

Palermo Cathedral | Photo by Dmitry Romanoff on Unsplash

A TRULY CATHOLIC PILGRIMAGE

How can people of faith shine a light upon a world foraging for answers in darkness? Through the centuries, an answer from the Catholic Church lies in Beauty. By raising up, nourishing and unleashing the creative genius of some of the greatest artists, writers, and musicians the world has ever seen, today we have these millennial treasures to enchant, uplift and inspire.

Such is the vision of Sacred Encounters Sicily, 2027, offered by Tekton Ministries, a leader in developing Catholic pilgrimages all over the world for more than 25 years. This 'Pilgrimage of Sojourn of the Soul' will not just touch your heart, but also illuminate how God shares the Divine love through the beauty, landscape, customs and cultures of an ancient land. Our pilgrimage is held during "La Festa di Ognissanti" - one of the oldest and most sacred traditions for Sicilians. By exploring the rich palette of its liturgies and rituals, foods and festivals, and saints and stories, pilgrims will leave with a deeper faith, profound sense of gratitude, and a transforming resolve to bring the treasures of Sicily into your homes, churches and community.

- **Day 1 - Friday, October 29**
  Depart USA
  Pilgrims depart from the USA to Palermo airport, arriving the next morning.

- **Day 2 - Saturday, October 30**
  Palermo: Fiera dei Morti (Fair of the Dead)
  Welcome to Sicily. After settling in at our hotel, we begin our **Allhallowtide** encounter not with ghosts and goblins, but with a different skeleton. For it is in the roofless, unfinished Gothic church of **Santa Maria dello Spasimo** where we enter into the contrasts of life and death, saints and sinners, ancient and new, sacred and secular. After an orientation and introductory talk, we will stretch our legs and get our bearings along the **seafront promenade**, then enjoy a welcome meal of local food and wine.

- **Day 3 - Sunday, October 31**
  Palermo: Halloween
  On these days of ritual and tradition, we enter the Solemnity of All Saints - "**Ognissanti**" - through the lens of the customs and observances of the region. While the overlap of Saturday Halloween revelry followed by the Feast of All Saints creates a unique collision between the secular and the traditional liturgical schedule, still it is a hallowed time of reverence, remembrance, family gatherings and special customs. Our day will begin with high Mass at the stunning Palermo Cathedral, where we join the local Church in its ancient litany of the saints, Following, we will enjoy a traditional Sicilian brunch, then observe the custom of venerating the saints at the sacred jewels **San Catald, Chiese del Gesu, and Maria dell' Ammiraglio**. In the evening we will join in the holiday festivities occurring throughout Palermo.

- **Day 4 - Monday, November 1**
  Palermo: All Saints
  Today we observe ***I-morti*** - the day of the dead. It is an occasion to engage in the local customs of visiting cemeteries, sharing festive meals and exchanging 'u cannistru ri morti' - baskets of sweets. Our sojourn will take us to the **Capuchin Catacombs** and **Santa Maria dei Rotoli** cemetery, where we will have a special memorial service for our deceased loved ones. Following a festive lunch of local foods and wine, pilgrims will have free time to explore other gems of the historic old town - **Palatine chapel, Quattro Canti, Teatro Massimo, Church of San Giovanni degli Eremiti, archeological museum, or the Oratorio del Rosario di Santa Cita**. W e will gather in the evening for a taste of the traditional Frutta di Martorana and a glass of Pantelleria, as we share our experiences and insights from the past three days.

- **Day 5 - Tuesday, November 2**
  Monreale: Byzantine Glory
  According to legend, Our Lady appeared in a dream to Sicilian King William II and showed him where to build a church. That church - the **Monreale Cathedral** - is considered today the undisputed jewel of Norman art. Our day of Byzantine glory will take us south to the foot of Mount Caputo, where we will tour this UNESCO World Heritage Site, celebrate Mass, explore the old town, and savor a hosted lunch of local wines from the **Camporeale** area. Upon returning to Palermo, pilgrims will have some free time until later in the evening when we close our Palermo stay with charcuterie and sharing at the hotel.


Monreale Cathedral

- **Day 6 - Wednesday, November 3**
  Cefalu: Tyrrhenian Treasure
  Today we head east to the picture postcard village of **Cefalu**, to explore its historic medieval gems and savor **Cathedral and Coffee** at the **Duomo di Cefalù**. Afterwards, we cross the Sicilian hinterlands to the foot of Mt. Etna, to the ancient port city and baroque gem of **Catania**. The day closes with a sumptuous dinner of **Catanese cuisine** and wines.


