



# IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI

## A Franciscan pilgrimage in Italy

### SPECIAL TOUR

### 12 days – 11 nights

This autumn, join us for a once-in-a-lifetime pilgrimage to **Assisi**, the birthplace of **Saint Francis**, during the most sacred days of the **Franciscan** calendar. In **early October**, the town transforms into the spiritual heart of the **Franciscan** world, drawing pilgrims from across the globe to commemorate the life, death, and timeless teachings of this humble saint. For parish and faith groups, this is a rare opportunity to experience the **Transitus** on **October 3**, a deeply moving vigil marking **Saint Francis' passing**, and the **Feast Day of October 4**, when the streets, churches, and piazzas come alive with prayer, processions, and celebration.

Walk in the footsteps of a man who renounced wealth and privilege to embrace a life of humility, simplicity, and radical love for God, the poor, and all creation. As you explore the streets of **Assisi**, you will see the **Basilica of Saint Francis**, adorned with frescoes depicting the saint's extraordinary life, the **Basilica of Saint Clare**, and the sacred chapels and hermitages that shaped his ministry and contemplative practices. Every corner, every hill, and every valley tells a story of devotion, courage, and faith, offering pilgrims the chance to reflect deeply on their own spiritual journey. You will also have the opportunity to visit the tomb of **Saint Carlo Acutis**, a young boy who died of leukemia at the age of 15 and was recently canonized. Carlo's life of deep faith, devotion to the Eucharist, and use of modern technology to spread the Gospel offers a contemporary example of holiness, inspiring pilgrims of all ages. Every corner, every hill, and every valley tells a story of devotion, courage, and faith, offering pilgrims the chance to reflect deeply on their own spiritual journey. Beyond the liturgical celebrations, this pilgrimage invites you to experience the tranquil **Umbrian** landscapes that inspired **Saint Francis'** love for creation—the gentle hills of **Assisi**, the quiet woods of **La Verna**, and the serene valleys surrounding **Greccio**, where the first nativity was reenacted in a spirit of humility and devotion. Each day is carefully designed for prayer, reflection, and participation in Mass and processions, ensuring that your experience is both spiritually profound and practically accessible, even for first-time visitors to Italy.

In this special anniversary year, walking these sacred paths in October is not just a pilgrimage—it is a celebration of faith, fraternity, and the enduring legacy of **Saint Francis**, offering parish and faith groups a deeply moving encounter with one of Christianity's most beloved saints.

#### DAY 1 October 1 ROME Welcome to the Eternal City

Upon landing in Rome, reception and transfer to your hotel in the heart of the city. The afternoon is dedicated to rest and orientation, giving pilgrims time to adjust to the Italian rhythm. Your guide introduces you to Rome, explaining its unique position as the center of the Catholic Church and its influence on Saint Francis, who traveled to the city to seek approval for his new religious order. This first day gently immerses you in Italy's culture, helping you acclimate while reflecting on the journey ahead. Overnight in Rome. (D)

#### DAY 2 October 2 ROME - VATICAN Francis in the eternal city

Breakfast at the hotel begins your first full day in Rome. You visit St. Peter's Basilica, exploring its spiritual and artistic treasures while learning about Francis' connection with the papacy. It was here that Saint Francis received approval from Pope Innocent III for his Order, a pivotal moment in his life and in the history of the Church. After a guided tour of the basilica and its chapels, you attend Mass, celebrating the enduring legacy of Francis' obedience and humility. The afternoon

#### NET PRICE PER PERSON IN DOUBLE ROOM

**15-19 Pax EUR 3.170.-**

**20-25 Pax EUR 2.830.-**

**26-29 Pax EUR 2.496.-**

**30-35 Pax EUR 2.385.-**

**SURPLUS SINGLE EUR 435.-**

#### GROUP DEPARTURE

**October 1, 2026**

**FULLY CUSTOMIZABLE!**

Please let us know your dates and we will check availability to confirm your group

#### INCLUDED SERVICES

- All transfers in private bus
- 11 nights in 3\*\*\* and 4\*\*\*\* selected hotels including breakfast
- 11 dinners including
  - ✓ Welcome dinner on the first day
  - ✓ Farewell dinner on the last day
- All excursions mentioned in the program.
  - ✓ Full day guided tour Rome's Francis Heritage
  - ✓ Transitus Vigil in Assisi
  - ✓ Morning Procession in Assisi w. solemn Mass
  - ✓ Guided visit in Assisi, surroundings & Basilica
  - ✓ Guided visit of La Verna Sanctuary
  - ✓ Guided walking tour in Florence and Siena
  - ✓ Guided visit in Pisa and San Gimignano
- Local english-speaking tour guide in all aforementioned excursions.
- Mass celebrations in different cities
- Entrance fees for all visits in Museums.
- 24 h. support (Hotline)

