GREECE & TURKEY PILGRIMAGE

16 DAYS

St Paul & the Early Church

Follow in the footsteps of St Paul and his companions through the sacred landscapes of Greece and Turkey, lands that still echo with the first bold proclamations of the Gospel. Visit the ancient cities where Paul preached, formed Christian communities, and later wrote his powerful letters — words that continue to inspire the Church today.

From the Areopagus in Athens to the ruins of Ephesus, each site tells a story of courage, perseverance and unshakable hope. This pilgrimage invites us to reignite the fervour and missionary spirit of the Church's greatest evangelist.

COMMENCES SUNDAY 05 SEPTEMBER 2027 • 16 DAYS / 15 NIGHTS

Athens (3 nights) • Ancient Corinth • Kalambaka (2) • Meteora • Kavala (2) • Philippi • Island of Patmos (2) • Samos (1) • Kusadasi (2) • Canakkale (1) • Anzac Cove • Istanbul (2)

The Library of Celsus, Ephesus

the genuine pilgrim experience

harvest journeys

Athens

Meteora

SYMBOLS: *(B) Breakfast, (L) Lunch, (D) Dinner*

Itinerary

DAY 1: SUNDAY, 05 SEPTEMBER 2027 - COMMENCE ATHENS

Athens today is the thriving capital of Greece, but, more importantly, we have entered into the world of the New Testament where St Paul and his companions established the first Christian communities throughout his four missionary journeys.

Meet with your group this afternoon before celebrating our first Mass together.

Athens overnight (D)

DAY 2: MONDAY, 06 SEPTEMBER - CHRISTIAN ATHENS

When St Paul first came to Athens it was predominantly a city which worshipped pagan gods. St Paul was taken before the city council at the Areopagus Hill, a rough outcrop of limestone rock from which he preached the Gospel message to the Athenian philosophers (Acts 17:16-21).

We begin our pilgrimage with Mass, followed by a tour of **Christian Athens** including the **Acropolis**, the **Areopagus** where St Paul delivered his famous sermon about the identity of "the Unknown God" (Acts 17:15-34). Visit the **Ancient Agora** and the **Plaka** (Old Greece) and explore the **Parthenon**. Also see the **Kallimármaro Stadium**, dating back to 330BC and restored for the first modern Olympic Games held here in 1896.

This afternoon, visit the fascinating **Acropolis Museum**, built to house every artefact found on the rock of the acropolis and the surrounding slopes.

Athens overnight (BD)

DAY 3: TUESDAY, 07 SEPTEMBER - ANCIENT CORINTH

Journey out to **Ancient Corinth** this morning where the apostle Paul lived for almost two years, teaching the people the Word of God and converting many. We visit the ancient ruins and see the site where he preached the Gospel from the **Rostrum**. See the **Peirene fountain**, and the 6th century BC **Temple of Apollo** before an outdoor Mass in this stunning pilgrimage setting. Finally, we come to **Cenchreae**, the ancient port from where St Paul said farewell to the believers and departed for Ephesus (Acts 18:18).

Remainder of the day at leisure.

Athens overnight (BD)

DAY 4: WEDNESDAY, 08 SEPTEMBER - VIA HOSIOS LOUKAS MONASTERY TO METEORA

Today we depart Athens, travelling west to the remarkable Byzantine **Monastery of Hosios Loukas**, built in the 11th century on the slopes of Mt Helikon. In 1990 UNESCO included this site on their World Heritage List. On arrival we will celebrate Mass in the grounds of the Monastery and be taken on a guided tour of the **Churches, crypt and surrounds** where we admire the amazing frescoes and mosaics.

We continue north this afternoon to the small town of **Kalambaka** built at the foot of the majestic grey rocks of **Meteora**.

Kalambaka overnight (BD)

DAY 5: THURSDAY, 09 SEPTEMBER - METEORA

We spend some time today marvelling at this unique phenomenon of nature – 24 perpendicular rocks where 600 years ago Byzantine monks chose to worship God and build their Monastic community of **Meteora**. We will visit some of these living monasteries and view the extraordinary collection of priceless religious frescoes and other treasures that will make this a remarkable day.

Enjoy some free time this afternoon.

Kalambaka overnight (BD)

DAY 6: FRIDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER - VIA BEREA & THESSALONIKI TO KAVALA

Journey north to **Berea** (modern Veria). The **"Bema"** - an impressive monument to Paul - is believed to incorporate the steps from the original synagogue from which he preached the gospel to the Jews, who welcomed the word of God and began to study the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-12). *(Time permitting)*

We then journey on to **Thessaloniki**, Greece's second city, founded in 315 BC, and where St Paul preached during the winters of 49-50AD and wrote the two epistles to the ancient Thessalonians. It was here that he established the first Christian Church in Europe. See the ramparts of the city, the triumphal **Arch of Galerius** and the **Roman Agora** where St Paul once preached. We visit **St Demetrios' Church** with its valuable mosaics and frescoes and will drive up to the upper town, which offers a marvelous view of the city.

