

PROGRAM 1: 8 DAYS (4 NIGHTS CAIRO + 3 NIGHTS NILE CRUISE) \$1,150.00 per person minimum 2 people

Day 1: ARRIVAL TO CAIRO

Arrival to Cairo airport, our representative will meet and assist you before the passport control in the airport. Then you will be transferred by a private A/C car to your hotel. Overnight in Cairo

Day 2: CAIRO / WADI EL NATRUN / PYRAMIDS / CAIRO

Breakfast, following the steps of the Holy Family we will start our day by the visit of **WADI EL NATROUN**: The holy family arrived at Wadi El-Natroun (Natroun Valley) after crossing the Rosetta branch of the Nile to the western Delta, and heading south into Wadi El-Natroun (then called Al Asqet) in the Western Desert of Egypt.

In the earliest decades of Christianity, the desert expanses of Wadi El-Natroun became the site of anchoretic settlement and, later, of many monasteries. It is said that Jesus blessed the desert in view of these future settlements. In 1986 there were about 320 monks occupying the four Wadi 'n-Natrun monasteries.

Afternoon, visit to the **Pyramids of Giza** and the **Sphinx**, the most famous and the last of the original **Seven Wonders of the World**. Back to the hotel, dinner and overnight.

Day 3: MOSTOROD / MATAREYAH / ZEITOUN / OLD CAIRO / MAADI

Breakfast, a full day dedicated to visit the major stops of the Holy Family in Cairo starting with:

MOSTOROD: only about 7 miles North West of Cairo Mostorod which later received the name Al-Mahmma. '**Al-Mahmma**' means '**the Bathing place**' a name given to the town because the Virgin Mary bathed the Christ Child and washed His clothes there. It is worthy of note that, eventually, on their way back to Palestine, the Holy Family stopped once more at Mostorod and, this time, caused a spring to gush from the earth, which still flows forth to the present day. After Mostorod we will start our visit to:

MATAREYAH / ZEITOUN: In Matareyah, a tree stands to this day, still regularly visited, called '**Mary's Tree**', for the Family is believed to have rested in its shade. Here, too, the Infant Jesus caused water to flow from a spring. He blessed it, drank from it and Mary washed His clothes in it. She poured the washing water on to the ground, and from that spot, a fragrant balsam plant blossomed. Besides the healing and pain-soothing properties of this balm, its essence is used in the preparation of the scents and perfumes of which the Holy Chrism is composed. Matareyah has made international headlines in recent times when on April 2, 1968 an **apparition of Mary above the cupola of St. Mary Church in Zeitoun** was witnessed by thousands of Christians and Muslims alike. In the afternoon we will visit:

OLD CAIRO AND MAADI: Continuing their way southwards, the Holy family passed the Fortress of Babylon at Old Cairo. Next, the Holy Family moved south, reaching the modern Cairo suburb of Maadi, which, in earliest pharaonic times, was an outlying district of Memphis, the capital of Egypt at that time.

Joseph became acquainted with the sailors of the Nile boats and the Holy Family was invited to be taken south to Upper Egypt. The monks of the Dair al-Muharraq (The Monastery of the Blessed Virgin) assume that the Holy Family could afford the travels because of the gold they received from the Wise Men of the East (Mt. 2:11).

The historic church built upon the spot from which they embarked, also dedicated to the Blessed Mother, is further identified by the denominative, 'Al-Adaweya', the Virgin's Church 'of the Ferry'. (In fact, the name of that now modern suburb, Maady, derives from the Arabic word, which means 'the crossing point').

The stone steps leading down to the River's bank, and believed to have been used by the Holy Family are accessible to pilgrims through the Church courtyard.

An event of miraculous import occurred on Friday the 3rd of the Coptic month of Baramhat - the 12th of March - 1976 A.D. A Holy Bible of unknown origin was carried by the lapping ripples of the Nile to the bank below the Church. It was open to the page of Isaiah 19: 25 declaring:

"Blessed be Egypt My people"

The Bible is now behind glass in the Sanctuary of the Church for all to see.

Back to the hotel, dinner and overnight.

Day 4: CAIRO / ASWAN

Breakfast, we will start our full day visiting the **Egyptian Museum** of antiquities. On display is a rare collection of 5000 years of art the largest most precious collection of Egyptian art in the world. Over 250,000 genuine artifacts are presented, including an exhibit dedicated to the Tutankhamen collection of treasures, gold, and jewelry, as it was enclosed in his tomb for over 3,500 years before it was discovered in the 1920s when his tomb was excavated.

Afternoon, transfer to Cairo airport and flight to Aswan. Arrival, meet and assist at Aswan airport. Transfer to the Nile cruise, dinner and overnight.

Day 5: ASWAN / EDFU / KOM OMBO

Full board. We will start by visiting Aswan: the High Dam and the Philae temple. Navigation to Kom Ombo. Visit the Temple of Kom Ombo dedicated to the gods Sobek and Haroeris. Continue to Edfu. Upon arrival visit of the Edfu temple dedicated to the god Horus. Cruise to Esna to pass through the lock.

Day 6: ESNA / LUXOR

Full board. After passing the Esna lock navigation towards Luxor. Visit the Necropolis of Thebes and the West Bank: Valley of the Kings and Queens, funeral temple of Hatshepsut, known as Deir el Bahari, and Colossi of Memnon. After lunch, visit to the temples of Karnak and Luxor.

Day 7: LUXOR / CAIRO

Breakfast and disembarkation. Transfer to airport for flight to Cairo. Arrival and transfer to hotel, Free afternoon. Overnight.

Day 8: CAIRO / ...

Breakfast. Transfer to Cairo Airport. Departure.

