

Footsteps of Jesus

Holy Land Pilgrimage

6th-15th October 2022

Time to book your place!



Dear friends,

You may recall I wrote earlier in the summer about an exciting opportunity to visit the Holy Land next year. Places are now filling up, so I am writing to encourage you to join in this unique way to deepen your faith and open yourselves to the extraordinary life, culture, and history of the Holy Land.

Only four years ago a group from St Mary's undertook a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and it was a deeply significant and enjoyable experience for those who took part:

“The incredible contrasts in physical landscapes and climate over very short distances in the land where Jesus walked, and its history, will leave a lasting impression on me”

“the peace, beauty and serenity of the Sea of Galilee has left a profound impact on me, and I can conjure the natural surrounds of the biblical stories whenever I read/hear them back home. I would like to keep the memories of our Holy Land trip alive as I continue on my own ongoing personal pilgrimage”

My predecessor, Richard Sewell, is now the Dean of St George's College in Jerusalem, and this pilgrimage will be organised through the college and Richard. There are other very good reasons for visiting through St George's College:
St George's has a long-term relationship with the communities in the Holy Land

The college recently celebrated its centenary and is integrated with local Anglican Arab communities, and especially in Jerusalem. The college is also part of the Anglican Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East with which our diocese is now twinned.

The pilgrimage will be led by the college's highly qualified clergy.

They are steeped in the history and archaeology of the land and the faith which has shaped it. Carefully thought through programmes enable people to reflect and to learn whatever their prior level of knowledge.

The college is rooted in prayer and rich liturgical experiences

Every day on the pilgrimages is bound together in prayer so that they are a great deal more than a tour of fascinating places. The College enjoys the daily pattern of worship of the Cathedral which is on the same site.

Beautiful and comfortable accommodation

St George's has its own premises, just ten minutes' walk from the Old City of Jerusalem but it is a peaceful idyll in which to study and to rest. There are ensuite facilities, an outstanding learning environment and comfortable areas in which to socialise. The Pilgrim Guest House is an attractive context for dining and fellowship together. Accommodation outside Jerusalem is chosen to provide similar comfort.

The **Footsteps of Jesus** study pilgrimage which lasts for 10 days, invites participants to become pilgrims who follow the journey that Jesus and his first disciples made through the Holy Land. The course aims to lead its members to be struck anew by the power of Jesus' teaching and healing ministry, to experience both the joy and the sorrow of his journey to the cross, and to encounter the risen Christ at his tomb and in breaking bread together at Emmaus.

Mini lectures prepare pilgrims for site visits and explore the geographical contexts of Jesus' ministry. The course integrates biblical study with theological

and spiritual reflection on contemporary issues in Israel and Palestine, and encounters the roots and traditions of the Christian faiths of East and West. All activities are rooted in prayer.

While the details of every programme vary, visits include:

- Jesus' birthplace in **Bethlehem** and childhood home in **Nazareth**
- The **site of Jesus's baptism** (where you may renew baptismal vows)
- The **Judean desert** where Jesus was tempted after his baptism
- The **Sea of Galilee**, including Jesus "own town" (Matt. 9.1), Capernaum
- **Caesarea Philippi**, where Peter answered Jesus's question, "Who do you say that I am?" by affirming "You are the Christ" (Mark 8.29)
- The site of the Transfiguration **on Mt. Tabor** (Matt. 17.1-8)
- **Bethphage**, from where Jesus entered **Jerusalem** in triumph (Mark 11.1-10)
- The Garden of **Gethsemane** (Mark 14.32-49)
- The remains of the Jerusalem **Temple** complex from Jesus' day, and Western Wall
- The **Way of the Cross, Golgotha** and **Jesus' tomb**
- **Emmaus**, where Christ appeared after his resurrection (Luke 24.13-31)

What to do next if you are interested

A \$500 deposit will secure a place, and this can be done via the college website below (best way is using the PayPal option). Given the uncertainties caused by COVID-19 there is a flexible refund policy until there is greater travel confidence. The course fee is \$2,600 which covers all board & lodging and all costs once in the Holy Land except personal extras. Flights are not included and will be arranged separately as a St Mary's group. Participants will be billed for the remainder of the amount one month before the course starts.

Think and pray about if this is something you would like to do.

Have a look at the college website for more details:

<https://www.saintgeorgescollegejerusalem.com/pilgrimage/p22-footsteps-of-jesus-october-6-october-15-2022/>

Please contact me or perhaps others who have previously been on a Holy Land pilgrimage, if you would like to discuss this further in any way.

With all good wishes

Rev'd James Hutchings