Continue on to the port city of **Kavala** (ancient Neapolis), once named "Christoupolis" after being the first European city to accept Christianity. It was here that St Paul, St Timothy and St Silas first landed from Troas (Acts 16:11), one of the great moments in the history of Christianity.

Kavala overnight (BD)

DAY 7: SATURDAY, 11 SEPTEMBER - PHILIPPI & KAVALA

Arise and journey east along the ancient route of the Apostle Paul via **Amphipolis** (Acts 17:1) and on to nearby **Philippi**, named after Philip II, father of Alexander the Great. It was here that St Paul won his first European convert, a woman named Lydia,

Patmos

from the city of Thyatira (Acts 16:12-40).

Visit the **Baptistery of Lydia** for a beautiful outdoor Mass in this breathtaking oasis on the **River Zygaktis**, and to renew our Baptismal vows. Visit the **marketplace** (where St Paul and St Silas were brought before the rulers) and **the cistern** which tradition identifies as the place where St Paul was imprisoned.

Enjoy some free time to swim or rest.

Kavala overnight (BD)

DAY 8: SUNDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER - KAVALA TO PATMOS

After breakfast we are transferred to Thessaloniki airport for our flight to Athens.

In Piraeus we celebrate Mass and then we board our ferry to the Dodecanese Island of **Patmos**, where St John wrote the Book of Revelation. Lying between the islands of Leros and Ikaria is the 'ascetic shaped' Patmos, called the 'Jerusalem of the Aegean' due to the overwhelming atmosphere of the island during the great celebrations of Christianity.

Patmos overnight (BD)

DAY 9: MONDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER - PATMOS

We begin our day with a walking tour of the main square of the village of **Chora**. This is the traditional settlement and capital of Patmos, where the narrow streets were designed to ward off pirates over the centuries. Ascend to the **Monastery of St John the Beloved**, a huge fortress-like building dating from the 11th century, for a visit and celebration of Mass.

Our exploration of this living monastery will culminate with time in the actual **Cave of Revelation** where God chose to reveal to St John the mysteries of the last book of the Bible - the Apocalypse. The cave is now at the foot of the monastery, which houses priceless icons and manuscripts, sacred relics, vestments embroidered with silver or gold threads and bejeweled with precious stones.

Later continue to the active **Convent of Evangelismos** (Annunciation) built by the hieromonk Nikiphoros who was cured from the plague after praying to St Luke the Evangelist. Visit the **Convent of Zoodochos Pigi** with icons dating from the 16th to the 18th century. Finally, we will enjoy a short scenic tour of the island.

Patmos overnight (BD)

DAY 10: TUESDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER - PATMOS TO SAMOS

Following some free time today, we'll board our afternoon ferry to the scenic Island of **Samos**.

Upon arrival in Samos, we will be met and transferred to our hotel.

Samos overnight (BD)

DAY 11: WEDNESDAY, 15 SEPTEMBER - SAMOS TO KUSADASI

This morning we depart Samos for **Kusadasi**, doorway to **Ephesus**, the **Churches of Revelation** and **Gallipoli**.

On arrival in Kusadasi we will be met and transferred by coach to our hotel for the remainder of the day at leisure.

Kusadasi overnight (BD)

DAY 12: THURSDAY, 16 SEPTEMBER - EPHESUS PILGRIMAGE

We travel directly to **Ephesus** this morning, the most famous of the Seven Churches of Revelation (Rev 2:1-7) where St Paul spent more than two years in the course of his third missionary journey. It was to the Christian community of Ephesus that St Paul wrote his greatest and most challenging letter (the epistle to the Ephesians) and also succeeded in converting many away from worship of the god Artemis.

Our visit today will include the ruins where St Paul lived and preached. See the **prison of St Paul**; walk through the ancient marble streets founded in the 10th century BC and see this most 'complete' Roman city providing us with an excellent window into Imperial Rome. Pass the **Temple of Hadrian, the Library of Celsus**, the enormous **amphitheatre** (Acts 19:29-31), and finally come to the ruins of the **Christian Basilica** where the Third Ecumenical Council took place in 431AD, and where Our Lady was proclaimed "Mother of God".

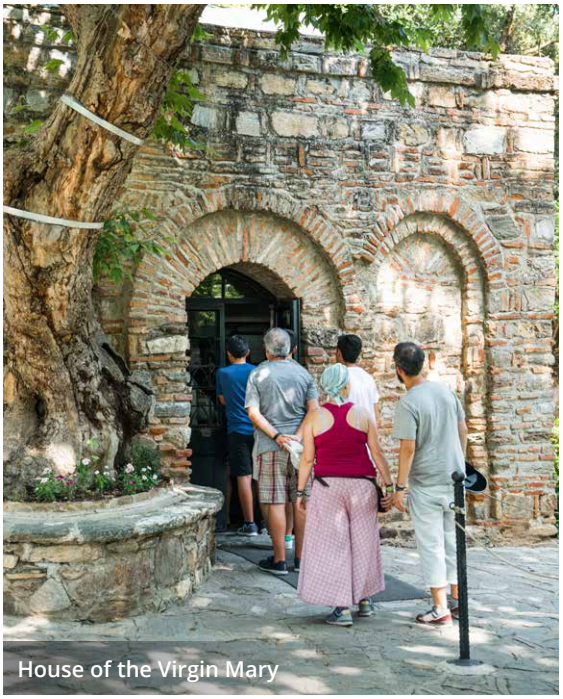
We ascend the hill to the **House of the Virgin Mary** where it is said Mary spent the

