

2023

11  
DAYS

# Graces of France

*Watch your faith come alive during this absorbing time of pilgrimage beginning with a reflective stay in Lourdes, the City of Mary. Journey on through Mountainous villages and holy shrines, weaving a pilgrim trail through the glorious Spanish & French countryside and the sacred villages of our faith.*

**COMMENCES SUN 17 SEPTEMBER 2023 • 10 NIGHTS / 11 DAYS**

Lourdes (3) • Montserrat (1) • Manresa • Barcelona (1) • Fly to Lyon  
• Paray le Monial (2) • Chartres (1) • Mont Saint Michel (2) • Paris



Accompanied by  
**Fr Michael Twigg OMI**



*the genuine pilgrim experience*

**harvest**  
journeys



LOURDES



LOURDES

Lourdes (3) / Montserrat (1) / Manresa / Barcelona (1) / Fly to Lyon / Paray le Monial (2) / Chartres (1) / Mont Saint Michel (2) / Paris

## pilgrim highlights

- + Begin perfectly with a full 3 Night stay in Lourdes and be touched by the spiritual atmosphere of Our Lady that abounds.
- + Be among the thousands of rejoicing pilgrims flowing towards the Lourdes Sanctuary during the evening torchlight spectacle.
- + Relish a two-night stay in Paray Le Monial and pray in the Chapel of the Apparitions where Jesus exposed His Sacred Heart to St Margaret Mary Alacoque.
- + Gaze upon the incorrupt body of St Bernadette during a private Mass in the town of Nevers where she joined the Sisters of Charity.
- + Be awe-struck in Chartres as you enter the magnificent 13th century Cathedral and marvel at the stained-glass majesty during our guided exploration.
- + Pray in Lisieux before the statue of the Virgin Mary that smiled at the 10-year-old Thérèse before she was immediately cured of a severe illness.
- + Come to breathtaking Mont-Saint-Michel and be inspired by the prayerful beauty of the great Abbey built in honour of St Michael the Archangel.

(B) = Breakfast (L) = Lunch (D) = Dinner

### DAY 1: ARRIVE LOURDES

**Welcome to Lourdes.** It was in this small town that Our Lady first appeared to St Bernadette in 1858. This evening you will join with your fellow pilgrims for our first group dinner.

*Lourdes overnight (BD)*

### DAY 2: LOURDES

We celebrate an **International Mass** this morning with pilgrims worldwide in the immense Underground Basilica of Pius X (schedule permitting) followed by a visit to the little village of **Bartres**, and the farm where St Bernadette was nursed and later returned in adolescence to help her foster mother. We will visit the **Sheepfold** and the **Parish Church** where she spent so many hours in prayer.

We will return to Lourdes to enjoy a peaceful afternoon to rest, wander at your own pace or take the time to pray the Stations of the Cross with the life sized copper images which overlook the holy Grotto. Spend some quiet time perhaps reflecting at the Grotto with its chapel built over the place of the apparitions.

Optional Blessed Sacrament Procession and evening candlelight procession.

*Lourdes overnight (BD)*

### DAY 3: LOURDES

This morning we will celebrate a group **Mass at the Grotto** before meeting our guide for a **walking tour of Lourdes** including the **Sanctuary** area: **Upper & Lower Basilicas, the Grotto, and the Baths** where hundreds of miraculous cures have taken place. Continue our visit of the main sites associated with St Bernadette including the **Boly Mill** where she was born in 1844, the **original parish church** and

the **Cachot (prison)** where the family was forced to live due to misfortune during the time of the apparitions.

Free time this afternoon for a visit and prayers for the sick at the miraculous **Baths** where the water has continued to flow since 1858. Pilgrims may choose to submerge themselves in the healing waters, or collect the Lourdes water at the taps. During her 9<sup>th</sup> apparition to Bernadette, Our Lady said *"Go drink and wash yourself at the spring"*. Optional afternoon **Blessed Sacrament Procession** and Blessing of the Sick before a final evening **candlelight procession** after dinner.

*Note: Washing at the baths is a personally rewarding experience and is carried out in a discreet manner with the process being very respectful of one's privacy.*

*Lourdes overnight (BD)*

*"The pilgrimage renewed my faith. I had an emotional moment at Lourdes going for a bath in the holy waters. Very profound."  
— Anne Burrows-Jung*

### DAY 4: LOURDES TO MONTSERRAT

We farewell Lourdes early this morning as we again journey through the Pyrenees, crossing the border back into northern Spain.

