your visit to Corinth, return to Athens for a delicious meal and overnight.

Day 8: Friday, Oct 13, 2023 | Athens - Start 3-day Cruise (Celestyal Cruises Cruise Lines) to Mykonos
Following breakfast, you will proceed to the Piraeus port where you will board the ship for your 3-day cruise. Your first stop will be the Island of Mykonos, the most cosmopolitan of the Greek islands, which attracts visitors from all over the world. After docking, transfer to Hora, the island's capital. Upon arrival in Hora, you will enjoy a walking tour that will take you up the narrow cobbled streets of the city. Pass by chic boutiques, elegant nightclubs, and white washed houses to arrive in Alefkandra. This section of Mykonos is known as the "Venice of Mykonos", since the homes have wooden balconies and are built on the sea. Historically, these homes were of the wealthy merchants and captains. Return to the cruise ship for dinner and overnight.

Day 9: Saturday, Oct 14, 2023 | Kusadasi - Ephesus (Mary's House) - Patmos
After breakfast on board, arrive at the lively Turkish port of Kusadasi. Transfer to the small village of Mt. Koresos. While in this village, you will visit the small stone chapel that is situated upon the site where the Virgin Mary spent her last days. Following this visit, your group will walk through the Magnesian Gate to ancient Ephesus. Begin your walking tour, which will take you through some of the most magnificent excavations in the world. Some of the sites include the Odeon (concert hall), the Fountain of Trajan, the steam-heated Baths of Scoolastika, the Temple of Hadrian and the Latrines, and the Library of Celsus. The last stop on the walking tour is the Great Theatre, which had a capacity of 25,000 people and is a site of where Saint Paul preached. On the return part of your walking tour, follow the exact route that Mark Anthony and Cleopatra once rode in procession via the Arcadian Way. This main street runs from the Great Theatre to the main city's harbor. On your transfer back to Kusadasi, you will have the opportunity to view the Basilica of Saint John. In the sixth century, Emperor Justinian erected this structure over the grave of the evangelist, John. Upon arrival in Kusadasi, enjoy free time to explore on your own before returning to the ship. When you embark on the ship, your journey will continue to Patmos, where you will tender to the port of the island. You may choose to take the **Optional Shore Excursion**, to visit the monastery of Saint John the Theologian. This marvelous structure was built nine-hundred years ago, and continues to be supported by the walls of a strong fortification. In addition to the stunning main church that contains outstanding frescoes, you will have the opportunity to view the beautiful courtyard, dining room, and the bakery. Your tour continues to the small museum, where you will view priceless ecclesiastical treasures such as books, manuscripts, mosaics, icons, textiles, vestments, and jewelry. Board the bus, which will take you to the Monastery and Grotto of the Apocalypse. In this grotto, experience a once in a lifetime opportunity to view the site of where the Book of Revelations was written. The silver niches in the wall mark the pillow and ledge that were used as a desk by the author of the Book. Additionally, view the three-fold crack made by the voice of God who emphasized the importance of honoring the Holy Trinity. Your **Optional shore excursion** will culminate with a transfer to the port of Scala. While in this quaint and picturesque harbor, you will enjoy free time before returning to the ship.

Day 10: Sunday, Oct 15, 2023 | Heraklion - Santorini
This morning you will awaken and transfer to the largest city on the island of Crete, Heraklion. While in this administrative capital, visit the ancient ruins of the Palace of Knossos. These ruins were discovered in 1899, and the palace is currently partially reconstructed. This ancient palace is believed to have been the mythical Labyrinth of King Minos and the seat of ancient Minoan culture. Additionally, it is the site where Saint Paul met the owner and captain of the ship who warned him of continuing his journey to spread Christianity in Rome. Following this historical visit, you will embark the ship that will take you to the idyllic island of Santorini. Santorini is definitively the most breathtaking island of all of the Greek Islands. Upon arrival in Santorini, you disembark by tenders and you may take the cable car up to Fira (on your own at additional cost of approximately \$20 pp) with its iconic white-washed houses, narrow streets, open-air cafes, and glittering boutiques that cling to steep cliffs. This evening you will return to the ship for your last dinner and overnight on your cruise.

Day 11: Monday, Oct 16, 2023 | Athens—USA
Today marks the end of your cruise. Following disembarkation, you will say your heartfelt farewells to a journey that will last in your memory forever. You will be transferred to the Athens airport for your return flight(s) home.

Pilgrimage to Greece WITH FR. ALFRED OBIJUD ~ OCTOBER 6-16, 2023 | \$3,999 FROM WASHINGTON DC (IAD)

****Items indicated in RED are mandatory****

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