Catania

- **Day 7 - Thursday, November 4**
  Catania: Saints and Symbols
  Cosmopolitan, exuberant, eclectic, our exploration of contrasts continues, from the glittering whiteness of Catania's bustling Via Aetna to soot-stained side streets. It's also a study in the relationship of a saint to a city, where we will meet St. Agatha in the story of her martyrdom, symbols of her meaning, and her enduring presence, from parish churches to the baroque Cathedral, trendy trattorias to a signature dessert. After our morning sojourn, Mass, and hosted lunch, pilgrims have the rest of the day to explore this colorful Ionian gem. Later in the evening we will gather at the hotel for a nightcap and sampling of various sweets.


Palermo Cathedral

- **Day 8 - Friday, November 5**
  Syracuse: Martyrs and Masterpieces
  Rivaling Athens for its size and cultural heritage, and hosting St. Paul during a missionary journey, Syracuse is a blending of its ancient Greek and Roman past with early Christian, Arab and Norman influences. On our visit we will explore these contrasts, visible in its Ortigia Cathedral and the Piazza Archimede. We will also meet its famed saint, Lucy, who was martyred at the present site of the Basilica di Santa Lucia al Sepolcro. Another patron, though not so saintly, is the master of chiascoro street drama, Caravaggio, who in the Burial of St. Lucy has given the city a reflection of its past and paradoxes. Our visit to the city's historical area will include Mass and a hosted lunch of local food and wine. Upon return to Catania, pilgrims are invited to gather in the evening for sweets and sips to recount the joys and delights of the day.

- **Day 9 - Saturday, November 6**
  Free Day
  Today pilgrims have an opportunity to create special memories through a free day, such as taking a cooking course, exploring the coast by motor scooter, touring Greek ruins, golfing at a nearby resort, exploring wineries, or deep sea fishing. More information about the various offerings will be made available prior to the trip. We will close our day with a hosted multi-course dinner at a local restaurant.

- **Day 10 - Sunday, November 7**
  High Mass and Soaring Vistas
  On our last day in Sicily we begin with a Sacred Encounters treat: **high Mass** at a spectacular church. Following, we will celebrate our final meal with a traditional Sicilian brunch. Then we will journey up the slopes of **Mt. Etna**, to the **Rifugio Sapienza**. Our vista from 6000' offers an opportunity to ponder and reflect, or just take in the enormity and ruggedness of the landscape. Later in the day pilgrims will have an opportunity to offer their insights, and then raise a glass to our shared journey of a sacred encounter.


Italian Winery

- **Day 11 - Monday, November 8**
  The Return: A look back and a journey forward
  Today we say goodbye to 10 glorious days of our encounter with Sicily as we return to our homes. We encountered an island bursting with beauty - in churches and pizzas, museums and mountains, food and festivals, vineyards and fields. We explored contrasts of life and death, sand and sea, old traditions and a new world. We encountered a people with an immense history, layered identity, and enduring spirit. We depart gladdened, overflowing with appreciation and commitment to see our homes and lands with new lenses, act with greater purpose, and seek ways to bring beauty, faith and goodness into the world.

B=Breakfast D=Dinner



SICILY PILGRIMAGE DETAILS

REGISTER ONLINE AT TektonMinistries.org

LAND-ONLY PRICE PER PERSON

$4,095

Gratuities to guide, driver, hotel/restaurant staff **$135.00**
(estimated/pre-collected with final invoice)

ESTIMATED OPTIONS:
- For a single room: $850

Final Payment Due **July 2027**

BASE RATE WILL INCLUDE:

- 9 nights' accommodation at 4 star hotels, including taxes and service charges
- Knowledgeable, inspiring, guides for tours and evening talks
- Deluxe motor coach transportation to all venues
- Mass at Cathedrals in Palermo, Syracuse and Catania
- Entrance fees to museums and other venues listed on itinerary
- Daily breakfast and main meal (including wine or beer at the main meal)
- Hosted evening 'sips and stories' per the itinerary

Rates do not include: *airfare, airport transport, taxi, some tips, optional side trips and travel insurance*

Reservations and Payment: Tekton Ministries requires a non-refundable deposit of $300.00 per person at the time of booking. This deposit forms part of your final payment which is due 90 days prior to departure - after receiving the final invoice. All pilgrimage registrations must be made online through our website. Reservations made within 89 days of departure (or after the final invoices are sent) must be accompanied by payment in full. Any credit card payments other than the deposit will incur a convenience fee. Any reservations received within 45 days of departure will incur a late booking fee of $100.00 per person. Late payments may be subject to a late fee and/or possible removal from the pilgrimage. Pilgrimage prices are based upon a minimum number of TBD total pilgrims. Surcharges may be assessed for smaller group sizes.