We then arrive at stunning **Montserrat**. The renowned 11<sup>th</sup> century sanctuary of Our Lady of Montserrat lies at the top of a 4,000 foot high mountain and is one of Spain's most popular pilgrimage destinations. The shrine is home to a 12<sup>th</sup> century miraculous statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary, lovingly known as the **"Black Madonna"**, discovered in the **Santa Cova** or Holy Cave. Here at



Montserrat, St Ignatius kept vigil with a coarse sackcloth and a pilgrim staff.

On arrival we will be taken on a private guided tour of the museums.

Continue for a visit and Mass in the **Basilica**, the construction of which began in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and a viewing of the beautiful Holy Image of Our Lady of Montserrat, known affectionately as the “Black Madonna.”

Time permitting, before dinner we will have an opportunity to join the Benedictine monks and the **Montserrat Boys Choir (The Escolania)** in the Basilica for the beautiful sounds of evening Vespers.

*Montserrat overnight (BD)*

#### DAY 5: MONTSERRAT / MANRESA TO BARCELONA

*The spirit of Montserrat is a unique blend of the mountain, the sanctuary, and the life of monasticism. Around the sanctuary you will find many different banners and emblems representing various religious, cultural, social, financial and even sporting organisations.*

Those who wish may rise early this morning to enjoy a walk down the sacred path passing modernist sculptures of the Mysteries of the Rosary (all worked on by Llimona and Gaudi among others). Almost hanging from the rock’s edge at the end of the route is the **Chapel** where the image of Our Lady of Montserrat was found by young shepherds in the 13<sup>th</sup> century after seeing a bright light which led them to the grotto.

We then travel out to the town of **Manresa** for Mass where St Ignatius came on retreat for 11 months between 1522 and 1523. Each day he spent seven hours in prayer in a cave and then helped the sick in the village with the time he had left over. Here too, Ignatius began to develop the method for seeking God’s will and where he wrote his renowned Spiritual Exercises. We come as pilgrims

to this amazing place with St Ignatius and pray in the actual cave where his life and spirituality developed.

Continue on to Barcelona where we will embark on a panoramic tour of the city followed by a visit to La Sagrada Familia.

Dinner at the hotel

*Barcelona overnight (BD)*

#### DAY 6: BARCELONA TO PARAY-LE-MONIAL

We depart early this morning by air to Lyon.

On arrival into Lyon we proceed we continue our French immersion travelling on to **Paray-le-Monial**, the place where **St Margaret Mary Alacoque** experienced visions of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In revealing His Heart to her, Jesus said:

*“Behold the Heart which has so loved men that it has spared nothing but has been poured out totally and consumed as proof of its love”.*

*Paray-le-Monial overnight (BD)*

*“The Saints, Mary, everything comes alive. It’s like a little retreat. You put your life on hold and into God’s arms and His presence.”*  
— **Jenny Chitti**

#### DAY 7: PARAY-LE-MONIAL & TAIZE

After a leisurely breakfast, we set off this morning for **Taize**, the tiny hillside community in which young people from all over the world are drawn. Pope St John Paul II referred to Taize as ‘that little springtime’ as pilgrims join in a common weekly programme of prayer meetings, discussion groups and meals. We join with

the community for **midday prayer**, which is sung beautifully in the large candlelit church.

Return this afternoon to Paray-le-Monial for a guided visit featuring the **Chapel of Apparitions**, the room of the **relics of St Margaret Mary**, the **Diorama of St Margaret** and the **Eucharist Museum**. Other highlights include the **Basilica of Sacre Coeur** and the **Chapel of St Claude** in honour of St Margaret Mary’s Spiritual Director.

*Paray-le-Monial overnight (BD)*

#### DAY 8: VIA NEVERS & CHARTRES

This morning we farewell the city of the ‘Heart of Jesus’ and journey to the town of **Nevers** nestled within the picturesque Loire Valley. Here we will celebrate Mass and visit the **Convent of St Gildard** where St Bernadette’s incorrupt body reposes and may be viewed. After she was blessed with the 18 apparitions of the Virgin Mary at Lourdes, St Bernadette retired to Nevers where she died at the age of only 35.

