

**0524 Mt. Olive DO NOT USE Lutheran Church Pilgrimage - In the
Footsteps of St. Paul - DO NOT USE
May 20 - May 31, 2024**



Monday, May 20

Depart LAX on our way to Athens, Greece.

Depart LAX on our way to Athens, Greece.

Tuesday, May 21

Welcome to Greece! Your afternoon is free to begin discovering Athens. Transfer to our hotel for dinner and overnight stay in Athens.

Wednesday, May 22

ATHENS: Today our tour in Athens starts by passing by the most famous sites in the center of the city. A short stop at the Panathenaic Stadium, where the first modern Olympic Games took place in 1896. Following the tour will bring you to the Acropolis (a UNESCO World Heritage Site), the Parthenon, and Mars Hill where St. Paul the Apostle spoke about the One Almighty God of all to the pagan Athenians. From here we have an excellent view of the ancient Agora, which was the center of ancient Athenian life, where St. Paul spent time in the markets. We continue with a pleasant short walk passing by Herodian and Dionysus Theatre, and we visit the Acropolis Museum. Main attractions include the following: artifacts of everyday life, statuary from the archaic period, the Caryatids, and the Parthenon Hall. Free afternoon. Dinner. Overnight at our Athens hotel.

Thursday, May 23

CORINTH / ATHENS: This day we will drive to the City of Corinth. Our first stop will be at the Corinth Canal to enjoy the magnificent view. On to the archaeological site of Ancient Corinth where, under the shadow of the towering Corinthian Acropolis, the Apostle Paul preached and lived for two years in 50 AD, and where he wrote his most familiar biblical letters. We visit the ancient city ruins in which St. Paul worked with St. Aquila and St. Priscilla, the Agora where Paul's trial by Gallio took place, the Bema, the marketplace, and the temples. We will also visit the Archaeological Museum. Return to Athens early afternoon. Dinner. Overnight at our Athens hotel.

Friday, May 24

CRUISE SHIP MN CELESTYAL OLYMPIA: Morning transfer to the port of Piraeus for 11:00 am embarkation on the MN Celestyal Olympia for your 4 days and 3 nights Iconic Aegean Cruise. In the afternoon, your cruise will arrive at the Island of Mykonos. Here the whitewashed houses, flowered balconies and windmills of this Cycladic Island will simply enchant you. We recommend that you take a nonchalant stroll in Mykonos town to take in the winding narrow streets full of boutiques and to visit the beautiful Church of Panagia Paraportiani. Mykonos combines (in a unique way) a luxuriant and sophisticated lifestyle with a simple and yet charming life of the Cycladic Islands. Overnight onboard Cruise Ship MN Celestyal Olympia.

Saturday, May 25

EPHESUS & PATMOS: Morning arrival to the ancient City of Ephesus, Turkey.

During our shore excursion to the ancient ruins of Ephesus (one of the most impressive ruins of the biblical world) we will see the Great Theatre where the Apostle Paul preached the good news of Jesus the Messiah, which is also the largest theatre in antiquity with a capacity of 24,000. We then drive to the house where the Virgin Mary is believed to have resided years after the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of her firstborn child, the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior. In the afternoon, we will arrive at the tranquil Island of Patmos, where the Apostle John was exiled by the Roman Empire.

We'll visit the village of Chora where the Monastery of St. John is located and continue to the nearby Grotto of the Apocalypse where John wrote the Book of Revelation during his exile. Overnight onboard Cruise Ship MN Celestyal Olympia.

Sunday, May 26

CRETE & SANTORINI: Morning arrival to the Island of Crete and the City of Heraklion where we will join the shore excursion to the Palace of Knossos discovered in 1899. It is in Heraklion where St. Paul met the owner and captain of the ship who warned him of continuing his journey to Rome. In the afternoon, the ship will depart to Santorini, the most idyllic and breathtaking of all the Greek Islands. It is the island famous for its ancient volcanic eruptions that created its famously beautiful caldera bay. Optional excursions to Thira and Oia areas give you the opportunity to fully experience one of the most famous islands of Greece. Overnight onboard Cruise Ship MN Celestyal Olympia.

Monday, May 27

METEORA: Morning arrival to Piraeus Port. Disembark the cruise ship and journey on to Kalambaka to visit the amazing monasteries of Meteora. Amid striking scenery, perched on top of huge rocks that seem to be suspended in mid-air, stand these ageless Christian monasteries built in the 15th century. Dinner. Overnight at our hotel in Kalambaka.

Tuesday, May 28

METEORA / BEREIA / THESSALONIKI: Visit one more monastery (or maybe two). Departure for Thessaloniki (the biblical Thessalonica), which is the co-capital of Greece. On the way, we will visit Berea with the famous mosaics of St. Paul. We will continue to Thessaloniki and, before check-in, we will take a bus tour of the City of Thessaloniki, including St. Demetrius Basilica and St. Sofia Church. Dinner. Overnight at our hotel in Thessaloniki.

Wednesday, May 29

KAVALA / PHILIPPI / LYDIA SPRINGS: Visit Kavala where St. Paul landed with his disciples St. Timothy and St. Sillas. See the small church that marks the traditional site of Paul's landing there. Visit Kavala, once named Christoupolis because it was the first city in Europe to accept Christianity. We will continue to the City of Philippi where St. Paul preached the gospel and where early Christians were baptized on European soil. Visit the baptism site where Lydia converted to Christianity. Our tour will continue with a visit to a crypt from the Roman period that is believed to have served as a prison for St. Paul, then the Marketplace, the famous Acropolis there and the Theatre. Farewell dinner. Overnight at our hotel in Thessaloniki.

Thursday, May 30

THESSALONIKI: Enjoy a free day at your own leisure. You can visit the Rotonda, Byzantine Museum of Thessaloniki, and Jewish Archaeological Museum, stroll around the Ladadika area, and the promenade, all of which are centrally located. Or, just relax at the hotel. Dinner on your own. Overnight at our hotel in Thessaloniki.

Friday, May 31

Morning transfer to the airport for our flight back home. Same day arrival. Morning transfer to the airport for our flight back home.

* Itinerary is subject to change