

Pilgrimage to Italy

With Father Matthew Flatley

Diocese of Jefferson City

February 22 - March 5, 2026

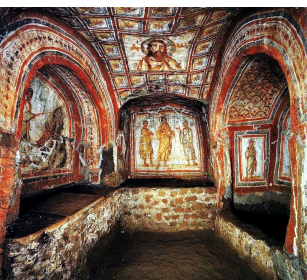
Florence ✚ Assisi ✚ Sienna ✚ St. Clare ✚ Papal Audience
Basilica of St. Francis ✚ Orvieto ✚ The Vatican
Crypt Mass in the Basilica of St. Peter ✚ St. Paul Outside the Wall
The Colosseum ✚ Rome ✚ Papal Audience ✚ St. Catherine
Basilica of St. Peter ✚ Sistine Chapel ✚ The Pantheon
Basilica of St. John Lateran ✚ St Mary Major
Santa Croce in Gerusalemme ✚ San Clemente
Catacombs of St Sebastian



B = breakfast L = Lunch D = dinner

Sunday, February 22: Depart from our home city to connect with an overnight flight to Rome. Dinner and breakfast served aboard.

D on plane



Monday, February 23 (ROME): After we land and gather our bags, we drive to St. Paul Outside the Walls, a beautiful Basilica dedicated to the **Apostle of the Gentiles**. Erected during the fourth century AD, the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls (**Basilica di San Paolo Fuori le Mura**) is one of the four major basilicas of Rome, and the second largest after St. Peter's Basilica. It was founded on the burial ground of St. Paul. Here, we **Celebrate the Holy Mass**. After our tour, we have lunch in the cafeteria at San Paolo. Next we go to venerate the **Catacombs of St Sebastian**. Our visit through these hallowed burial grounds of the early Christians calls to mind the fundamentals of our Faith, depicted in part on the very walls of these underground chambers. We then drive to our hotel for check in and dinner. **B & D Rome**

Tuesday, February 24 (ROME): After a late start & breakfast this morning we drive to the heart of the historical center of Rome, in a widening of Corso Vittorio Emanuele II, the street which connects St. Peter's Square with Venice Square. Nearby are important points of interest such as Piazza Navona, Campo de' Fiori and Castel Sant'Angelo. We begin a walking tour of Old Rome and visit **The Pantheon, where we go inside**. Originally erected in 126 AD, it was eventually converted to a Catholic Church and remains so today. We also visit the inside of **Basilica of Saint Mary of Minerva & optionally** with our guide, you can walk to **Campo de' Fiori, Piazza Navona, Trevi Fountain, and the Spanish Steps** leading up to Holy Trinity Church. After the walking tour we end up at the **San Luigi dei Francesi (The Church of St. Louis of Francis)**. This is France's baroque national church in Rome, known for the Caravaggio paintings in its chapel. Here **we Celebrate our opening Mass**. After Mass we check into our hotel for dinner and overnight. After our lunch, we take a tour of **Ancient Rome**. We will see sites such as the - the Arch of Constantine, Roman Forum, Palatine Hill, and an interior tour on your own of the Colosseum. We will also have a brief visit to the **Mamertine Prison**. Said to be built in the 7th Century BC and where **Sts. Peter & Paul** were held. Here we have time for veneration of the two Saints in the Chapel. Tonight we have dinner together outside the hotel. **B, L & D Rome**

Wednesday , February 25 (ROME): This morning we will experience a highlight of our Roman stay, attendance at a **PAPAL AUDIENCE** at St. Peter's, depending, of course, on the presence in Rome of our Holy Father, **Pope Leo XIV**. After the Papal Audience and a break for lunch, we will drive towards the center of Ancient Rome to **Santa Croce in Gerusalemme**. Consecrated in 325 AD, previously this served as the Palace for **St. Helena, Mother of Constantine**. She visited Jerusalem to re-establish the Christian holy places in 326, and by tradition there found the **relics of Christ's Passion including the True Cross**. The latter she left in Jerusalem, where it was venerated for centuries, but splinters from it and other items she brought back to Rome and put on display at the palace. This was the motivation for the foundation of the church. We next reach the **Basilica of St. Clement**, built over the home of our fourth Pope and over some truly interesting ruins of ancient Rome. Close by is the **Santa Scala, or "Holy Staircase,"** the very steps Jesus is believed to have climbed on His way to Pilate's praetorium. This sacred staircase, hallowed by the Savior's footsteps, remains intact to this day. Pilgrims can take the time to venerate this relic and receive the Plenary indulgences offered during their visit. Our final stop is to the most illustrious church dedicated to **Our Lady, the Basilica of St. Mary Major. Here we celebrate Mass**. We also have time to venerate the Manger which is considered the most notable relic from Bethlehem in which the baby Jesus was laid. We return to our hotel and prepare to go out for dinner. **B & D Rome**

Thursday, February 26 (ROME): **Holy Mass this morning is in the magnificent Basilica of St. Peter** in Vatican City. As we walk through and pray, our thoughts are flooded with events that have taken place here and the people who have worshiped in this great center of our Church. After Mass, we will first be guided on a tour of the **Vatican Museum**, seeing especially the

Sistine Chapel with its awesome frescoes by Michelangelo **OR** the possibility of a **Scavi Tour**. The Vatican museum tour concludes with an inside visit of the Basilica. **Afternoon:** This afternoon we can continue our own exploration of the Eternal City. Nearby the Vatican are religious articles shops. Maybe an ascent to the top of St. Peter's dome will be our quest. The reward is a fantastic view of Vatican City and Rome. We will also tour the Gallery Arte Poli; this artist contributed to the beautiful artwork in the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Jefferson City. This evening we can sample delicious Italian cuisine on our own.

