Pilgrimage to RUSSIA

Sept. 6th - 17th, 2018 (12 days)
With Fr. Michael Scherrey
Companions of the Cross
Spiritual Director

A Journey in the footsteps of Eastern Orthodox saints

Experience the vibrant faith, history and culture of Russia!
Pilgrimage to Russia: (12 days)

Focus on the faith, culture and history of Russia that shaped the lives of many great saints and holy people, including a Russian-Canadian Catholic lay apostle, servant of God and foundress of the Madonna House Apostolate, Catherine Doherty.

NOTE: The Catholic Church in Russia is part of the worldwide Roman Catholic Church, under the spiritual leadership of the Pope in Rome. According to the most recent figures in Annuario Pontificio, there are approximately 773,000 Catholics in Russia, representing about 0.5% of the total Russian population. On this pilgrimage, we will be experiencing the beauty of the faith held by our Russian Orthodox brothers and sisters, and will have daily Mass, celebrating Mass in Catholic churches on most days.

Day 1 (Thurs. Sept 6) DEPARTURE
Afternoon departure from Toronto on late afternoon flight Moscow with Air France. In-flight meals provided.

Day 2 (Fri. Sept. 7) MOSCOW
Welcome to Russia! We will be met by our Tour Guide at the airport. After boarding our deluxe coach, we will start our pilgrimage with Mass at the Parish of Our Lady of Good Hope, in a chapel in the basement of the Moscow Cathedral (or at their chapel in the American Embassy). After lunch, we will transfer to our hotel. The rest of the day is at leisure. Dinner and overnight at our 4-Star hotel in Moscow (3 nights)

Day 3 (Sat. Sept. 8) MOSCOW
Today, we begin our exploration of Moscow by spending the morning visiting Red Square. Here, we will tour St. Basil Cathedral, built in the mid-1500’s on orders from Ivan the Terrible, over the grave of St. Vasily or Basil, a venerated local saint. The magnificent building, shaped as a flame of a bonfire rising into the sky, has no parallel in Russian architecture. The church was confiscated from the Russian Orthodox community as part of the Soviet Union’s anti-theist campaigns and has operated as a division of the State Historical Museum since 1928. We will visit GUM, a famous, historic shopping Mall, originally called the Upper Trading Rows when first built in the 1890s. Our tour will include a visit to Lenin’s Mausoleum, the resting place of Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin, as well as the beautiful Russian Orthodox Cathedral of Christ the Saviour located on the northern bank of the Moskva River, a few blocks southwest of the Kremlin. With an overall height of 103 metres, it is the tallest Orthodox Christian church in the world. The current church is the second to stand on this site. The original church, built during the 19th century, took more than 40 years to build. It was destroyed in 1931 on the order of Soviet leader Joseph Stalin. After lunch, we will visit the Tretyakov Art Gallery, the foremost depository
of Russian fine art in the world. We end our day by celebrating Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception of the Holy Virgin Mary, a neo-Gothic Roman Catholic Church at Moscow's center, which serves as the cathedral of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Moscow. It is one of only two Roman Catholic churches in Moscow and the largest in Russia. The cathedral is listed as a heritage building in the Russian Federation, and is a protected monument. Dinner and O/N in our Moscow hotel.

Day 4 (Sun. Sept. 9) MOSCOW
This morning, we will take a ride aboard Moscow’s extensive and unique Metro to the Kremlin. Here we will take a walking tour, visit the Kremlin grounds, and tour this fortified complex at the heart of Moscow, overlooking the Moskva River to the south, Saint Basil's Cathedral and Red Square to the east, and the Alexander Garden to the west. Here we will visit Dormition Cathedral, The Cathedral is regarded as the mother church of Muscovite Russia, constructed between 1475–79 under Grand Duke Ivan III. The Coronation of every Russian monarch from 1547 to 1896 was held here, and it is the burial place for most of Patriarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church. We will also tour the Armoury Museum, one of the oldest Museums in Moscow, established in 1850. It The originated as the royal arsenal in 1508. It holds unique collections of the Russian, Western European and Eastern applied arts spanning the period from the 5th to the 20th centuries. Some of the highlights include the Imperial Crown of Russia, and the ivory throne of Ivan the Terrible, as well as magnificent jewels, carriages, gowns, art and more. The Kremlin was also the site of the Ascension Convent and the Chudov Monastery, founded in 1358 by St. Alexius of Moscow. The Monastery was closely associated with the rulers of Moscow and was the baptismal place for Russian royal children. Both were closed in 1918 and dismantled in 1929 in order to build the Red Commanders School. The relics of St. Alexius, considered a patron saint of Moscow, are venerated in Epiphany Cathedral in the Yelovhovo district of Moscow, which we will also visit today.

