



DIocese of ARLINGTON
YOUTH, CAMPUS, &
YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES



ENCOUNTER “LITTLE ROME”

Who knew that Rome and the Holy Land were both within 25 minutes of the Cathedral of St. Thomas More? Our journey will take you to the Brookland neighborhood in Washington, D.C., sometimes referred to as “Little Rome” due to the Catholic universities (Catholic University of America and Trinity University), the Dominican House of Study, monasteries, shrines, and other religious sites. Among the unique institutions you’ll encounter there: The Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in America, The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, and Saint John Paul II National Shrine.

This page provides a general overview of this experience, however, please go to www.tinyurl.com/DCtoRome on your portable device (or scan the QR code below) for links to the full experience.



PLACES TO VISIT

Many families are unable to visit Jerusalem in their lifetimes despite it being a place of pilgrimage for Christians—and other Abrahamic faiths. The **Franciscan's Holy Land in America** can either whet our appetites for the longer visit or become a place of regular pilgrimage in our own back yard. Our first stop is this enclave in Washington, D.C., a national shrine with replicas of many of the sites important to world history and to Our Lord. Due to COVID-19 only the Gardens are open, which are more than worth it for a contemplative visit. You can still view the Rosary Portico, pray the Stations of the Cross, visit replicas of the Grotto of Gethsemane, the Tomb of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Lourdes Grotto, and more!



While in D.C., you can take part in the Sacraments through Mass and Confessions offered at the **Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception**. You may visit for private prayer in the Crypt Church, attend Mass, go to Confession, visit the bookstore and gift shop and visit the outdoor Garden of Mary.



Encounter the mission and legacy of a celebrated and cherished recent pontiff at the **Saint John Paul II National Shrine**. As a fierce advocate for youth and their participation in the life of the Church and society, and as a vocal opponent of the dangers of communism, St. John Paul II was a leading light for evangelization in the 20th and 21st centuries. Visit the “Gift of love” exhibit to explore his life, venerate his relic in the Luminous Mysteries Chapel, or participate in Mass during your visit.



BEFORE YOU GO

1. Plan your pilgrimage and activities by visiting the website which provides a trivia quiz and preps you for your Franciscan Monastery Gardens visit.
2. Consider attending Mass or Confessions at the Basilica or the John Paul II Shrine.
3. Take some time to learn about St. Francis of Assisi (see next page.)
4. Glance at 8 tips to turn a family trip into a pilgrimage visit www.tinyurl.com/PilgrimageTips
5. Does “The Immaculate Conception” refer to the virgin birth of Jesus? If you answered “no” you are correct. Visit our website for references to Sacred Scripture explaining the difference.

Check website for any current closings, special events, or displays.



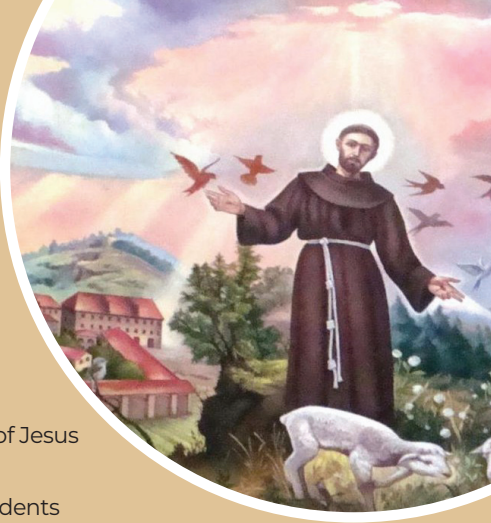
MINISTRY OF THE HOLY LAND FRANCISCANS

While on this pilgrimage, consider supporting the Franciscans who preserve the holy places and make it possible for Christians to remain in the land of Jesus.