#### NOT INCLUDED

- International and local flights.
- Local airport taxes
- Tips for Guides, drivers and Porters
- Personal expenses
- Optional tours
- Other services not mentioned in the program





includes visits to Santa Maria in Aracoeli and Santi Apostoli, churches with strong Franciscan ties. Your guide provides context on Roman history, medieval spirituality, and the Franciscan influence on Rome's art and architecture. Dinner and overnight in Rome. (B) (D)

#### DAY 3 October 3 ROMA – ASSISI Arrival and Orientation in Assisi

Breakfast at the hotel precedes a scenic drive north into the rolling hills of Umbria. The landscape slowly shifts from bustling city streets to serene valleys and gentle hills dotted with olive groves and medieval villages. Arrival in Assisi, Saint Francis' hometown, introduces pilgrims to the city's medieval charm, cobblestone streets, and warm atmosphere. After checking into your hotel, enjoy a leisurely orientation walk through the medieval streets. Your guide introduces the layout of the town, explains its Franciscan heritage, and provides practical tips for navigating the cobbled lanes. You feel the energy of a town preparing for the feast, with pilgrims from around the world arriving for the anniversary celebrations.

In the late afternoon, attend Mass at the Basilica of Saint Francis, where you can begin your spiritual immersion in the saint's life. The basilica's frescoes illustrate the extraordinary moments of Francis' humility, devotion, and service to others. Take time to visit the tomb of Saint Carlo Acutis, the young boy who died of leukemia at age 15 and was canonized for his deep Eucharistic devotion and innovative approach to spreading the Gospel using modern technology. Reflect on how holiness can be lived in every generation, even in youth.

**Evening: Transitus Vigil.** At sunset, join the Transitus of Saint Francis at the Lower Basilica or nearby convent. This vigil commemorates Saint Francis' passing in 1226. The service, with prayers, hymns, and candlelight, creates a deeply moving atmosphere, inviting pilgrims to meditate on Francis' life and the enduring message of humility, peace, and love for all creation.

Dinner and overnight in Assisi. (B) (D)

#### DAY 4 October 4 ASSISI Feast Day of Saint Francis

Breakfast at the hotel sets the tone for a spiritually rich day. Begin with a procession through the streets of Assisi, led by Franciscan friars. Pilgrims carry banners, candles, and floral tributes, and your guide explains the centuries-old tradition and symbolism of each ritual. Attend Solemn Mass at the Basilica of Saint Francis, where your priests can celebrate with your group. This is the centerpiece of the Feast Day, attended by hundreds of pilgrims from around the world.

Experience the energy, devotion, and solemnity of the day as Assisi comes alive in prayer and song. After Mass, take a guided tour of the Upper and Lower Churches and the medieval town, including the Santa Clara Basilica. Before ending the tour, pause at the tomb of Saint Carlo Acutis for prayer and contemplation, allowing pilgrims, especially youth groups, to connect with a modern example of faith and holiness. The frescoes by Giotto, Cimabue, and others depict Francis' life—from his renunciation of wealth to his care for lepers and his embrace of poverty. Your guide helps first-time visitors connect the art to the saint's teachings and the values he embodied. In the afternoon, visit Eremo delle Carceri, a quiet hermitage in the forest where Francis and his followers prayed in solitude. Walk the paths he once walked, breathe in the serene surroundings, and reflect on his connection to creation. Evening reflection at your hotel or a nearby chapel allows personal meditation and group discussion on the Feast Day's spiritual impact. Dinner and overnight in Assisi. (B)

#### DAY 5 October 5 ASSISI San Damiano & Santa Maria degli Angeli

Breakfast at the hotel begins a day devoted to two key Franciscan sites. First is San Damiano, the small chapel where Francis heard Christ speak from the crucifix: "Francis, rebuild my Church." This moment transformed his life, leading to his radical commitment to poverty, prayer, and service. You continue to Santa Maria degli Angeli, home of the Porziuncola, the tiny chapel central to Franciscan spirituality. Pilgrims kneel here in silent prayer, reflecting on the simplicity and devotion that guided Francis' life. The afternoon allows time to explore the basilica, the gardens, and quiet spaces for contemplation. Dinner and overnight in Assisi. (B) (D)

