SEPTEMBER 2026 PILGRIMAGE

12 DAYS

Great Saints of Italy

Uncover the sacred heart of Italy — a land where a rich tapestry of faith, history, and culture comes alive. Walk where Saints walked, pray where miracles unfolded, and explore timeless villages nestled among the hills and countryside, each one a thread in this sacred story.

Stand in awe before majestic cathedrals, walk beneath the frescoed heavens of the Sistine Chapel, and behold masterpieces born of divine inspiration. Let your soul be captured by the beauty, grace, and wonder of this unforgettable pilgrimage.

Accompanied by
Fr Patrick Vaughan

COMMENCES MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2026 • 12 DAYS / 11 NIGHTS

Rome (3 nights) • Montecassino • San Giovanni Rotondo (2) • Monte Sant'Angelo • Lanciano • Assisi (2) • Siena • Florence (2) • Padua • Venice (2)

FR PATRICK VAUGHAN

Fr Patrick has been a priest for 33 years in many parishes in the Diocese of Wollongong and is presently at the parish of Saint Joseph at Bulli and Saint Columbkille's at Corrimal. Fr Patrick previously worked as a customs officer and a registered nurse in renal transplant and haemodialysis. He was also a pupil midwife for 12 months, delivering many babies.

St John Paul II

St Benedict

St Padre Pio

St Francis

St Clare

St Anthony

St Mark

the genuine pilgrim experience

harvest journeys

Assisi

Rome

Rome (3 nights) • Montecassino • San Giovanni Rotondo (2) • Monte Sant'Angelo • Lanciano • Assisi (2) • Siena • Florence (2) • Padua • Venice (2)

pilgrim highlights

- Begin a three-night exploration of the Eternal City from St Peter's Square to the Catacombs as we unearth the rich traditions of our Church.
- Be privileged with a memorable meeting with the Holy Father and the pilgrims of the world and hear firsthand his message to the faithful.
- Encounter the miraculous life of St Padre Pio who had the stigmata, and who is a saint for our lifetime. Personally connect with his call to live a holy life.
- Ascend the medieval heights of Monte Sant' Angelo where the Archangel Michael is said to have appeared.
- Travel back in time to encounter the living presence of St Francis as we dwell for two nights in the hillside village of Assisi.
- Soak in the inspiration of Florence, one of the great art capitals of the world, and be amazed at the genius of Michelangelo's David.
- Enjoy a generous two-night stay in the stunning Venice, visiting the city's most iconic landmarks.

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

Itinerary

DAY 1: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2026 - ARRIVE ROME

Check into your centrally located hotel. Tonight meet your fellow pilgrims for your first group dinner.

Rome overnight (D)

DAY 2: TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22 - ROME: THE VATICAN & MAJOR BASILICAS

Commence our pilgrimage with a spectacular **Mass at St Peter's Basilica** before coming to the nearby **Vatican Museums**. Wander the spectacular chambers leading to the **Sistine Chapel** to view Michelangelo's masterpieces, including the magnificent fresco of the **Last Judgment**. Continue through to the awe-inspiring St Peter's Basilica, the largest church in the world for an informative exploration. Our guided tour will feature among other highlights Michelangelo's stunning **Pietà**, the **tomb of Pope St John Paul II**, the **great Confessional** and the **Crypt** containing the **tombs of several Popes**.

In the afternoon, visit the **Basilica of St John in Lateran** (First Papal residence) and view the adjacent **Holy Stairs** brought from Jerusalem to Rome in 326AD by St Helena. Continue on to visit the impressive **St Mary Major Basilica**, where we can visit and pray before the **tomb of Pope Francis**.

Rome overnight (BD)

DAY 3: WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23 - ROME: PAPAL EVENT, ST PAUL'S & THE CATACOMBS

PAPAL EVENT: We will return to St Peter's Square this morning for a memorable **audience with Pope Leo XIV** as we join with pilgrims from around the world. *(Subject to the Pope's presence in Rome)*

Journey this afternoon out to the majestic **Basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls**. Originally consecrated in 324, the saint's tomb is visible now under the Papal Altar. We will celebrate a wonderful Mass here as a special tribute to the Church's greatest evangelist.