Below are some highlights of their ministry efforts:

- Working to stabilize the declining population of Christian families in the Holy Land who are threatened by national strife, terrorism, and the lack of employment and educational opportunities
- Preserving 74 sanctuaries and shrines from the life of Jesus and the prophets
- Operating 16 schools for more than 10,000 pre-K-12 students
- Supporting 29 parishes, 4 homes for orphans and 3 academic institutions
- Providing emergency support to refugees (Syrian, Iraqi, etc.)

The Franciscans also provide pilgrimage trips to the “real” Holy Land in Israel. If interested, visit www.holylandpilgrimages.org/.



LIFE OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

When you first enter the Upper Gardens at the Franciscan Monastery, in the rose gardens, you will see a statue of St. Francis of Assisi, founder of the Franciscans. When reflecting on St. Francis' early life, he was often described as the “Life of the Party”. He enjoyed a lavish, wild, and sinful lifestyle and desired greatly to be a noble knight. His story is one of the most powerful experiences of conversion, but it did not happen overnight. St. Francis found himself at a dead end: not satisfied by the worldly pleasures he sought out in his youth. St. Francis only found fulfillment when he turned to Christ and gave himself to God. He lived a radical lifestyle: he chose to give up all his possessions for the simple life, showed honor, respect, and love to all people no matter their circumstance, and desired to spread the Gospel to every corner of the earth. It was this radical lifestyle that attracted thousands of people to travel to hear him speak and learn from his message. He placed absolute trust in the Lord to provide for his needs and those of his companions and through that trust, the Order of the Franciscans was born. Let us embrace the example of St. Francis as we journey on this encounter to radiate joy, embrace simplicity, and trust in the Lord.

To learn more about St. Francis you can read about him here: tinyurl.com/EncounterSFA or watch a video for a quick overview of St. Francis' life by Catholic News Agency: tinyurl.com/SaintFrancisAssisivideo

PRAYER FOR YOUR CAR RIDE:

Reflect on Micah 6:8 and consider offering up the following intention during your journey.

We pray for the Franciscans who preserve the holy places and make it possible for Christians to remain in the land of Jesus. Then pray together a Peace Prayer of St. Francis:

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace: where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.



TYING IT ALL TOGETHER

This encounter provides you with an opportunity to figuratively walk in the footsteps of Jesus. Certainly, you will not go to the places where Christ trod nearly 2,000 years ago. And yet, perhaps you will be inspired to learn more about each place, to visualize Christ's passion more concretely when you pray the stations, to study about the history and places you read about in Sacred Scripture. Perhaps you will become inspired by the work of the Franciscans and want to find out more about their work to preserve the presence of the rapidly diminishing Christian population in the Holy Land. Perhaps you will be inspired to visit the Holy Land itself and walk in the footsteps of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Pilgrims speak of the power and awe of that journey. Just remember, Christ didn't require that pilgrimage of us, but He does want us to walk in his footsteps in word and deed!

On your car ride home or over dinner, perhaps you can reflect on your take-aways from the day.

- What resolutions can you make as they relate to charitable work? Service? Prayer?
- Which of the more than 80 chapels and oratories that honor the Mother of God at the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception did you find the most interesting? Beautiful? Surprising?

OTHER PLACES TO STOP ON THE WAY HOME!

- If you're ready to head home for dinner, grab the daily catch at the Municipal Fish Market (which, according to historians, has been there since George Washington walked the earth).
- Want to be more active...try hiking or cycling or horseback riding in **Rock Creek Park**. **Beach Drive** is closed to cars certain hours on the weekends so feel free to strap on those **roller blades** or pedal to your heart's content...or if you really want to make this a full weekend and more...**bike** the **C&O Canal** from Georgetown to Cumberland (184 miles). Rent a kayak at the Key Bridge boathouse or Fletcher's boathouse or try stand up **paddle boarding** or do a spin in a paddle boat at the Tidal Basin. Check out the azaleas or bonsai collection at the **National Arboretum** or visit **Kenilworth Park and Aquatic Gardens** for some nature.

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