B & D Rome



Friday, February 27: (ORVIETO & ASSISI): After breakfast, we check out of our hotel and motor to the North and reach the beautiful hill town of **Orvieto**. It is here that in 1263 Pope Urban IV proclaimed the authenticity of a Eucharistic miracle, that the Sacred Host had bled during a Mass celebrated in nearby Bolsena. We can still see the Corporal associated with the miracle enshrined within the **Cathedral of Orvieto**. From this event the Church instituted the **Feast of Corpus Christi**. The Cathedral's façade is adorned with a splendid and world famous mosaic. **We will celebrate the Eucharist in its Chapel of the Corporal**. On our way to our villa, we stop for a **winery tour & lunch**. Here, we sample some of the region's great vintages, enjoy incredible views and local foods. We have dinner together this evening in the hotel.

B, L & D Assisi



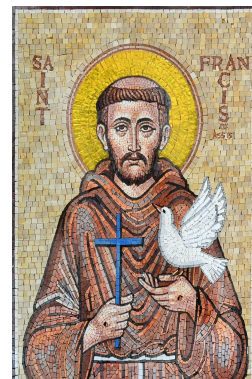
Saturday, February 28 (ASSISI): After a late start this morning, we will drive to **Assisi**. We reach the **Basilica of St. Clare**, Foundress of the Poor Clare nuns, and see her tomb. In the upper chapel we venerate the Crucifix that was originally located in San Damiano church. Our Lord from that crucifix spoke to Francis the command to "Rebuild My Church." We continue on a guided tour to explore the holy place of Assisi. We then will visit **Blessed Carlo Acutis at St. Mary Major church**. He is an English-born Italian Catholic youth and website designer who is best known for documenting Eucharistic miracles and the approved Marian apparitions around the world and cataloging them. **Here we will celebrate Holy Mass**. After Mass we walk up to the main piazza, where we are struck by the fact that all the buildings are of sandstone with a slight rose hue. We then walk to **The Basilica of St. Francis Assisi**. Our tour will show us the magnificent frescoes by **Giotto** in the Basilica that depict the life of the saint. If open, we will visit the ancient facade of the bishop's residence, unearthed recently. One excavation bears special significance for the life of St. Francis. It's called the **Vescovado Gate**, dating to the Middle Ages, that leads from the old square into the bishop's residence. This door was **the door of decision** for Francis, the door of conversion, because when he came here, he decided to renounce all of his earthly goods. Here, we pass through this door in hope that as we walk through it and to reflect on our lives, and to say, 'Where and how am I living? For whom or for what am I living?' We have dinner together outside the hotel.

B & D Assisi



Sunday, March 1 (SIENA): After check out and breakfast, we then descend down to the plain below Assisi and visit **St. Mary of the Angels (Santa Maria degli Angeli)**. After, we drive **Siena**, a delightful medieval town, but important because of the connection with **St. Catherine, Doctor of the Church** and reformer of the Papacy. Our first stop is **San Cristoforo**. **A small church that dates back to the 12 Century**. **Here we will Celebrate our Mass**. Our walking tour takes us to the **Piazza del Campo** and to the Gothic Cathedral of dark and light marble; **Basilica Catheriniana San Domenico**. Here, we visit the **Chapel of St. Catherine**. After time on our own, we make our way to one of the finer restaurants for an early dinner. Soon after, we make our way back to our hotel in Florence.

B & D Florence



Monday, March 2 (FLORENCE): During one of our drives in or out of Florence, we will stop at **Piazzale Michelangelo** to take in beautiful panoramic views of the city. This morning we celebrate **Holy Mass in the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore**. We then have a tour of the **Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore** and its masterfully done bronze Baptistry doors worthy to be called by Michelangelo the "Gates of Paradise." We will also see the **Giotto Bell Tower**, **Piazza della Signoria**, and **Pointe Vecchio**. Soon after we tour **Santa Croce**, a stunning Gothic building known for the many tombs of great artists, writers and scientists buried there, like **Galileo**, **Machiavelli** and the great **Michelangelo**. After our guided city tour of Florence we will visit the

Uffizi Gallery located in the heart of Florence. The Gallery hosts works of art by great Italian artists such as **Botticelli, Giotto, Cimabue, Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci and Raffaello**. Its large collection has works from all centuries but a large part dates back to the periods between the 12th and 17th centuries. Later we enjoy dinner paired with some of the region's better wine vintages at a Florentine Restaurant. We then return to our hotel for an overnight stay.

B & D Florence

Tuesday, March 3: (FLORENCE): This morning we **Celebrate Mass at Santa Maria Novella**, a prominent church in Florence, known for its stunning green and white marble facade and historical significance as a Dominican basilica. It houses important artworks, including frescoes by Masaccio and Ghirlandaio, making it a key site for Renaissance art. After, a visit of the day will be a highlight; the **Academy of Fine Arts** which houses **Michelangelo's** sculpture of **David**. After our visit with David, we then have the rest of the day on our own for lunch and shopping. The shops are laden with jewelry of Florentine gold and silver, exquisite leather goods and bargains of all kinds. Tonight we will have dinner together out in Florence.

B & D Florence

Wednesday, March 4: (ROME) After our breakfast and a late checkout, our driver will transfer the group to Rome. Our first stop will be **the Basilica of St. John Lateran**, the Cathedral Church of Rome. **Here we will celebrate our daily Mass**. Then we may have some time for sightseeing, spending time with Our Lord, or maybe some last minute shopping. We then enjoy our farewell dinner together. Our hotel will be near the airport.

B & D Rome

Thursday, March 5: After breakfast, we check out of our hotel and make our way to the Rome Airport, where we depart at 10:30 AM for our one connection flight home.



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