Following lunch, our experience of the Moscow Metro continues, with visits to some of its spectacularly beautiful stations. The Metro here was the first underground railway system in the Soviet Union. As of 2017, excluding the Moscow Central Circle and Moscow Monorail, it has 206 stations and its route length is 339.1, making it the fifth longest in the world. Our Mass will be celebrated at the Catholic Chaplaincy of the Anglo-American School. Dinner & O/N at our 4-star Moscow hotel.
Day 5 (Mon. Sept. 10) MOSCOW, SERGIEV POSAD, SUZDAL
After breakfast, we will begin our 2-day tour of part of the Golden Ring, a circle of ancient towns which played a significant role in the formation of the Russian Orthodox Church, and which preserve the memory of the most important and significant events in Russian history. The towns have been called "open-air museums" and feature unique monuments of Russian architecture of the 12th–18th centuries, including kremlins, monasteries, cathedrals, and churches. These towns are among the most picturesque in Russia and prominently feature Russia’s onion domes. First, we will take a short drive to the community of Sergiev Posad, 70 Km northeast of Moscow, named after Russia’s patron saint, Saint Sergey, who is also recognized by the Roman Catholic church. The town is famous for its Holy Trinity Lavra Monastery, the Russian Orthodox equivalent of the Vatican, a complex of medieval buildings that rival those of the Kremlin, and home to the Russian patriarch as well as more than 300 monks. For centuries the monastery has been the religious, spiritual and cultural center of the country. It is the cradle of Russian Orthodoxy, and has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1993. Sergey, a spiritual leader and monastic reformer, founded a small wooden temple here in 1345. Trinity Cathedral, built in 1422 on the site of his tomb, is the oldest building of the monastery still standing today. We will tour the beautiful complex, which includes the seminary of the Russian Orthodox Church, the 1585 Cathedral of the Assumption, easily recognized by its blue star-spangled domes, a stunning 18th century baroque bell tower and the 1692 Refectory Church of St. Sergius, underground monk cells and prayer caves, a museum and other buildings. Following this, we will have some free time in the local market, before visiting the Matryoshka Factory – home of the Russian Nesting Doll, which made Sergiev Posad known as the toy capital of Russia. It is believed St. Sergey himself carved such toys for children. Following our tour, we take a 3-hour drive (180 Km) to Suzdal. An evening Mass will be celebrated in our Hotel. Dinner and overnight at our 4 star hotel in Suzdal.

Day 6 (Tues. Sept. 11) SUZDAL, VLADIMAR, MOSCOW
This morning, we tour historic Suzdal, one of Russia’s oldest settlements, dating back to early the 10th century. It is a serene and charming place, offering a latticework of unpaved paths that wind by churches with candy-colored domes, rustic wooden structures and cinematic meadows. While on tour we will sip some local medovukha honey cider for a true taste of the region and visit the Museum of Wooden Architecture, on the bank of the Kamenka River, to experience what a Russian village from centuries ago was really like. All buildings are actual constructions that people lived and worked in. They include the Church of the Transfiguration, constructed from pine by using nothing but an axe, and the Church of the Resurrection, both dating back to the early 1700’s. Following this, we will visit the Suzdal Kremlin, once the religious and administrative center for the community, which represents the oldest part of town. Its ramparts have been completely preserved. The Kremlin here is also home to the Cathedral of the Nativity, famous for its frescoes and one of the eight White Monuments (rare
churches) of Vladimir and Suzdal, collectively a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Our final stop is the Efimov or Pokrovsky Monastery, founded in 1364.

Following lunch, we will drive 45 minutes to the community of Vladimir, one of the most visited destinations within the popular Golden Ring circuit. Here we will visit the Cathedral of the Assumption, one of the most historically important Russian Orthodox Churches., the Cathedral of Demetrius, once an in-house church of the Russian prince’s court and a unique monument of ancient Russian architecture, and the Crystal Museum, before taking our late afternoon drive back to Moscow. (Driving time from Vladimir to Moscow 3.5 hours). Our evening Mass will be celebrated in our hotel. Dinner and overnight at our 4-star hotel in Moscow (2 nights).

