



Seven Churches Pilgrimage to Turkey

**Group Organiser:
Mr John McLoughlin**

**Accompanied by
Spiritual Director**

23-30 June 2012

Price: €1099

Price includes:

- Return direct flights from Dublin to Izmir
- All airport taxes included
- 7 nights 4 star hotel accommodation in Turkey based on twin/double accommodation
- Breakfast and evening meal each day
- Lunches on six days
- Luxury, air-conditioned coach for the duration of the tour, within driver's hours
- Professional guide for the duration of the tour
- Ferry crossings from Izmit Bay to Istanbul
- Ferry crossing from Istanbul across Dardanelles Straits
- Entrance fees and visits on the itinerary
- Group travel insurance up to 85 years of age

Not included:

- Drinks and tips
- Single room supplement

If people wish to share we can arrange this. Single rooms are on request at a supplement of €40 per night.

Reservations: Please complete booking form and return with a deposit of €200 per person.
Places are limited.

Group Leader:

Mr John McLoughlin
Tuam
Co Galway
Tel: 093 28337

Tour Operator:

Joe Walsh Tours
143 Lower Baggot Street
Dublin 2
Tel: (01) 2410800

Itinerary and flight details may be subject to change

nights. Our evening meal will be served in the hotel.

Day 1 – Saturday 23 June

Depart Dublin on direct flight to Izmir (flight departs Dublin at 09.30hrs, arriving into Izmir at 15.35hrs). On arrival in Izmir we will be met by our guide and have a panoramic tour of Izmir before continuing to our hotel, Hotel Anemon Fuar or similar. Check into hotel and evening meal.

Day 2 – Sunday 24 June

Breakfast will be served in the hotel. We will depart for Ephesus for the visit of **Shrine of Virgin Mary**, where she lived in her last years; the **Basilica of St. John**; and the **ancient city of Ephesus**, where St. Paul stayed and taught for two years (Acts 19:10), and where he promised on his second journey, "I shall come back to you if it is God's will" (Acts 18:21). Lunch will be served at local restaurant in Selcuk. After having visits in Ephesus drive to Pamukkale. Continue to our hotel (Hotel Colossae Thermal) in Pamukkale where we will have our evening meal and overnight.

Day 3 – Monday 25 June

Breakfast will be served in the hotel. Following breakfast we depart for the **ancient city of Hierapolis** famous for its early Christian remains, where Apostle Philip was martyred and which was the hometown of Papias, a disciple of St. John. Later on we will drive to **Philadelphia** where the church was not strong but the members were loyal. We will continue to **Sardis**, one of the most picturesque sites of the Seven Churches; here we will visit the Artemis Temple, the Byzantine Church, and the Acropolis. Lunch will be served at local restaurant. We will drive to Bursa; the first capital of the Ottoman Empire. We check into our hotel (Hotel Holiday Inn Bursa). Here we will have our evening meal and overnight.

Day 4 – Tuesday 26 June

Breakfast will be served in the hotel. Today we will visit Bursa before continuing to Istanbul. In Bursa we will visit the **Grand Mosque, Silk Bazaar**, and the **Green Mausoleum**. We will then continue to Iznik. where we will have lunch upon arrival. After lunch we will visit **Nicaea**, the most important city of Bithynia at the time of Paul's visit, and where the two church meetings -the First and Seventh Ecumenical Councils, were held. Here we will visit St Sophia's Church, the place of the latter meeting; and St. Trifon Church. We will travel by ferry from Izmit Bay to Istanbul. Check into hotel (Hotel Zurich), where we will stay for two

Day 5 – Wednesday 27 June

Breakfast will be served in the hotel. Today we will have the day in Istanbul. Here we will visit **St. Sophia's Church**, the largest church of its era and the architectural glory of Byzantine architecture; the **Blue Mosque**, famous for its six minarets as well as its interior blue tiles; the **Byzantine Hippodrome**, where the chariot races were held; the **Topkapi Palace**, the imperial residence of Sultans and the **Chora Church**, one of the first churches of Byzantine Empire famous for its golden frescoes. Lunch will be served at local restaurant in Istanbul. Late in the afternoon return back to hotel. We will have some free time before our evening meal in the hotel this evening.

Day 6 – Thursday 28 June

Breakfast will be served in the hotel. Today we depart Istanbul and travel to Canakkale crossing the Dardanelles Strait by ferry. We will stop for lunch in a local restaurant and then visit the ancient **city of Troy**; where the mythological Trojan war took place. Excavations are being carried out here since 1872 and several layers of the city built on top of each others have been excavated. We will continue to our hotel (Hotel Akol) for check in, evening meal and overnight.

Day 7 – Friday 29 June

Breakfast will be served in the hotel. Today we will visit **Assos**, where Paul is said to have walked from Alexandria Troas on his third journey (Acts 20:13-14). We then continue to the ancient city of **Pergamon** and visit the **Asklepium Sanctuary** and the **Acropolis** including the Altar of Zeus, which is said to be "the place where Satan has his throne" (Revelation 2:13); the Trojan Temple; the world's steepest theatre; and the Red Basilica, which was originally a centre of pagan worship and afterwards used as a church dedicated to St. John. Lunch will be served at a local restaurant and then we depart for **Thyatira**; where we will visit the remnants of the christian church and the temple. We then continue back to our hotel in Izmir (Hotel Anemon Fuar) for our evening meal and overnight.

Day 8 – Saturday 30 June

Breakfast will be served in the hotel. Today we will return by direct flight from Izmir to Dublin.