CONTINUED →

pilgrim highlights

- Follow in the footsteps of St Paul through Greece and Turkey, visiting key sites of his missionary journeys and the early Church.
- Stand where St Paul preached in Corinth, Philippi and Thessaloniki, including the ancient port of Cenchreae.
- Marvel at the Byzantine monasteries of Meteora, dramatically perched atop towering rocky pinnacles.
- Enjoy two nights on Patmos, visiting the Monastery of St John and the Cave of Revelation.
- Explore Ephesus, Smyrna and Pergamum, discovering important sites connected with St Paul and the Seven Churches of Revelation.
- Reflect and pray at Gallipoli and Anzac Cove, honouring those who gave their lives during the battles of 1915.
- Conclude in Istanbul, exploring Hagia Sophia, the Blue Mosque, Basilica Cistern, Topkapi Palace and the Grand Bazaar.

Istanbul


House of the Virgin Mary

later years of her life. We celebrate our group Mass here in one of the chapels. Finally, we visit the restored remains of the 6th century **Basilica of St John at Celcuk** where a small church was originally built over the tomb of St John the Evangelist.

Kusadasi overnight (BD)

DAY 13: FRIDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER - PERGAMUM & CANAKKALE

This morning, we set out towards Izmir, once the site of ancient **Smyrna**, one of the Seven Churches of Revelation (Rev 2:8-11). This was home to a lively Christian community under the pastoral care of its bishop – the saintly **Polycarp**.

After Mass here we will continue north to **Pergamum** (Rev 2:12-17), one of the most impressive classical sites in Turkey and another of the Churches of Revelation. Once described by St John as the place "where Satan has his throne", this too was the site where the first Christians were martyred by Rome (Rev 2:12-17). On arrival we will view the region's longest building, the **Red Basilica** dedicated to St John the Apostle.

We continue north by coach, arriving in **Canakkale** in the early evening.

Canakkale overnight (BD)

DAY 14: SATURDAY, 18 SEPTEMBER - ANZAC COVE & GALLIPOLI TO ISTANBUL

This morning, we journey along the **Gallipoli Peninsula** where 7,594 Australian and 2,431 New Zealand soldiers lost their lives in battle during World War I.

Visit **Anzac Cove** where we will take some time to reflect on the sacrifices made here. We then drive past **Courtney's and Steele's Post** and **Quinn's post.** Visit **the Nek, Chunuk Bair**, the **New Zealand Monuments** and **Lone Pine Cemetery** where we will celebrate a touching Eucharist, coming in faith to pay tribute and pray for the souls of the heroes of those tragic months of 1915.

Our journey continues east this afternoon to **Istanbul** – a glorious city uniquely located on two continents.

Istanbul overnight (BD)

DAY 15: SUNDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER - ISTANBUL

After Mass this morning we will visit the **Blue Mosque** and the incredible **Hagia Sophia** (meaning 'Holy Wisdom'). Built in 548 AD, Hagia Sophia was the greatest Church in Christendom until 1453 when Constantinople fell to the Ottoman Empire. We then also visit the 6th century **Basilica Cistern**, the largest of several hundred ancient cisterns that lie beneath the city.

Continue to visit the enormous **Topkapi Palace** *(excluding Harem)*. Onwards then to **the Grand Bazaar**, with over 4,000 exotic tiny shops. This evening, we enjoy a special farewell dinner.

Istanbul overnight (BD)

DAY 16: MONDAY, 20 SEPTEMBER - DEPART FOR HOME

The pilgrimage concludes this morning after breakfast. *(B)*

PILGRIMAGE DETAILS

TOUR CODE	SP2702
STARTS	Sunday, 05 September 2027
FINISHES	Monday, 20 September 2027
LAND COST	AUD $9490 *(Twin Share)* *
SINGLE ROOM	AUD $3150 *Supplement*
PREPAID TIPS	AUD $240 *Per Person*

** Costs have been based on prices as at August 2026 & 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: *Internal flights in Greece & Turkey • Deluxe Air Conditioned Coach touring • Professional Local Guides • Sightseeing & Entrance Fees*

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

NOT INCLUDED

International Airfares • Airport transfers on arrival & departure, unless specified in the itinerary • Other meals not listed • Passport & Visa Costs (if applicable) • Items of a personal nature including phone calls, laundry, beverages, etc. • Travel insurance • Prepaid Tipping

BOOKINGS & ENQUIRIES
harvestjourneys.com/saint-paul
AU Free-Call: 1800 819 156
NZ Free-Call: 0800 819 156
info@harvestjourneys.com

Harvest Journeys
PO Box 165
Surry Hills
NSW 2010
Australia

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