

***“Jesus went about teaching, preaching and healing.”***

***“Behold the Lamb of God!”***

**A Spiritual Pilgrimage to the Holy Land and Petra in Jordan**

**December 2 – 12, 2023**

**Spiritual Leader: His Eminence Archbishop Nikiphoros of Askalon**

2 December, Saturday – Depart USA from your home city using your choice of airline.

3 December, Sunday – Arrive in Tel Aviv, Israel. Meet group, assist and transfer to Motor Coach. Depart airport and begin our Pilgrimage tour. We head to nearby Jaffa, one of the oldest cities in The Holy Land, and is the city where St. Peter raised Tabitha from the dead. We stop to visit the Monastery of St. Michael overlooking the harbor of the city, and the Rock of Andromeda. From Jaffa, we drive east to the city of Lydda, the birthplace of St. George-- the Church, built over the tomb of St. George. We visit the tomb and venerate the relics. Check in to HOTEL RENAISSANCE. After dinner, short group meeting. (D)

4 December, Monday - This morning we travel north to Caesarea on the Mediterranean Coast viewing the aqueducts. Then driving further north towards Mt. Carmel, associated with the life of Prophet Elias. We will make a stop for lunch. After lunch we drive east to Mt. Tabor, the site of The Transfiguration of our Lord. After our visit, we head for Nazareth to the Church of The Annunciation where the Angel Gabriel greeted Mary. We arrive in the city of Tiberias at the hotel GALEI KINERET right on the sea of Galilee. (B, D)

5 December, Tuesday - We begin our day at Kibbutz Nof Ginosar for a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee and view the ancient Galilee Boat, which is an ancient fishing boat from the 1<sup>st</sup> Century AD discovered in 1986 off the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Then on to Holy Apostles Monastery in Capernaum where Jesus spent most of his public life and performed most of His miracles. From here we visit the site of the Multiplication of Loaves and Tabgha. Then we head up to the Mount of Beatitudes where Jesus gave His Sermon on the Mount. We end the day at Magdala, the hometown where Mary Magdalene lived and died. (B, D)

6 December, Wednesday - Before we depart Tiberias, we visit Holy Apostles Monastery next door to our hotel. Then we head to Jericho, the oldest city in the world, and the Greek Orthodox Monastery of St. Elijah, a disciple of Prophet Elias. This is where we find the Sycamore Tree associated with Zacchaeus. While in Jericho we stop to view the Mount of Temptation. Not too far away from Jericho, we will stop at the River Jordan where Jesus was baptized by St. John. We will receive a blessing from the waters of the Jordan River. We will then visit the Monastery of St. Gerasimos in the desert of the Jordan Valley. This is the area where St. Mary of Egypt lived and reposed. After a short lunch break, we continue our drive along the Dead Sea. Along the way we view Masada, an ancient fortification in the Judean desert overlooking the Dead Sea and in the area of Ein Gedi, a natural preserve. This was the site of the siege of Masada in the first Jewish-Roman War – taking place on its hilltop. We arrive at the Israeli/Jordanian border. Proceed with formalities and cross the borders. A Jordanian guide (who speaks English) will meet us at the border with a motor coach and take us to check in to HOTEL HYATT ZAMAN. (B, D)

7 December, Thursday – We depart the hotel with our Jordanian guide (who speaks English) and head to Petra. Petra is a famous archaeological site in Jordan's southwestern desert. Dating to around 300 B.C., it was the capital of the Nabatean Kingdom. Accessed via a narrow canyon called Al Siq, it contains tombs and temples carved into pink sandstone cliffs, earning its nickname, the "Rose City." Perhaps its most famous structure is 45m-high Al Khazneh, a temple with an ornate, Greek-style facade, and known as The Treasury. Upon the completion of your visit to Petra we will return to the Jordanian/Israeli borders for formalities and head to Jerusalem to check into our HOTEL DAN PANORAMA. (B, D)

8 December, Friday - This morning we depart the hotel for a complete tour of The Old City. Walk the Via Dolorosa, view the Pool of Bethesda, Church of Joachim and Anna, Prison of Jesus, Tomb of the Virgin Mary, the Garden of Gethsemane, and visit the Western Wall. (B, D)

9 December, Saturday – The day is free for you to explore Jerusalem and its environs or do some shopping. We will be attending Midnight Divine Liturgy at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and in the quiet of the night visit the Tomb of Jesus and the Church itself. Return to the hotel. (B, D)

10 December, Sunday – We depart the hotel and about 3 kilometers outside of Jerusalem we will visit Bethany. This is where we find the Tomb of Lazaros, and the Church of Martha and Mary. We continue on to visit St. Theodosios, the Church of Shepherds' Fields and the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem where our Lord was born. We will enjoy lunch at Llama in Bethlehem and visit Llama Brothers for shopping. (B, L, D)

11 December, Monday - This morning we visit the New City of Jerusalem – View the Kineset (Israeli Parliament), view the American Embassy, visit the Church of St. John the Baptist. Return to hotel, balance of the day at your leisure. In the evening a farewell dinner and final meeting with presentation. (B, D)

12 December, Tuesday: Early morning departure from the hotel to the Tel Aviv Airport for returning to USA or on to Athens, Greece.