Day 7 (Wed. Sept. 12) DRIVING TOUR OF MOSCOW AND MOSKVA RIVER CRUISE
Today we will enjoy a driving tour of the city, making stops at places of interest: We will tour the Novodevichy Convent, or Maiden’s Convent, the best-known cloister of Moscow. Unlike other Moscow cloisters, it has remained virtually intact since the 17th century and is an outstanding example of the Moscow Baroque architecture, as well as an exceptionally well preserved monastic complex, closely related to Russian Orthodox. It was proclaimed a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2004. Then, we will spend time at Sparrow Hills, located on the bank of the Moskva River, one of the highest points in Moscow. Its observation platform gives a beautiful panoramic view of the city, which has been an inspiration for many Russian poets and writers. Moscow State University is located here. We will visit Victory Park - a memorial complex dedicated to Russia’s victory over Nazi Germany, located in the historic area of Moscow known as Poklonnaya Hill, which means Bow Hill, one of the highest spots in Moscow. We will spend time on Old Arbat Street, a pedestrian street about one kilometer long in the historical centre of the city, which has existed since at least the 15th century. It is one of the oldest surviving streets in the Russian capital. It now has a mix of apartments, shops, bistros, etc. and is a popular tourist destination. As we tour, we will see Stalin’s Skyscrapers, a group of seven tall buildings built from 1947 to 1953, in an elaborate combination of Russian Baroque and Gothic style, as well as the
Russian White House, the primary office of the government of Russia and the official workplace of the Russian Prime Minister. Included in our morning tour is the exquisite and unique Eliseevsky grocery store, originally built in the 18th century as a lavish apartment building & mansion, later redesigned to be a luxurious store. Mass will be celebrated at the Church of St. Louis of France, which serves the English community of Moscow. After lunch, we will relax on a scenic Moskva River Cruise by Radisson. Dinner and overnight in our 4-star Moscow hotel.

Day 8 (Thurs. Sept. 13) MOSCOW, HIGH SPEED TRAIN TO ST. PETERSBURG
After breakfast, we depart to the Leningradsy Railway Station to take the morning high-speed train to St. Petersburg, the Venice of Russia. Brought into service by Russian Railways in 2009, the Sapsan (Russian for Peregrine Falcon) is the most convenient way to travel between Moscow & St. Petersburg, achieving a maximum speed of 250 kilometers per hour (155 miles per hour). During our 4-hour ride on this impeccably clean and smooth train, we will pass through a number of other Russian towns and cities. Upon our mid-afternoon arrival into St. Petersburg, we will visit the St. Alexander Nevsky Monastery and museum complex, sometimes called “the soul of St. Petersburg”, home to some of the oldest buildings in the city, as well as to cemeteries which contain the graves of some of the giants of Russian culture, including Tchaikovsky, Dostoevsky, and Glinka, many scientists, artists and royalty. The monuments dedicated to these people are outstanding pieces of art in their own right and were created by the best sculptors of the time. By the beginning of the 20th century the territory of the monastery complex was home to an impressive 16 churches. Today, only five survive. We will visit the Holy Trinity Cathedral, where the remains of St. Alexander Nevsky, a greatly loved Russian prince famous for his wisdom, piety and military victories and the patron saint of soldiers, rests. In 2008, St. Alexander was declared the main hero of Russia’s history and voted the greatest Russian by popular vote. We will celebrate a late afternoon Mass at St. Stanislaus Catholic Church. Dinner and overnight at our 4-Star St. Petersburg Hotel (4 nights).

Day 9 (Fri. Sept. 14) ST. PETERSBURG
This morning, we will take a city tour of the centre of this beautiful port city of St. Petersburg, situated on the Baltic Sea, and considered Russia’s cultural center. During our tour, we will see many key sites such as the Church of the Savior on Spilled Blood, the famous Bronze Horseman, the central Palace Square, Saint Isaac’s Cathedral - the largest Russian Orthodox cathedral in the city and fourth largest in the world, and the Anichkov bridge. We will visit the Peter and Paul fortress, site of the original citadel and foundation of the city built here in 1703 by Peter the Great. Following lunch, we will relax on a delightful Neva River Cruise, gliding beneath some of the city’s beautiful bridges; past elegant landmarks and stunning architecture, while learning more about this magical city’s history. Following our boat trip, we will celebrate Mass at St. Catherine of Alexandria Catholic Church - the oldest Catholic church in the Russian Federation, and the only church with the title of Basilica. After dinner at our hotel,
we will take in an amazing evening of entertainment at the **Russian Folk Show**, where we will also get to sample Russian specialty foods during the intermission. Overnight in **St. Petersburg**.

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**Day 10 (Sat. Sept 15) PUSHKIN, PETERHOF, ST. PETERSBURG**