Program 2 ADD ONE NIGHT ST. CATHERINE AND MT. SINAI \$1,475.00 per person minimum 2 people

10DAYS (5 NIGHTS CAIRO + 3 NIGHTS NILE CRUISE + 1 NIGHT ST. CATHERINE)

Day 7: LUXOR / CAIRO

Breakfast and disembarkation. Transfer to airport for flight to Cairo. Arrival and transfer to hotel, Free afternoon. Overnight.

Day 8: CAIRO / SAINT CATHRINE

Breakfast. Depart Cairo and drive to the Suez Canal. Take the tunnel under the Suez Canal and arrive at the Sinai Peninsula. We visit the springs of Moses, then drive to Saint Catherine's Monastery and check into the Hotel. Built at the foot of Mount Sinai, the monastery was constructed by the Emperor Justinian between 527 AD and 565 AD. It contains priceless works of art and the second largest collection of illustrated manuscripts in the world. The evening is free, dinner and overnight.

Day 9: SAINT CATHERINE / CAIRO

Early wake up for those who wish to climb the Mountain of Moses. It is the site where Moses received the stone tablets on which the ten commandments were written. We return to tour Saint Catherine's Monastery. Transfer to Cairo, arrival to the hotel. Dinner and overnight.

Day 10: CAIRO / ...

Breakfast. Transfer to Cairo Airport. Departure.

PROGRAM 3: ADD ONE NIGHT ALEXANDRIA \$1,600.00 PER PERSON (2 PEOPLE MINIMUM)

11DAYS (5 NIGHTS CAIRO + 3 NIGHTS NILE CRUISE + 1 NIGHT ST. CATHERINE + 1 NIGHT ALEXANDRIA)

Day 7: LUXOR / CAIRO

Breakfast and disembarkation. Transfer to airport for flight to Cairo. Arrival and transfer to hotel, Free afternoon. Overnight.

Day 8: CAIRO / SAINT CATHRINE

Breakfast. Depart Cairo and drive to the Suez Canal. Take the tunnel under the Suez Canal and arrive at the Sinai Peninsula. We visit the springs of Moses, then drive to Saint Catherine's Monastery and check into the Hotel. Built at the foot of Mount Sinai, the monastery was constructed by the Emperor Justinian between 527 AD and 565 AD. It contains priceless works of art and the second largest collection of illustrated manuscripts in the world. The evening is free, dinner and overnight.

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DAY 10: CAIRO / ALEXANDRIA

Breakfast. Depart for **Alexandria**, the 2nd largest city in Egypt and the home of St. **Catherine of Alexandria**. She is revered as one of the **Fourteen Holy Helpers**. We will also visit the Church built over the cave where the **Blessed Virgin Mary** cured **SAINT Mary of Jesus Crucified**. Dinner and overnight.

Day 11: ALEXANDRIA / CAIRO AIRPORT

Breakfast. Transfer to Cairo Airport. Departure.

PROGRAM 4 NILE CRUISE (program 1) PLUS VISIT MONASTERIES ENROUTE TO CAIRO (\$1,600.00 PER PERSON MINIMUM 2 PEOPLE)

Thursday Day 7: LUXOR / ASSUIT

Breakfast and disembarkation. Transfer to city of Assuit. Free afternoon to explore the city and its famous market. Dinner and overnight.

Friday Day 8: ASSUIT / MINYA

Breakfast and visit the monastery of Dronka known as the Virgin Mary Monastery (*Deir Dronka*). About 10 kilometers from Assiut, situated on the west bank of the Nile is not only one of the most unusual mountain top monasteries in Egypt, but is also the last destinations visited by the Holy Family on their journey through Egypt.

From this site they left Egypt for Nazareth. Since that time, monks of the monastery believe that this area has been constantly inhabited by Christians. Indeed, this area of Egypt is now a community of Coptic's which populates the area around the Monastery.

This Monastery of St. Mary, and within it, the cave Chapel of St. Mary is said to date from the first century. Receiving as many as one million visitors per year, it is said that the Virgin Mary from time to time appears in a luminous form within the chapel.

In the afternoon we will start our visit to **The Monastery of Holy Virgin Mary** (*Deir Al-Muharraq*) located at Mount Qosqam. Originally there was an abandoned house and a water well adjacent to it where the Holy Family rested after it was repaired by St. Joseph. They stayed there for about 185 days. This area was known as "The Second Jerusalem".

This dwelling which was blessed by the Lord himself became the ancient church of **Our Lady** and the monastery today with its simple structure has become a place of pilgrimage for generations.

The most important content in the sanctuary is a marble slab where Greek inscription is engraved. According to the Coptic Church tradition, 'the altar' of The Holy Virgin Mary Church is located "in the midst of the land of Egypt"; this was to fulfill what the Lord has spoken by the prophet, saying:

PROGRAM 4:

IV- 11DAYS (5 NIGHTS CAIRO + 3 NIGHTS NILE CRUISE + 1 NIGHT ST. CATHERINE + 1 NIGHT ALEXANDRIA)

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Day 8: ASSUIT / MINYA

Breakfast and visit to the monastery of Dronka known as the Virgin Mary monastery, in the afternoon we will start our visit to Deir Al Moharrak (monastery of St. Mary). Transfer by car to the city of Minya, arrival to the hotel and overnight.

Day 9: MINYA / CAIRO

Breakfast and visit to the virgin Mary church of Deir El Garnous and St. George church at Eshneen El Nasara. After the visit of Minia, we will drive back to Cairo. Arrival to the hotel and overnight.

Day 10: CAIRO / ...

Breakfast. Transfer to Cairo Airport. Departure.