



THE HOLY LAND

YOUR SPIRITUAL PILGRIMAGE STARTS HERE:
THE LAND OF "EMMANUEL"

Our dear fellow Pilgrims,

Shalom. Peace.

Today, we arrive in Israel; we are ready to start another journey together. Our pilgrimage begins here: the land of "Emmanuel" (God-with-Us).

"Since the beginning of the 4th century, followers of Christ have made their way to the Holy Land. Countless Christians... have take this often-arduous journey for many reasons. The vast majority heard the call to experience for themselves the place of Christ's Birth, the towns in which he preached, and the city in which he suffered, died, and rose from he dead for our salvation.

Just as it was for the Magi in the Gospel, the star that draws and guides today's pilgrims (like us) does not always shine with the same brilliance; but still they rise up and respond to an intimate whisper" (Magnificat: Holy Land Companion - A Spiritual Guide for Pilgrims, .

In this pilgrimage, we walk with *Yeshua*, meaning "salvation". In Luke 1, we know that the angel Gabriel, at the Annunciation, told Mary to name her son by this name; while, in the gospel of Matthew, we hear the angel also told St Joseph to name his son by this name, "for He will save His people from their sins" (Mt 1:21-22).

In this journey we might experience many obstacles and discomfort, and we might not know the difficulties or disappointments that might confront us in these days that we are together. But we will take comfort knowing that the Lord Emmanuel will always be with us, and He is present in our hearts, in the Word of God that we will hear, and in the Eucharist that we will celebrate on this journey.

"In the unique setting of the Holy Land, Gods has always come to speak to to his people, revealing to them the startling mysteries of his love". It is our hope that this pilgrimage might be for each one of us a channel through which the

Lord God might speak in our hearts of His great forgiveness, salvation, and love.

Enjoy the journey!

Your spiritual guides in the journey,

Fr. Vincent D'Agostino

Fr JC Merino

Pilgrim's Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
you were a pilgrim in this Holy Land.
Now you lead and guide us on our pilgrimage.

As we follow in your steps,
we ask the grace to keep our eyes on you.
Open our hearts that we may find you not only in
ancient stones, but in your people and each other.

Let your words be a burning fire within us. Write your
Gospel upon our hearts.

Give us a spirit of prayer that we might receive openly
your grace and love. Lord, teach us to pray in the very
land where you taught your first disciples, that we
might say:

Our Father...

