Then take a panoramic tour and check in to your hotel. (D)

**12th day:** In the morning depart from the hotel and visit the Spice Bazaar, near the Galata Bridge just by the entrance of Golden Horn. Then embark on a ferry for a memorable cruise along the straits of Bosporus, see many fascinating pavilions, palaces and classical wooden Turkish houses by the water. In the afternoon visit Hagia Sophia, which was Christendom’s greatest church built by the emperor Justinian, a masterpiece of Byzantine architecture. Across from Hagia Sophia, walk down to see the Basilica Underground Cistern, a mystic atmosphere carried by 336 columns. Dinner will be served at a local restaurant this evening. (B,D)

**13th day:** In the morning depart from the hotel for the full day sightseeing; visit to the Topkapı Palace, the residence of the Ottoman Sultans from 15th to 19th centuries. Then take a short walk to the 17th century Blue Mosque, so called due to its more than 20,000 blue Iznik tiles that adorn the interior walls. Stroll into the Hippodrome area which was built by Roman emperor Septimus Severus and then visit Turkish & Islamic Arts Museum which is praised as one of the best museums of Europe. The building was the palace of a famous Ottoman vizier Ibrahim Pasha. Today also visit the World famous Grand Bazaar area and then return to your hotel for dinner and overnight. (B,D)

**14th day:** In the morning depart from the hotel, drive down to the seafront and visit Dolmabahçe Palace, an eclectic building from the 19th century when the sultans moved from Topkapı Palace to here. Then drive to visit Küçük Ayasofya Mosque which was formerly the Church of St. Sergius and St. Bacchus, two patron saints of all soldiers in the Roman Byzantine army. Continue to Galata Tower with a view of the Bosporus and the Golden Horn along with the historical peninsula. (B,D)

**15th day:** Transfer to the international airport for your departure flight. (B)

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**Tour Highlights**

- First class hotels
- Breakfast and dinner
- Comprehensive touring with paid admissions
- Transportation on private air conditioned buses
- All transfer and baggage
- All tips included

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For additional information and reservations, please contact:
Fr. Mario Di Cicco, OFM
St. Peter’s Church
110 West Madison Street
Chicago, IL 60602
Cell (312) 888-1331
email: mmcdicicco@gmail.com
Website: FrMarioTours.weebly.com

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HOLY LAND & TURKEY PILGRIMAGE
Led by Franciscan Father Mario Di Cicco, O.F.M.
In conjunction with Santours (#2092786-40)

September 7 - 21, 2019

Land Only $4,155
Deduct $160 if paid by check ($3,995)
Single Supplement: $1,190
Deduct $50 if paid by check ($1,140)

Airfare cost based on city of departure.
Pilgrimage Itinerary

1st day: Departure for Tel Aviv

2nd day: Arrival in Tel Aviv, transfer to hotel

3rd day: Tel Aviv/Tiberias

We begin our Holy Land pilgrimage with a visit to Caesarea Maritima which was built by Herod the Great as a major seaport at the time of Christ. Later it was occupied during the Byzantine and Crusader periods. It contains ruins from all three periods. Then we drive to Haifa, a modern seaport which is situated on the slopes of Mount Carmel, the mountain of Elijah. There we shall visit Elijah’s cave and the Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. After lunch we travel to Nazareth where we will celebrate our first Mass in the Holy Land at the Basilica of the Annunciation, followed by a visit to the church commemorating the home of the Holy Family and St. Joseph’s workshop. Finally we make our way to Tiberias and the Sea of Galilee, on the shores of which is our hotel. Dinner and overnight.

4th day: Tiberias

Driving to the northern end of the Sea of Galilee, we first celebrate Mass at the Primacy of Peter right on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. We then visit the village of Capernaum—the site where Peter lived and Jesus exercised much of his ministry in the Galilee. We proceed to Upper Galilee to Caesarea Philippi where Jesus asked the apostle: “Who do you say that I am?” We visit the sources of the Jordan River. We experience a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee. Return to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

5th day: Mt. Tabor/Cana/Tabgha

We drive to Cana for the renewal of marriage vows. Then we drive up to Mt. Tabor to celebrate Mass at the site of the Transfiguration. We visit the site of the miracle of the Loaves and Fishes at Tabgha. The rest of the afternoon at leisure. Dinner and overnight.

6th day: Tiberias/Jerusalem

After Mass at the Mount of Beatitudes, we drive south to Jerusalem along the Jordan River route. On our arrival in Jerusalem, we will experience our own special Solemn Entry into Holy Sepulcher with the Franciscans greeting us. Dinner and overnight.