Today, after an early morning Mass in our hotel and breakfast, we take a short drive 24 Km. south to the town of **Pushkin**, founded in 1710 as an imperial residence, which is now a major tourist attraction and a UNESCO Heritage Site. The town has an incredible museum complex which includes 2 Palaces, other buildings of beauty and historical significance and associated parks. We will start our day with a tour of **Catherine Palace**, a lavish Baroque palace dedicated to Catherine the Great. One of its more famous attractions is the **Amber Room**, which was looted during World War II by the Nazi army and lost to Russia. In 1979, efforts were undertaken to rebuild the magnificent, priceless room at and in 2003, after decades of work by Russian craftsmen and donations from Germany, the reconstructed Amber Room was inaugurated at the Catherine Palace. Our palace tour will be followed by a restful stroll through some of the gardens of **Catherine Park**. The park covers an area of 107 hectares and consists of the Old Garden an English garden, both created in the 1700’s. We will also have a chance to view the beautiful **Alexander Palace** from the outside, another classic palace built here for Alexander I. Following our lunch break, we return to St. Petersburg to visit **Peterhof Palace and its Fountain Park**, a series of palaces, ornate fountains and gardens laid out on the orders of Peter the Great on the shores of the Baltic Sea. Referred to as the “Russian Versailles”, this site is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Following our tour, we end our day with a special celebration dinner on an illuminated dinner cruise of the city. Overnight in **St. Petersburg**.

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**Day 11 (Sun. Sept 16) ST. PETERSBURG**

On our final morning in this incredible city, we start our day by celebrating Mass again at **St. Stanislaus Church**, built in the neo-classical style in 1783 by Archbishop Stanislas Bohucz, who donated the money and the land for the church from his former residence, and who is buried here. Bishop Antoni Malecki, who was deported to Siberia in 1930, officiated here from 1887 to 1921. A plaque commemorates his memory in the church. We will then tour the magnificent **Hermitage Museum** - a stunning museum of art and culture founded by Empress Catherine the Great. The largest in the world, its collections span
time and cultures from the Stone Age to the 20th century, and occupy a large complex of six historic buildings along Palace Embankment. Prominent among these is the magnificent Winter Palace, a former residence of Russian emperors, which is included in our tour. Following lunch, we will tour the Fabergé Museum, a privately-owned museum established in order to repatriate lost cultural valuables to Russia. The museum is located in the center of Saint Petersburg at Shuvalov Palace on the Fontanka River. A highlight of the museum’s collection is the group of nine Imperial Easter eggs created by Fabergé for the last two Russian Tsars. The remainder of our day is free to allow time for last minute shopping packing. Dinner and overnight at our hotel in St. Petersburg.

Day 12 (Mon. Sept 17) RETURN TO CANADA
We will say farewell to Russia and embark from St. Petersburg on our early morning flight into Europe to connect to our flight to Toronto.

Information Meeting
Ottawa: St. Mary’s church, 100 Young St., Sun. June 10, 2018 from 2:30 – 3:30 pm.
St. Catherine of Sienna Room
Terms and Conditions

Cost for Tour In ($CDN): September 6 - 17, 2018 (12 days)
- 3357.00 Per person (based on double occupancy, minimum of 25 passengers) plus
- $ 585.00 Air and $637 Departure taxes (subject to change) totalling $1222 for airfare
  for a total tour cost of $4579
- $950.00 Single supplement

Included in Tour Cost of $4579
- Round trip airfare via Toronto to Moscow and return from St Petersburg
- Deluxe hotel accommodation 10 nights
- All breakfasts and dinners daily
- All fares, admission fees, hotels, taxes, tips & service charges
- Deluxe air-conditioned motor coach and licensed English-speaking tour guides throughout
- Air and Departure taxes
- All transfers from/to the airport and hotels
- Porterage of 1 piece of luggage per person for the airport and hotel

- $ 300.00 Deposit due at initial registration. (Balance to be paid 60 days prior to departure.)
- Optional insurance extra (due at time of deposit)

Not Included:
- 10 Lunches
- Any extra flights to connect from home city to our overseas flights
- Cost of Russian Visa. Please note that a Russian Visa is required. Cost is $230 ($180 consular fee + $50 fee for invitation letter issued by the Russian authority). JBC Travel will look after obtaining the Visas for the group.

Insurance: All inclusive travel insurance is recommended through Allianze Global Assistance – which will protect against cancellation charges due to sickness, accident or death of an immediate family member. It also covers baggage loss (limited), medical expenses and return transportation home.

All Inclusive Rates are: Age 60 and under: $271, Age 61-65 $341, Age 66-70 $418  Age 71 and up Please call for quote

Passport: A passport, valid for at least 6 months from our date of departure, is required.

Payment: After registering with Laurie, make deposit cheques payable to:
JBC Travel
286 Kent Street
Ottawa ON K2P 2A4
- Credit card payments are subject to a service charge of 3%
- Balance due July 6, 2018
- Rates are subject to change due to currency fluctuations, fuel surcharges or other unforeseen circumstances.
- Tour will operate with a minimum of 25 passengers.

Hotels: all 4 Star:
Moscow  5 nights, Suzdal 1 night, St. Petersburg 4 nights

For Information and Reservations contact: Laurie Courchesne-Dooley
phone 613-732-5739   e-mail: lafrcodo@outlook.com