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**Fr. Tom Belleque**  
**St. John Evangelist Parish**  
**Journey of St. Paul**

**March 11-20, 2018**  
**10 Days with 3 day cruise**  
Submitted by Kerry McCullough  
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<p><b>Sunday, March 11</b></p>	<p><b>Day 1 - DEPART USA</b> - We depart the USA on our transatlantic flight aboard a wide-bodied jet. Our arrival is expected in the morning. We enjoy in-flight movies, dinner and breakfast aloft.</p>
<p><b>Monday, March 12</b></p>	<p><b>Day 2 – ATHENS/THESSALONIKI</b> - We arrive in Athens this morning and transfer to our short flight to Thessaloniki. On arrival we are met and enjoy a short sightseeing tour of this famous port city. We drive up to the old town to see the place where St. Paul preached the gospel to the Thessalonians. Then we visit the St. Demetrius Church, the white tower, the Arch of Gallerius and get into the spirit of this fabulous town. Dinner and overnight at our hotel. N.B. DEPENDING ON FINAL AIR SCHEDULES, ARRIVAL DAY SIGHTSEEING MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE AND THESE SITES WILL BE MOVED TO ANOTHER DAY.</p>
<p><b>Tuesday, March 13</b></p>	<p><b>Day 3 – THESSALONIKI/ PHILIPPI</b> - Our full day excursion takes us along the ancient route of St. Paul, through mountain passes and plains on the traces of the Old Egnatia Avenue. We continue to Ancient Philippi, where Paul established the first church in Europe. Weather permitting; we celebrate an outdoor Mass at Philippi at the traditional site where Paul baptized Lydia. We then continue on a short drive to Kavala on the site of ancient Neapolis, where Paul landed on the way to Philippi before returning to Thessaloniki in the late afternoon. Dinner and overnight at our hotel.</p>

<p><b>Wednesday, March 14</b></p>	<p><b>Day 4 - THESSALONIKI/VERIA/VERGINA/KALAMBAKA</b> - This morning following Mass at a local parish Church of the Immaculate Conception, we depart Thessaloniki and drive through the plains of Thessaly, visit the legendary home of the Greek Gods and continue on to Veria (Beroea of the New Testament) where Paul visited on route to Athens and the Scriptures say the people were "more noble than in Thessaloniki." Paul and Silas were taken here after the Thessaloniki pagans attacked them. We then visit Vergina a modern town in Greece and the location of the ancient capital of the Macedonians, called Aigeai. We end in Kalambaka with dinner and overnight.</p>
<p><b>Thursday, March 15</b></p>	<p><b>Day 5 - KALAMBAKA/ATHENS</b> - This morning we continue to nearby Meteora whose pillar-like rocks provide an amazing site. The Meteora (meaning "suspended rocks," "suspended in the air," "in the heavens above") is one of the largest and one of the most important complexes of Eastern Orthodox Monasteries in Greece. The six Monasteries are built on natural sandstone rock pillars at the northwestern edge of the Plain of Thessaly. Afterwards we precede south getting on the highway and catching a glimpse of Mt. Olympus proceeding through the towns of Lamia, Larissa. Dinner and overnight at our hotel.</p>
<p><b>Friday, March 16</b></p>	<p><b>Day 6 - ATHENS/LAVRIO/CRUISE</b> - We are transferred from our hotel to the seaport of Lavrio where we board our cruise ship for our three-day cruise to the Greek Islands and Turkey. That same afternoon, we arrive at the island of Mykonos with its whitewashed houses and winding streets. Following Mass at Our Lady of the Rosary Church we are free to explore this picturesque island, startling white against the multi-hued sunset. Dinner and overnight aboard our ship.</p>
<p><b>Saturday, March 17</b></p>	<p><b>Day 7 - EPHEBUS (KUSADASI)/PATMOS</b> - This morning our ship docks in Kusadasi where our excursion takes us first to the Temple of Diana, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Some of the most spectacular ruins of the world are to be found in Ephesus, the city to whom St. Paul wrote his famous epistle. Early Christian tradition also believes that Mary, the Mother of Our Lord also lived here with St. John. We continue to Mary's House where we celebrate Mass. We return to our ship for lunch where we continue on to Patmos, which was considered sacred and is often referred to as the "Jerusalem of the Aegean." It was here that the Evangelist St. John received the inspiration for the Apocalypse. Our excursion visits the Monastery of St. John, a huge fortress-like building dating from the 11th century. We also visit the grotto, where tradition says that St. John wrote the Book of Revelation. We return to our ship and overnight.</p>

<p><b>Sunday, March 18</b></p>	<p><b>Day 8 – CRETE &amp; SANTORINI</b> – This morning, we arrive at Heraklion on the island of Crete, the largest of the Greek island, where Paul was shipwrecked during his journey to Rome. Here we will find the ruins of the Minoan church and the museum depicting the birth of the Minoan. We celebrate Mass at the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist. Return to our ship for lunch while sailing to Santorini. This afternoon, we visit Santorini, the island thought by many to be the lost continent of Atlantis. Here we join a visit to <i>Oia Village</i>. On route admire the panoramic view of the Aegean Sea and neighboring islands. Built on the Caldera rim, Oia Village is an excellent example of Cycladic architecture. We explore by walking along the cobble-stone streets and the white washed houses with blue shutters which appears as a beautiful travel poster. Our excursion ends in Fira where our guide will show us the way to the cable car back to the ship.</p>
<p><b>Monday, March 19 – St. Joseph</b></p>	<p><b>Day 9 - LAVRIO/CORINTH/ATHENS</b> - Upon Arrival in Lavrio, we disembark and drive to nearby Athens for a visit to the legendary Acropolis. We see the chief jewel of the Acropolis - the Parthenon, the Temple of Winged Victory, the Propylea and the Erechtheum with its peerless Porch of Maidens. Beneath the Acropolis is the Areopagus or Mars Hill. This is where St. Paul made his famous "Men of Athens" speech revealing a considerable knowledge of the Greek philosophy and character. Afterwards, we drive along the coastal highway to Corinth, with a splendid view of the Aegean Sea. After a short stop at the Corinth Canal which connects the Aegean and Ionian Seas, we arrive in Ancient Corinth. We visit the ruins of Corinth, where St. Paul worked with Aquila and Priscilla. Included are the first century shops, the Agora, Temple of Apollo and the Bema Seat. Conditions permitting, we celebrate Mass on the very site where St. Paul preached. We return to Athens and check in to our hotel. We have the opportunity to explore the culinary delights of Athens tonight, as dinner will be on our own. Overnight at the hotel.</p>
<p><b>Tuesday, March 20</b></p>	<p><b>Day 10 - ATHENS/USA</b> - This morning we transfer to the airport for our return flight home.</p>