

"Journey in the heart"
Pilgrimage to India and Sri Lanka

February 02 - 20, 2015.

Signal your interest before May 01 !

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Organized by: Spice Odyssey

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"His mother treasured all these things in her heart." (Luke 2:51)

Living is a journey, both a journey inwards and a journey outwards. The outer world into which we travel is partly made up of natural facts and forces and partly constructed by politics, culture, society, religion and individual behaviours. Dealing with this outer world is perhaps the most obvious part of the human journey. We cannot escape it!

We can, however, become forgetful of the inner world or simply take it for granted - unless something goes wrong. In fact, it needs deliberate and consistent attention all the time. How well we deal with that inner world bears directly on how well we deal with the outer world.

Our pilgrimage to India and Sri Lanka will be an encounter with other cultures and environments. We will leave our comfort zones that depend so much on what we can take for granted. This will provide the jolt to body, mind and spirit that can awaken us to new possibilities - not only there but also here.

The pilgrimage will then be as much a journey in the heart as it is a journey across sea and land. The latter evokes the former, the former makes the latter rich and life giving. Mary, the Mother of Jesus, will be our companion along the way.

A special feature of this pilgrimage will be four nights in the Saccidananda ashram at Shantivanam (Fr Bede Griffiths' Ashram) where we will live with the Camaldolese monks and follow their rule of life.

Itinerary

- Day 1 - 2 Feb. Arrival Mumbai

Met by Distant Frontiers Representative on arrival and transferred to the hotel. Overnight at Taj Landsend.

- Day 2 - 3 Feb. Mumbai

Breakfast. Meet for introductions, overview and meditation. Personal time. Prior to dinner there will be a walk through a typical East Indian Catholic village.

- Day 3 - 4 Feb. Mumbai

After breakfast, board a coach for a half day sightseeing tour of Mumbai that will end with lunch in the city. Overnight at Taj.

- Day 4 - 5 Feb. Mumbai - Coorg via Mangalore.

Coorg is a nature lover's haven. It is an ideal place to meditate and get in touch with the inner self. You can indulge in nature walks, bird watching - over 300 different species, or simply just choose a quiet spot near the lake to meditate.

Early breakfast, then leave by coach for Mumbai airport to check-in for your flight to Mangalore. On arrival in Mangalore, you will be driven by coach to Coorg, approximate journey of 3 hours. Overnight at Orange County Resort*. Dinner.

*All meals at Orange County included.

- Day 5 - 6 Feb. Coorg

Breakfast. Coracle ride on river Cauvery. Coracles are local fishing craft that are circular and ideal for navigating these waters. Quiet personal time leading into Eucharist before Dinner. Lunch/Dinner

- Day 6 - 7 Feb. Coorg

The planned activity today is a visit to the Bylekuppe Tibetan Settlement. This is the second largest settlement outside Tibet complete with a Tibetan monastery that houses 7000 monks. Meditation. Lunch/Dinner

- Day 7 - 8 Feb. Coorg - Bangalore 260 kms.

After breakfast we will leave by coach for Bangalore. It is a long journey of approximately 6-7 hours. This will be broken up by lunch along the way. Overnight at MovenPick Hotel. Dinner.

- Day 8 - 9 Feb. Bangalore to Trichy via Chennai.

Breakfast. Leave for the Airport to board a flight for Chennai and then on to Trichy. On arrival at Trichy, we will be met by a coach and transferred to Shantivanam Ashram. Overnight ashram.

- Day 9 - 10 Feb. Shantivanam.

Follow Ashram program.

- Day 10 - 11 Feb. Shantivanam

- Day 11 - 12 Feb. Shantivanam

- Day 12 - 13 Feb. Shantivanam. Trichy - Colombo

Leave after breakfast for Trichy airport for a flight to Colombo.

- Day 13 - 14 Feb.

Breakfast. Board a coach to visit the Dambulla Rock Temple. This is a World Heritage Site built in the 1st century BC by King Walagambahu. It consists of 5 caves of painted walls and ceilings. There are 150 images of the Buddha, the most impressive being one of the Buddha carved out of rock. Meditation. Dinner.

Overnight at Heritance Kandalama.

- Day 14 - 15 Feb

After breakfast we will leave by coach for Anuradhapura. It was the first capital of ancient Ceylon and is home to two world heritage sites. We will see the Sri Maha Bodhi (Sacred Bo Tree) that is supposedly a sapling of the original Bo Tree under which Prince Siddhartha attained enlightenment. It is over 2200 years old. The other places of interest that we will be visiting are the Brazen Palace (2nd century BC) and Ruwanweliseya (2nd century BC) the most famous of all dagobas. The sightseeing will be followed by lunch at Palm Garden village in Anuradhpura. Dinner. Overnight in Kandalama.

- Day 15 - 16 Feb

Breakfast. Leave for the hill city of Kandy. En route we will visit the Peradeniya Botanical Gardens located about 7 kms from Kandy. These gardens cover 147 acres and are noted for its orchid house. Dinner. Meditation. Overnight at Amaya Hills.

- Day 16 - 17 Feb

Breakfast. Visit a tea plantation inclusive of lunch. Meditation before dinner. Overnight Hotel.

- Day 17 - 18 Feb

Breakfast. Eucharist. (Ash Wednesday) Board the coach for a sightseeing tour of Kandy. Kandy was the last capital of the Sri Lankan kings and is a World Heritage site. Return to the hotel and the rest of the day is free. Dinner. Overnight at Amaya Hills.

- Day 18 - 19 Feb. Kandy - Colombo

Breakfast. Embark on a coach journey from Kandy to Colombo, approximately 3 hours. Leisure. Meet at 5.30pm for celebration of the Eucharist including time for personal sharing. (Ite missa est day). This will be followed by dinner. Overnight at the Galle Face Hotel.

- Day 19 - 20 Feb

Breakfast. We will be checking out of the hotel after breakfast. Proceed on a walking tour of Colombo. This will be followed by a visit to a shopping centre for last minute shopping and lunch (not included). Around 4 pm we will return to a hotel near Colombo Airport - day room usage for about 5 hours. We will check out from the hotel around 10pm to embark on your return journey back to Australia.