

**Join Bishop Frank Caggiano on a
11 Day Pilgrimage to Italy & Sicily**

Visiting Agrigento, Siracusa, Taormina, Paola, Bari,
San Giovanni Rotondo, St. Michael's Cave, Pietrelcina & Rome



Spiritual Director

**Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano
Bishop of Bridgeport**

July 13th – 23rd, 2015

YOUR TRIP INCLUDES:

- Round trip air from New York
- First Class Hotels
- Breakfast & Dinner Daily
- Air-conditioned motor coach
- English speaking guide
- Sightseeing as per itinerary
- Portage of one piece of luggage at hotels
- All taxes and service charges
- Daily Mass and Rosary

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Visit the Valley of the Temples in Agrigento
- Mass at the Basilica of Madonna delle Lacrime
- Mass at the Basilica of San Francesco di Paola
- Mass at the Tomb of St. Nicholas of Bari
- Visit of the Tomb of Padre Pio in the Church of St. Pio of Pietrelcina
- Visit the Basilica of Santa Maria delle Grazie
- Mass at Santa Maria degli Angeli
- Visit Piana Romana where Padre Pio received the invisible Stigmata
- Visit Santa Anna Church where Padre Pio was Baptized
- Mass at the Tomb of St. Peter
- Mass at St. Paul Outside the Walls
- Papal Audience (provided the Holy Father is in residence)
- Panorama of Rome including a visit of the four major Basilicas of Rome – St. Mary Major, St. John Lateran, St. Paul Outside the Walls and St. Peter's

Pilgrimage Price: \$ 3,699.00 per person Double/Triple \$ 750.00 Single Supplement

ITINERARY

Mon, July 13th: JFK/Palermo

Depart on your overnight flight to Palermo. Dinner served in flight.

Tue, July 14th: Palermo/Agrigento

Upon arrival in Palermo, we are met by our guide and transferred to **Agrigento**. The remainder of the day is free.



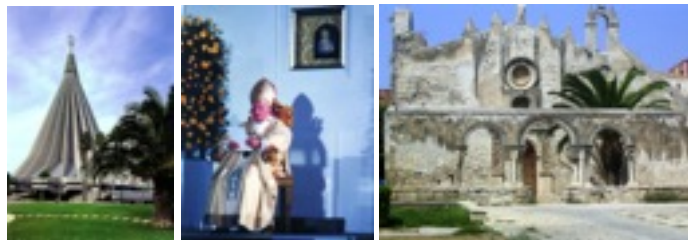
Wed, July 15th: Valley of the Temples/Siracusa

This morning we visit the Valley of the Temples and remains of the Cloister of the Convent of St Nicholas.

The archaeological area known as the [Valley of the Temples in Agrigento](#), Sicily, is one of the most important archeological sites in the world and a [UNESCO World Heritage Site](#) since 1998. Along a long rocky scarp, chosen as the southern limit of the town, are still sited the great temples of ancient Akragas.

Ancient Akragas, in its hey-day, was a flourishing cultural center: it gave the world Empedocles, the pre-socratic philosopher, whose concept of matter was divided into four elements, Earth, Air, Fire and Water, was the foundation of science for many centuries to come. The city attracted poets like Simonides and Pindar who described it as "[the most beautiful of mortal cities](#)".

After our visit, we continue to [Siracusa](#).



[Thu. July 16th: Siracusa](#)

This morning we visit the Basilica of Madonna delle Lacrime which holds the plaque of Our Lady of the Tears. From August 29th to September 1st, 1953, a plaster plaque of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, placed over the headboard of the bed of a young couple, Angelo Iannuso and Antonina Giusto, shed human tears. The phenomenon took place at intervals inside and outside of the house. Many saw, touched, gathered and tasted the salt of those tears.

After Mass we visit the wonderful city of Siracusa where historic cultures are evident in the narrow streets and lovely courtyards of the old houses. It is the birthplace of Archimedes and, at one time, it rivaled Athens as the most important city of the Greek world.

Our first stop is the [Church of St. John the Baptist](#). It is the oldest church in the West, second in age only to its Eastern counterpart located in Antioch, Turkey. In its crypt, [Saints Paul and Luke were said to have preached to the Christian community](#).

Next we visit the [Ortiga Island](#) where we find the [Duomo](#) which is one of the town's most celebrated sights. The building records the many ages of the town. Once it was the Greek Temple of Athena, with a giant gold statue of the goddess on its roof. The massive Doric columns of the temple are still visible. The wall above the columns along Via Minerva, with battlements, is Norman in origin, while the Baroque facade was a replacement after the 1693 earthquake. Inside the Duomo, you can see more evidence of the temple origins of the building, and more of the original structure. Inside we see the relics of St. Lucy in a small room is the shrine to Santa Lucia, the patron saint of Siracusa. St. Lucy is loved so much that Siracusa awards her two festivals a year, in May and in December, with the saint's statue being ceremonially removed from her side-chapel and placed in front of the main altar, before a succession of traditional festivities and the carrying of the statue through town in a colorful procession. The body of St. Lucy is in Venice. Siracusa became a [World Heritage Site in 2005](#)

Fri, July 17th: Siracusa/Taormina

After Mass at Madonna delle Lacrime, we have a free morning to enjoy Siracusa on our own. Late morning, we are transferred to **Taormina**. Upon arrival we are transferred to the upper city where we will be free to have lunch, on our own, walk around the city and just enjoy the views of Mount Etna. Taormina is a jet set town and this is evident in the local boutiques and jewelry shops. Take time to visit the Greek Theatre.