Continue then to the **ancient Catacombs** for a memorable guided tour to marvel at these underground burial tunnels for Christians and Hebrews. This evening, we will celebrate our final night in Rome at a local trattoria.

Rome overnight (BD)

DAY 4: THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24 - ROME VIA MONTECASSINO TO SAN GIOVANNI ROTONDO

Today we bid farewell to the Eternal City as we commence our day's journey towards the great shrine dedicated to Padre Pio.

We journey south to Cassino where we wind our way up the mountain, enjoying the view of the spectacular **Abbey of Montecassino**, founded by St Benedict in 529, patron saint of Europe and the founder of western monasticism.

It was here in Montecassino that Benedict wrote his 'Rule of St Benedict' (Regula Benedicti) and where he died. The Abbey was carefully rebuilt after the epic battle of 1944 and still dominates the surrounding countryside from its mountaintop setting.

Enjoy a guided visit visiting the **museum** displaying examples of medieval monastic art while the **Basilica** is richly decorated with mosaics. We come too as pilgrims to pray

Vatican Museum

before the relics of St Benedict and his sister, St Scholastica.

Continue on to **San Giovanni Rotondo** where St Padre Pio spent a lifetime of prayer, penance, self-denial and intense pain caused by the five wounds of Our Lord's passion. His list of supernatural gifts is overwhelming – reading of souls, prophecy, miraculous healings, spiritual direction, etc. while spending extraordinarily long hours in the confessional and often sleeping very little. Throughout his life he received visits from Jesus and Mary and had regular communication with his guardian angel.

San Giovanni Rotondo overnight (BD)

> *"Their experience and professionalism was clearly evident throughout the tour."*
> ***— William Bruce Strath***

DAY 5: FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25 - SAN GIOVANNI ROTONDO & MONTE SANT'ANGELO

This morning we take a tour of the shrine including: **Tomb and cell of St Padre Pio**; his **Confessional**; and the **Crucifix** from which he received the stigmata. We visit the English-speaking office for an inspirational talk by one of the friars and to view a special rare film showing highlights of St Padre Pio's daily life in the Monastery.

Travel by coach in the afternoon to **Monte Sant' Angelo** to visit the hilltop **Sanctuary of St Michael the Archangel** and celebrate Mass in the **Grotto Cave**. The Archangel is said to have made four separate appearances here mostly during the 5th century, making the sanctuary here one of the earliest Christian sites in Europe and visited by thousands of pilgrims every year. St Francis also visited the sanctuary but feeling unworthy to enter the grotto, stopped in prayer at the entrance, kissed a stone and carved on it the sign of the Tau cross.

San Giovanni Rotondo overnight (BD)

DAY 6: SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26 - SAN GIOVANNI ROTONDO VIA LANCIANO TO ASSISI

Travel north to **Lanciano**, scene of the **Eucharistic miracle** in the 8th century. To this day the **sacred relics** have remained incorrupt. Celebrate a special Mass here. Continue through the Umbrian countryside to Assisi, where St Francis tended the poor and sick and founded the Franciscan Order.

Assisi overnight (BD)

DAY 7: SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27 - ASSISI

Encounter the tangible spirit of St Francis preserved in this holy town. Celebrate Mass at the **Basilica of St Francis** and pray at the tomb of St Francis.

Visit the tomb of **Blessed Carlo Acutis** – a young Catholic from Italy with a passionate devotion to the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist and an aptitude for computer programming. From the ages of 12 to 14, he designed a website cataloguing Eucharistic miracles that have occurred around the world, which he launched in 2005. He died of leukemia a year later at the age of 15, offering his suffering for the pope and for the Church.

Visit the **Church of San Damiano** and the actual chapel where the voice of Christ spoke to Francis in the year 1205, the first monastery of the **Order of St Clare,** and the Hermitage, an oasis of peace and tranquility in the woods where St Francis often withdrew to spend many hours in prayer. Also see the **Basilica of St Clare** where we will proceed to the side chapel to pray before the Holy Crucifix from which God spoke to Francis.

Assisi overnight (BD)

DAY 8: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 28 - ASSISI VIA SIENA TO FLORENCE

Visit the **Basilica of St Mary of the Angels** and the **Portiuncula**, the small chapel that Francis rebuilt after hearing a call from the Lord, before departing Assisi for the lovely medieval city of **Siena.**

Visit **St Dominic's Basilica** for Mass and view the incorrupt head of St Catherine; the **Basilica of St Francis** where we will view the **Eucharistic miracle;** and stroll the **Piazza del Campo,** one of Italy's finest squares, before journeying north to **Florence**, the art capital of the world.