7th day: Jerusalem/Bethlehem

We travel to Bethlehem for Mass at Shepherds’ Cave, followed by a visit to the Basilica of the Nativity which houses the crypt commemorating the birth of Jesus. Lunch and time for shopping.

8th day: Jerusalem

8th day: Jerusalem
Early Mass at Holy Sepulcher inside the Empty Tomb. After breakfast, we enter the Old City through Herod’s Gate to visit St. Anne’s church and the pool of Bethesda. We move on to the church of the Flagellation where we begin the Via Dolorosa. We next visit the excavations of Ecce Homo. We proceed along the Way of the Cross and come out at the top of the Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher. Lunch in the Old City. After lunch we visit Ain Karem where we will pray at the two churches honoring the birthplace of John the Baptist and the Visitation of Mary to her cousin Elizabeth. Dinner and overnight.

9th day: Dead Sea/Qumran/Jericho

After Mass at Calvary and breakfast, we proceed to the Dead Sea area, the lowest spot on earth. We visit Qumran and the site of the Essene Community where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found. After lunch in Jericho, the oldest city in the world, we float in the Dead Sea. Return to Jerusalem for dinner and overnight.

10th day: Mt. of Olives and Gethsemane/Mt. Zion

After breakfast we proceed to the Mt. of Olives and visit the church of the Our Father. We proceed down the hill to the church of Dominus Flevit, where Jesus wept over Jerusalem. We come to the base of the Mt. of Olives to the Kedron Valley to celebrate Mass in the Basilica of All Nations, the site of the Lord’s Agony in the Garden. After lunch we visit Mt. Zion and the church of St. Peter in Gallicantu, the site of the home of Annas and Caiphas and the place where Peter denied Jesus. We then proceed to the church of the Dormition of Mary. Return to the hotel and overnight.

11th day: Istanbul

After breakfast, depart for airport to Istanbul. Arrive at Istanbul Ataturk Airport, meet with your guide and drive to the Old City by following the Theodosius City Walls arrive at Kariye. Visit the Chora Museum. Church of St. Saviour in Chora, see the well preserved frescoes and mosaics depicting scenes from the Bible. Then have a stop to visit Greek Orthodox Patriarchate church on the way to your hotel.

(continued on back page)

Dear Christian Pilgrim:

Once again we are going up Jerusalem, called by the psalmist the City of God! It is a city rich in history, richer still in God’s marvelous deeds. It is a city where Jesus of Nazareth proclaimed the saving message of God’s kingdom and exercised his healing ministry of God’s love. It is there that he died for love of us, only to be raised up in that same city by God in a mighty act of power. Jerusalem, now more than ever, is truly the City of God, for it was within her walls that the Church of Jesus Christ came to birth in the dramatic outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. We will cross the border into the country of Jordan, visiting Petra, the rose-colored city, as well as Mt. Nebo where Moses saw the Promised Land, and the famous sites of Jerash and Madaba.

I will be making my usual pilgrimage to the Holy Land, appropriately called the Fifth Gospel, to retrace the steps Jesus took in obedience to God’s will and out of love for us all. It is a moment of grace for all of us to visit the scenes of our salvation. I invite you to come along with me to share this deeply moving experience of faith. This pilgrimage will truly enrich your faith, deepen your knowledge of Holy Scripture, and increase your love for Jesus the Lord.

As an added bonus to this pilgrimage, we will be visiting the historic city of Istanbul in Turkey which straddles both Asia and Europe. We will tour the ancient church of Hagia Sophia, the Blue Mosque, the lovely Chora Church with its stunning mosaics, the Grand Bazaar, the Bosphorus by boat, and so much more. The extension to Istanbul will be memorable.

You are going on a pilgrimage, a special form of spiritual retreat, a religious event in one’s life where the Gospel, read at the sites of its first utterance, takes on a new significant meaning for one who is open to the Holy Spirit. It is not a sightseeing trip or a vacation tour, but it is a journey that has faith as its motive and goal, reflecting the pilgrimage of one’s life toward God.

I am an experienced Holy Land pilgrimage guide. I have lived in the Holy Land and I have conducted pilgrimages continuously each year since 1976. I have a doctorate in New Testament and have taught at three graduate theological schools. For these reasons, you can be assured of a deeply biblical and prayerful first-class experience.

I am enclosing $_______ ($500 deposit per person; deposit is non-refundable 30 days before departure)

Make deposit payable to

Sautours

Send registration form, deposit and copy of passport to:

Fr. Mario DiCicco, O.F.M.
St. Peter’s Church
110 West Madison Street
Chicago, IL 60602

Important Note: Visa entry to Turkey is necessary and can be accessed online at: evis.gov.tr. Cost is not more than $20.55.