

Day Trips

Art Prayer – A Spiritual Journey

The Cenacle in Montauto, Italy

Assisi

Entering this magnificent medieval town you are immediately drawn to the very holiness of this place. Yes, the spirit of both St Francis and St. Clare, their joy and peace are almost tangible to thousands of pilgrims that have made Assisi their destination since the 13 century. While in the Basilica of St. Francis we will view Francis' tomb and see the unbelievable frescoes of Giotto and Cimabue. In the afternoon you are free to walk to the convent of St Clare and see the room where she died or to the church of Santa Clara which houses the crucifix that spoke to Francis, or many other places along the way made holy by these two much loved saints. And of course ...there are delightful little shops along the main street!

LaVerna

A visit to La Verna is to visit one of the most outstanding holy places in the world. It was here, on this mountain in 1224 that St. Francis was signed with the wounds of the Passion of Jesus Christ. To visit this spot, to pray in the Chapel of the Stigmata is to touch the holy. During our time there we shall visit the heritage which is still a place of some friars who dedicate themselves to a more intense prayer life and see many objects used or worn by Francis himself. Within the walls of these buildings we have the pleasure of viewing many wonderful works of Della Robbia.

Sansepolcro and Monterchi

Sansepolcro is the birthplace of Piero della Francesca who was one of the greatest artists of the early Italian Renaissance. At the Museo Civico we shall feast our eyes on one of his greatest masterpieces – The Resurrection. A short distance away in the town of Monterchi we stand before another of Piero della Francesca's masterpieces called Madonna del Parto. This is a most beautiful fresco of the pregnant Madonna most likely done at that time to honor his deceased mother. On the way we catch a glimpse of Anghiari which is a charming medieval walled city set in the hills of Tuscany.

Cortona

This medieval Etruscan city is located about 20 km south of Arezzo and is nestled high on a hillside over- looking the beautiful Tuscan countryside. The only level street is crammed with wonderful restaurants and stores displaying the craftsmanship of many local artists which you can wander in and out of as you like. We shall visit the Duomo and the Museo Diocesano which contains great treasures from both the Florentine and Sienese artists. There, in the museum, your eyes will feast on works by such artists as Pietro Lorenzetti, Beato Angelico, Luca Signorelli and many others. ...plus there will be lots more to enjoy, "Under the Tuscan Sun."

Last but not least, we shall be staying at the Cenacle in Montauto which is located in the hills of Tuscany between Sansepolcro and Arezzo. This retreat center is situated on top of one of those beautiful Tuscan hills and offers a breath-taking view of the surrounding area. Prior to the Cenacle sisters, this house was occupied for 400 years by Franciscan Friars and, even now, maintains the charm of the old monastery.

We can only take a limited number and I have a feeling this retreat will fill up fast. Please feel free to call the Cenacle at 773-528-6300 or E-mail the Cenacle at peglanerc@aol.com for more information or to register.