Cancellations: All cancellations must be received in writing (email or letter). The following per person cancellation charges will apply in addition to any airline penalties and charges incurred by our suppliers: If canceled 91 days or more prior to departure, $300 will be charged. If canceled 90 - 61 days prior to departure, $1000.00 will be charged. If canceled 60 - 31 days prior to departure, $2000.00 will be charged. No refunds will be made within 30 days of departure. In addition, once the airline tickets have been issued, 100% of the airfare is non-refundable unless you have been advised otherwise at the time of your booking.

Travel Documents: A passport which is valid for 6 months past the date of your return flight home is required of all U.S. citizens. However, U.S. citizens do not require visas for France. If you are not a U.S. citizen, please call to find out if you need a visa. Tekton Ministries is not responsible for individual visas or passports.

Hotels: Accommodations are based on double occupancy rooms with private facilities. A limited number of single rooms are available at the supplement quoted and should be requested at the time of booking.

Air Transportation: Air travel is not provided.

Baggage: Each passenger is allowed one checked bag and one carry-on. Tekton Ministries is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen baggage.

Travel Insurance: Each person is required to purchase comprehensive travel insurance for your trip. Registration information will be provided upon receipt of your deposit.

Not Included in base price: International airfare, gratuities to guide, driver, and hotel staff, passport/visa fees, personal travel insurance, laundry, beverages and items not on the regular menu of included meals, excess baggage charges, optional sightseeing and expenses of a personal nature.

Refunds: Subject to the foregoing Cancellation Terms, upon cancellation of travel related services, all sums paid to Tekton Ministries/George's International Tours for such services will be promptly returned to the passenger, provided the passenger has not caused such cancellation and is not in violation of any of the terms and conditions previously, clearly and conspicuously disclosed and agreed to by the passenger. This refund provision does not apply where Tekton Ministries/George's International Tours has remitted the payment to another registered seller of travel or a carrier and they default in providing the agreed-upon transportation or service without providing a refund. In such a situation, Tekton Ministries/George's International Tours agrees to provide passenger with a written statement accompanied by a copy of the bank records establishing the disbursement of the payment, and if disbursed to a seller of travel, proof of their current registration.

Trust Account Disclosure: California law requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. George's International Tours has such a trust account.

Travel Consumer Restitution Corporation ("TCRC"): George's International Tours is a participant in the Travel Consumer Restitution Corporation ("TCRC"). You, the passenger, may request reimbursement from TCRC if George's International Tours was registered and participating in the TCRC at the time of sale and the passenger is located in California at the time of payment. Please be advised that passengers purchasing from outside of California are not covered by the TCRC. Eligible passengers may file a claim with TCRC if the passenger is owed a refund of more than $50 for transportation or travel services which George's International Tours failed to forward to a proper provider or if such money was not refunded to you when required. The maximum amount, which may be paid by the TCRC to any one passenger is the total amount paid on behalf of the passenger to George's International Tours, not to exceed $15,000. A claim must be submitted to the TCRC within six months after the scheduled completion date of the travel. A claim must include sufficient information and documentation to prove your claim and a $35 processing fee. You must agree to waive your right to other civil remedies against a registered participating Seller of Travel for matters arising out of a sale for which you file a claim with the TCRC, if you were located in California at the time of the sale. You may request a claim form by writing to: Travel Consumer Restitution Corporation, P.O. Box 6001, Larkspur, CA 94977-6001; or by faxing a request to 415-927-7698.

Responsibility Clause: Tekton Ministries, George's International Tours and/or their cooperating selling agents and/or their suppliers of services offer these tours for sale only on the express understanding that they themselves do not perform or in any way assume liability for the performance of the individual components, transfers, hotels, flights, car, motorcoaches, etc. of these tours and act only to combine these components into a single unit of sale for the convenience of the general public, and are not responsible therefore, either directly or indirectly, for any loss, accident, or injury which may result from any act, omission, negligence in or responsible for performing or providing these component services. The transportation companies concerned take no responsibility for any act, omission, or event during the time the passengers are not aboard their conveyances. The passenger contract issued by the transportation company shall constitute the sole contract between the transportation company and the passenger. Additional expenses incurred as a result of delay, change of schedules, illness, weather, strikes, hostilities, quarantine, government requisition of hotel space or any other reasons beyond the control of the tour operator or travel agent shall be borne by the passenger. Tour operator reserves the right to substitute hotels of similar category if necessary and to alter itineraries. Your deposit certifies that you agree with the above terms and conditions.

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