Florence overnight (BD)

DAY 9: TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29 - FLORENCE

Begin with Mass at the **Church of Santa Croce** then visit the **Academy of Fine Arts** containing many treasures, including **Michelangelo's statue of David.** Visit the **Ponte Vecchio** and the **Duomo**, and the celebrated **Baptistery**. Enjoy free time to rest or shop in the streetside bazaars.

Florence overnight (BD)

DAY 10: WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30 - FLORENCE TO VENICE VIA PADUA

We farewell Florence this morning and journey

CONTINUED →

Venice

north to **Padua**, the city of **St Anthony,** the beloved patron saint of lost articles. Originally from Lisbon, St Anthony became one of the Church's most powerful preachers, drawing thousands to the faith across Italy.

On arrival, we enjoy a **guided tour and Mass** at the **Basilica of St Anthony**, where we visit the **Chapel of the Reliquaries** and venerate the saint's tomb. We take time to admire the beauty of this sacred place and reflect on the life and miracles of this great Franciscan saint.

We then continue our walking exploration of **Padua** with a visit to the **Prato della Valle**, one of the largest and most beautiful squares in Europe. Nearby stands the majestic **Basilica of Santa Giustina**, which houses the **claimed relics of St Luke the Evangelist**—an important site of devotion for pilgrims.

Before departing the city, we visit the renowned **Scrovegni Chapel,** home to **Giotto's masterful fresco cycle** depicting the life of Christ and the Virgin Mary. These 14th century paintings are considered a turning point in Western art, bridging the gap between medieval and Renaissance styles.

Florence

Following this inspiring visit, we continue on to the stunning city of **Venice**, where we settle in for our two-night stay.

Venice overnight (BD)

DAY 11: THURSDAY, OCTOBER 01 - VENICE

Venice comprises a dense network of waterways with 117 islands and more than 400 bridges over its 150 canals. Instead of main streets, you'll find main canals – and instead of cars, you'll find gondolas!

This morning we begin our discovery of this unique floating city.

Our pilgrimage begins with **Mass at St Mark's Basilica**, the opulent cathedral built to house the relics of the Evangelist, brought to Venice from Alexandria. This is followed by a **guided walking tour** of the city's most iconic landmarks, including **St Mark's Square**, the **Doge's Palace**, and the **Bridge of Sighs**. Along the way, admire the grand canals, marble churches, elegant piazzas, and artistic treasures that reveal Venice's glorious past.

Enjoy some free time this afternoon to explore the artisan shops, sip coffee in one of the square's historic cafés, or perhaps take a peaceful gondola ride through the city's meandering canals.

Venice overnight (BD)

DAY 12: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 02 - DEPART VENICE

Our pilgrimage today finishes after breakfast. *(B)*

PILGRIMAGE DETAILS

TOUR CODE	SI2602	
STARTS	Mon, Sept 21, 2026	Rome
FINISHES	Fri, Oct 02, 2026	Venice
LAND COST	USD $5490 *(Twin Share)* *	
SINGLE ROOM	USD $890 *Supplement*	
PREPAID TIPS	USD $10 *Per Person, Per Day*	

** Costs have been based on prices as at June 2025 and must remain subject to possible change in the event of significant exchange rate variations or airline tax & levy increases beyond Harvest's control. Price based on minimum groups size of 20 paying pilgrims. Refer to Harvest Booking Terms & Conditions for more details.*

INCLUDED

ACCOMMODATION & MEALS: *Based on reputable local 3-4 star superior hotels or quality religious houses as applicable • Meals as specified in Itinerary*

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

OTHER: *Fully Escorted by Priest Chaplain • Porterage at hotels (where available) • Harvest Backpack, Pilgrim Journal and Travel Wallet.*

NOT INCLUDED

International Airfares • Other meals not listed • Passport and Visa Costs (if applicable) • Items of a personal nature including phone calls, laundry, beverages, etc. • Travel insurance • Prepaid Tipping

BOOKINGS & ENQUIRIES
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