



Preparations for our Assisi Pilgrimage

"A geographical pilgrimage is the symbolic acting out of an inner journey." ~ Thomas Merton

With great excitement we anticipate this personal journey we will be embarking on together in May, 2025 (May 19-24). To prepare our hearts and minds for our time in medieval Umbria there are a couple books we would like to recommend. A good novel that's both interesting and fun read, with a very intentional post-modern bent is Ian Morgan Cron's - *Chasing Francis; A Pilgrim's Tale*. However those who love history, Donald Spoto's book "*Reluctant Saint*" is both thorough and insightful in its approach to the life and times of St. Francis. For those who appreciate both the wit and charm of G. K. Chesterton's works you will enjoy his book on St. Francis as well. (You'll be deeply moved by the last half of Chapter 5.)

Our Pilgrimage Experience will include:

- Historical teachings and tours of this beautiful and culturally rich part of Italy, as well as of the life of St. Francis.
- An explanation of the topic, "The Way of Joy."
- Indulging in many different flavors of Gelato, a couple times a day, since it's only 2 Euros!
- Watching the sunrise next to the ruins of Rocca Maggoire Castle, above Assisi, as it casts its rays across the Umbrian planes.
- Making friends with local friars, and learning more about our Axiom Monastic Community.



Our journey will begin on the Monday evening of May 25th at 5:00 pm. Each attendee is free to depart Assisi anytime May 30th before check out time, which is usually between 10:00 and 11:00. If scheduling flights from Rome, allow enough time to get to the airport by train (usually 2-3 hours). We will stay at Hotel Ideale, located just a short walk from the center of the city. Hotel pricing includes breakfast.

Everyone will cover their own meal expenses, and chose their own lunch and dinner destinations, both as we tour together, as well as during free time. Some have expressed a desire to experience various Italian cuisines during the pilgrimage, some have mentioned they are on a strict missionary budget, and a few may fast a meal or two. This gives freedom for this variety. (We have good recommendations for those with, or without much money!)

The Pilgrimage cost is \$380.00 (single price, US) and \$365.00 (couple's price/person, US). This covers a small part of the preparatory work and materials required for the pilgrimage, our meeting room, and transport to and from Mt. Subasio.

Flights: Assisi is a beautiful two-hour train ride north of Rome, from Roma Termini. Arriving at either Rome airport one is required to take public transport to the Roma Termini train station. (Always remember before boarding a train in Italy you need to go by and make sure your train ticket is stamped by a stamp machine that is always right next to each train you board. Of course online tickets/QR codes don't require this validation. Regional trains are the cheaper ones, versus express.)

There is an additional route to Assisi that some prefer – one can fly from London Stansted (airport code STN) to Perugia (airport code PEG) which is a taxi ride from Assisi.

When planning your return to the airport, remember it will take you 2-3 hours to get back to Roma Termini, then another 30-60 minutes to get to the airport (FCO).

Let's prepare our hearts for wonder, for challenge, and change...

"True seeing is the heart of spirituality today." Richard Rohr

"The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes." Marcel Proust