Our pilgrimage takes us on to the great Cathedral city of **Chartres** where we enter inside the magnificent 13<sup>th</sup> century **Chartres Cathedral**, a medieval architectural wonder and home to the **Holy Veil**, said to be worn by the Blessed Virgin Mary when she gave birth to Jesus. Pilgrims too will see the most **famous labyrinth** in the world, built around the year 1200 and sometimes called the “Chemin de Jerusalem” or Road of Jerusalem.

*Chartres overnight (BD)*



CHARTRES



LISIEUX

### DAY 9: CHARTRES TO MONT-SAINT-MICHEL

Departing Chartres, we journey to the lovely island of **Mont-Saint-Michel**.

According to legend, the archangel Michael appeared to St. Aubert, Bishop of Avranches, in 709 and instructed him to build a chapel on the rocky islet. Soon after, he sent a group of monks to live on the island (since replaced in 966 by the Benedictine Order who soon after constructed the Abbey). From the Middle Ages people have flocked to the abbey and were so struck by its beauty that they called this place "The Wonder Island". Today it continues to be a major cultural and pilgrimage centre.

*What looks like a castle out of a fairy tale is actually one of Christianity's major pilgrimage sites. Surging from an infinite expanse of sand and waves, Mont-Saint-Michel is a marvellous work of both nature and mankind. In 1979 it was the first location in France to be designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Today more than two million pilgrims and visitors travel to behold this awesome work of the Middle Ages, the Abbey of Mont-Saint-Michel.*

*Mont-Saint-Michel overnight (BD)*

### DAY 10: MONT-SAINT-MICHEL

This morning we will meet our guide for a tour of the island.

*A climb up the steep narrow flight of steps called the **Grand Degré** is a prelude to the*

*tour of the abbey. Once we have admired the construction, we can contemplate the incomparable beauty of the bay by going back down via the rampart walk.*

A highlight of our visit here will be the **Benedictine Abbey**, which during the French Revolution was turned into a prison. We plan to join the community here for an inspiring chanted Mass. During our tour we will also see the **Chapelle de Notre Dame sous Terre** (Underground Chapel of Our Lady). It was built in the late 10<sup>th</sup> century in the very place that St Aubert erected the oratory in the 8<sup>th</sup> century.

Enjoy some free time this afternoon.

*Mont-Saint-Michel overnight (BD)*

### DAY 11: VIA LISIEUX TO PARIS

After breakfast we travel east to **Lisieux**, one of the world's premier pilgrimage sites and home to St Therese, the 'Little Flower', whom Pope Pius X called 'the greatest saint of modern times'. On arrival we enjoy a pilgrimage tour of Lisieux visiting the family home of **Les Buissonnets**, the **Carmelite Convent Chapel** with its **reliquary** of the saint and **St Therese's Basilica**.

We depart Lisieux, travelling on to **Paris** this afternoon for homebound flights or onward travels. (B)

### PILGRIMAGE DETAILS

TOUR CODE	GF2302	
STARTS	Sun 17 Sept 2023	Lourdes
FINISHES	Wed 27 Sept 2023	Paris
LAND COST	AUD \$5490 (twin share) *	
SINGLE ROOM	AUD \$1790 Supplement	
PREPAID TIPS	AUD \$14 Per Person Per Day	

\* Costs have been based on prices as at December 2022 and must remain subject to possible change in the event of significant exchange rate variations, tax increases or minimum group size factors beyond Harvest's control. Refer to Harvest Booking Terms & Conditions for more details.

### INCLUSIONS

**ACCOMMODATION & MEALS:** Based on Superior Standard / 4-Star accommodation • 9 Dinners / 9 Full Breakfasts.

**TOURING & TRANSPORTATION:** Deluxe Air Conditioned Coach touring • Professional Local Guides • Sightseeing and Entrance Fees.

**OTHER:** Fully Escorted by Priest Chaplain • Porterage at hotels • Harvest Backpack, Pilgrim Journal and Tour Wallet.



### BOOKINGS & ENQUIRIES

harvestjourneys.com/france  
**AU Free-Call: 1800 819 156**  
**NZ Free-Call: 0800 819 156**  
 info@harvestjourneys.com

### Harvest Journeys

PO Box 6087  
 Alexandria BC  
 NSW 2015  
 Australia

**harvest**  
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