Teatro Greco - Taormina's historic theater owes much of its present appearance to the Romans, the Greeks' successors in Sicily. Designed with an unsurpassable backdrop of blue sea, coastline, distant smoking Etna, and inland mountains, the theater was begun by the Greeks in the third century BC. In the first century AD, when Taormina was a significant Roman town, the Romans adapted the theatre to suit their more barbaric spectacles, stripping out seating to make more room for gladiatorial shows. It would be hard to beat the views from Taormina on a clear day. Some of the best places for enjoying the vista are the panoramic terrace of Piazza IX Aprile on Corso Umberto.

Sat, July 18th: Taormina/Paola

Morning departure to **Paola**. Today we follow the Mediterranean Coast. We arrive at **Messina** where we board our ferry to cross **the Straight of Messina**. Upon arrival at the port of **Villa San Giovanni**, we continue north along the Coast of Calabria en route to Paola. Upon arrival in Paola, we go to the **Basilica of San Francesco di Paola for Mass**.



Francis was born in Paola on March 27, 1416, to Giacomo Martolilla and Vienna Fuscaldo. Being advanced in years, his parents attributed the birth of their eldest child to the intercession of St Francis of Assisi. This is the reason why they named him Francis and promised to make him wear the votive habit of the Franciscans for a year. At the age of fifteen Francis went to the monastery of the Friars Minor Conventuals in St Marco Argentano (Cosenza) to fulfill the vow made by his parents. Here Francis showed his disposition to prayer and his devotion, along with those supernatural powers which made him famous as a wonder-worker afterwards.

From the very beginning Francis was a famous wonder-worker. He worked wonders for all of his life, from the building of his first monastery till his time in France. His powers were on behalf of the poor and of people who were oppressed by the frequent embezzlements of the powerful.

Thanks to Neapolitan merchants Francis' fame reached the court of the French King Louis XI. Since the king was very ill, he asked Pope Sixtus IV to send the hermit to his deathbed. This was the beginning of the "diplomatic chapter" of Francis' life. The Pope, wishing to sign a treaty with France, granted Louis XI's request willingly and so did the King of Naples.

Francis lived in France for about twenty-five years. There he led a simple life, working a piece of land, and was seen as a reformer of religious life-style. Because of his austere life-style he was chosen as a spiritual guide by some Benedictines, Franciscans and hermits, who left their religious orders to follow him. This made his Calabrian congregation international. Francis started the Order of Minims, then the

secular Third Order and finally the Cloistered Nuns. Their Rules were definitively approved by Pope Julius II on July 28, 1506.

Francis died in Tours on Good Friday, April 2, 1507. The fame of this wonder-worker spread through Europe thanks to the three branches of his order and contributed to his beatification on July 7, 1513 and his canonization on May 1, 1519, which took place after only twelve years since his death.

In 1562, a group of Huguenots in France broke open his tomb and found his body incorrupt. They dragged it forth, burned it and scattered the bones, which were recovered by Catholic faithful and distributed as relics to various churches of his order.



Sun, July 19th: Bari/San Giovanni Rotondo

Morning departure to **San Giovanni Rotondo**. Today we continue our cross over from the Mediterranean Coast to the Adriatic Coast en route to **Bari** where we have Mass at the Tomb of St. Nicholas in the **Basilica of St. Nicholas of Bari**. The remains of St. Nicholas were taken from southern Turkey in 1087. They lie in the crypt and are the source of pilgrimage for Catholic and Orthodox Christians. After our visit, we continue to San Giovanni Rotondo.

Mon, July 20th: Our Day with Padre Pio

Today we visit the **Basilica of Santa Maria delle Grazie** and the **Chapel of the old Church** where Padre Pio said Mass. Next we visit the English Office for a talk on Padre Pio. After our visit, we visit the new **Church of St. Pio of Pietrelcina** to see Padre Pio's Tomb.

This afternoon, we visit **St. Michael's Cave** where St. Michael the Archangel appeared.

Tue, July 21st: San Giovanni Rotondo/Pietrelcina/Rome

Morning departure to **Rome**. En route we stop at **Pietrelcina**, birthplace of Padre Pio. We visit Padre Pio's home, the **Church of Santa Ana**, where he was baptized and we have Mass at **Santa Maria degli Angeli**. Next we stop at **Piana Romana** to visit the place where Padre Pio received the invisible stigmata. After our visit we continue to **Rome**.

Wed, July 22nd: Papal Audience

This morning we go to **St. Peter's Square** or Castel Gondolfo for the Papal Audience (provided the Holy Father is in residence).

This afternoon we have a "Tour of the Major Basilicas of Rome" – St. Peters', St. Mary Major & St John Lateran. We also see the Roman Forum, the Coliseum and the Monument to Victor Emmanuel, Piazza Navona and the Trevi Fountain.

Thu, July 23rd: Rome/USA

Morning departure to Rome airport for our return flight to the USA.

Reservation Form

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**A \$700.00 DEPOSIT IS DUE AT TIME OF BOOKING
FINAL PAYMENT IS DUE May 1, 2015**

TERMS AND CONDITIONS: Cancellation made by passengers. Of the \$700.00 deposit, \$300.00 is non-refundable in case of cancellation. 70 days to 46 days a \$700.00 penalty is imposed. 45 days to 16 days a \$700.00 penalty PLUS any penalty imposed by the airlines and hotels. 15 days or less may result in loss of entire cost, depending on what we can recover. Once travel has commenced, no refunds for unused portions can be made. **TRAVEL INSURANCE IS AVAILABLE AND ADVISABLE** If you have a pre-existing condition, it is important that you take Travel Insurance within 10 days of booking.

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