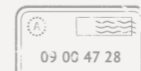


PILGRIM'S TRAVEL COMPANION

August 27 - September 9, 2025

A JOURNEY OF HEART, HEALING, & HOPE
WITH FR. JC MERINO



Our pilgrimage is not a simple journey of miles and monuments—it is a school of the heart. Day 2 greets us with both challenges and discoveries, opportunities to let grace take deeper root. Each step we take asks something of us: patience in waiting, openness in listening, courage in climbing, humility in praying. Pilgrimage transforms not in one instant, but through these small offerings of the day—when we let the Lord surprise us, teach us, and even stretch us.

Today is a threshold. Yesterday, we began; tomorrow, we continue. But today, we prepare for real transformation. The Lord whispers: *"Behold, I make all things new."* If we allow Him, this day will not simply pass—it will plant seeds that grow into hope, healing, and a renewed heart.

Allow today's moments—whether marked by joy, silence, or challenge—to be part of the gentle shaping of your soul. The Lord is at work, even in the unseen, and with each step you take, you are being drawn more deeply into His hope, His healing, and His heart.

A journey from Split to Medjugorje



August 28, 2025

Day 2: Arrival in Split to Medjugorje

We land today in Split, Croatia, a city cradled by the Adriatic Sea and crowned with centuries of history. Once the imperial retreat of Emperor Diocletian, Split now stands as a powerful symbol of transformation – from persecution to perseverance, from empire to evangelization.



Here, ancient stones echo the story of a Church that survived, adapted, and flourished.

As we make our way from this historic city toward Medjugorje, we, too, begin a spiritual transformation. This pilgrimage is not just a change in geography – it is a journey inward. Like Split itself, marked by both wounds and wonders, our own lives carry scars and stories. And yet, through faith, we are invited to rediscover hope that endures, healing that renews, and a heart that listens again to God's voice. Let us begin with open hearts, trusting that the Lord, who has called us here, walks with us – through every step, every prayer, and every encounter – as we journey together in faith.





Split, Croatia

Split, Croatia holds deep historical and cultural significance in Catholicism, rooted in both its early Christian heritage and its enduring place in the life of the Church.

At the heart of Split lies Diocletian's Palace, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Built around 305 AD by the Roman Emperor Diocletian, who was notorious for one of the most violent persecutions of Christians, the irony of its current state is profound: The mausoleum of Diocletian—a persecutor of the Church—was later transformed into the Cathedral of Saint Domnius (Sveti Dujice), dedicated to a Christian martyr whom Diocletian himself had executed. This sacred reversal of history marks Split as a city of resurrection—where the Church triumphed over empire, and where death gave way to life in Christ.

This city's patron saint is a martyr: Saint Domnius (also known as St. Dujice) was a 3rd-century, also the bishop at that time. His relics rest in Split's cathedral. His martyrdom under Diocletian and his later veneration right in the emperor's palace symbolize the power of witness and the endurance of faith.

Split has been a continuous center of Christian life for more than 1,700 years: It is the seat of the Archdiocese of Split-Makarska, a prominent ecclesiastical region in Dalmatia. The city is rich with churches, monasteries, and sacred art reflecting Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, and Baroque Christian expressions. Pilgrims often pass through Split on their way to Medjugorje, Sinj, or other Marian shrines in the region.

Situated on the Adriatic coast, Split has historically been a crossroads of East and West, contributing to the spread of Christianity from Italy and Rome into the Balkans. The city's Latin Christian heritage met Byzantine influences here, making Split a bridge of cultures and traditions within the Church.

Split's story is one of transformation and grace: From a symbol of Roman imperial power to a city of Christian witness and devotion. From a place of Christian persecution to a sanctuary of martyrs and saints.



**SHARE
YOUR
STORY**

trust your
JOURNEY

A Journey of the Heart: Split, Croatia

Here, where sea kisses stone and olive trees bow to the wind,
the heart finds its echo in the ancient streets of Split.

'Neath these arches walked emperors and martyrs,
but it isn't her power that endures - but it's grace.

O pilgrim soul, walk slowly.
For here lived Marulic, father of Croatian letters,
who wrote of virtue,
of Scripture,
and of the soul's ascent.
He knew that healing begins when one listens
- not to the world,
but to the whisper of God within.

So, listen - and let Split teach you:
that faith blooms e'en in the shadows of palaces,
that hope endures like sone against the tide,
and that the hear, when turned toward heaven,
always finds its way back home.

find
your
own
Path

Pilgrim Tip:

As we begin our pilgrimage, remember — every holy journey begins with a departure from the familiar. Whether you've traveled across an ocean or across a season of life, this first night invites us to pause, breathe, and entrust the road ahead to God.

Let the distance you've traveled remind you that pilgrimage is not just about arriving at sacred places — it's about becoming more open, more patient, more present. Let go of expectations. Rest well tonight. Tomorrow, the sacred path continues — and so does the gentle work of grace in your heart.