#### DAY 6 October 6 ASSISI – LA VERRA - FLORENCE

Breakfast at your hotel in Assisi. Depart north toward La Verna, nestled in the Casentino Valley of Tuscany. The scenic drive winds through hills and valleys, offering breathtaking views of forests





and pastures that shaped Francis' love for creation. At La Verna, attend Mass in the main chapel, near the site where Saint Francis received the stigmata in 1224. Explore the sanctuary, hermitages, and chapels where he prayed, reflecting on his mystical experiences and his deep care for all creation. Walk the paths of the surrounding woods for meditation and personal prayer. In the late afternoon, continue north to Florence. Settle into your hotel and enjoy a welcome group dinner. Reflect on the journey so far—the Feast Day, the Transitus celebrations, and the spiritual richness of La Verna. Overnight in Florence. (B) (D)

#### DAY 7 October 7 FLORENCE

Breakfast at the hotel. Begin a guided tour of Florence, focusing on its spiritual and Franciscan connections. Visit Santa Croce, the Franciscan church known for its artistic and religious heritage, where Franciscan values influenced Italian culture, art, and social life. Attend Mass in a Franciscan church in Florence, connecting your pilgrimage to the anniversary celebration of Saint Francis' life. Explore the Duomo and other key religious and cultural sites at leisure. Evening reflection and discussion with the group about Francis' influence on art, spirituality, and daily life. Dinner and overnight in Florence. (B) (D)

#### DAY 8 October 8 FLORENCE – PISA – SAN GIMIGNANO – SIENA

After breakfast, depart Florence for a scenic drive to Pisa, where you will see the Leaning Tower of Pisa and the surrounding cathedral square—a short cultural diversion highlighting Italy's artistic heritage. Continue to San Gimignano, known for its medieval towers and charming streets. While not directly Franciscan, the town offers a meditative pause in a historically rich setting, connecting pilgrims with Italy's broader cultural landscape. Late afternoon, arrive in Siena, settle into your hotel and time at leisure to relax. At the given time, enjoy dinner, and have time for evening reflection. Overnight in Siena. (B) (D)

#### DAY 9 October 9 SIENA – ORVIETO

Breakfast at the hotel. Begin the morning with a guided walking tour of Siena, including the Duomo and Basilica of San Domenico, where Franciscan connections and local spirituality are highlighted. Attend optional Mass in one of the city's churches. After lunch, depart for Orvieto, perched on its volcanic plateau. Explore the Orvieto Cathedral, attend Mass, and visit chapels that resonate with Franciscan devotion. Walk through the historic center and enjoy the medieval atmosphere. Overnight in Orvieto. (B) (D)

#### DAY 10 October 10 ORVIETO – GRECCIO - ROME

Breakfast at the hotel. Depart for Greccio (Rieti Province), south of Assisi, where Saint Francis created the first living Nativity. Visit the Sanctuary of Greccio, walk the paths he once prayed on, and attend Mass in the sanctuary chapel. Reflect on the humility and devotion that inspired this historic site. In the late afternoon, continue to Rome. Settle into your hotel for dinner and evening rest. Overnight in Rome. (B) (D)

#### DAY 11 October 11 ROME Free day

Breakfast at the hotel. Enjoy a free day in Rome, with optional suggestions for pilgrims: Churches related to Saint Francis, such as San Francesco a Ripa and Santa Maria in Aracoeli; the Major Basilicas: St. Peter's, St. John Lateran, St. Mary Major, and St. Paul Outside the Walls or simply relax, stroll the piazzas, and enjoy shopping. This flexible day allows pilgrims to reflect, pray, and connect personally with the spiritual heart of Rome. Optional guided Masses can also be arranged. Overnight in Rome. (B) (D)

#### DAY 12 October 12 ROME Departure

Breakfast at the hotel. Depending on your flight schedule, optional visits to key churches with Franciscan connections or time for personal prayer and reflection. Conclude the pilgrimage with a farewell Mass, celebrating the journey, the Feast of Saint Francis, and the anniversary year. Transfer to the airport for departure, carrying memories, reflections, and renewed spiritual inspiration from walking in the footsteps of Saint Francis. End of our services. (B)



**(B)** Breakfast **(L)** Lunch **(B)** Dinner