

Ireland's Spiritual Legacy
Featuring
50th International Eucharistic Congress
With Father John Lemire and Father Matt Kucharski

June 4 – 18, 2012
\$3,595.00 per person twin
\$810.00 single

Your 15 day Itinerary

Day 1 – Depart from Toronto to Dublin

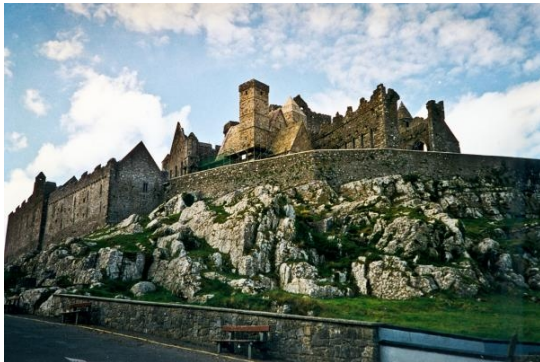
Join the group today for our overnight flight to Dublin, Ireland.

Day 2 - Welcome to Ireland

We arrive to Dublin Airport late morning. Meet the coach driver in the arrivals area and be escorted to the coach. We then depart for Waterford via the Wicklow Mountains. Today travel south of Dublin to County Wicklow, also known as the Garden of Ireland. It is home to Powerscourt, Mount Usher and Russborough, to name a few of its many houses and gardens. This region features all the various types of scenery that makes Ireland so beautiful. The coastline is bordered by charming sea resorts such as Bray or Greystones. In the heart of its gentle and rounded hills are nestled Enniskerry and Avoca, both very picturesque villages. Discover its romantic and quiet beauty, the deserted mounts where nothing but heather grows, the small forests and the lush prairies illuminated by yellow gorse in spring.

Visit **Glendalough**, whose English name Glendalough originated from the Irish "Gleann Dá Locha", which translates as "The valley of the two lakes". It was here that St. Kevin ~ son of the king of Leinster founded a monastery in the 6th century. From a simple beginning the site grew to become famous as a centre of learning throughout Europe. Standing for 600 years it was destroyed in 1398. Much of what is to be seen today dates from the 10 to 12th century. One of the most attractive features is the fine 34m high round tower. A cathedral, stone churches and decorated crosses also survived albeit as ruins. Glendalough has an excellent visitor's centre and display area, which is located at the entrance to the Valley. It houses a very comprehensive exhibition on Glendalough detailing the history, archaeology and wildlife of this area of Wicklow. Continue south to Waterford where we check in to our first hotel. (D)

Overnight - In Waterford or area – 1night



Day 3 - Waterford to Cork

This morning, after our full Irish Breakfast, we depart Waterford and travel to Killarney via Cashel and Blarney.

Visit the **Rock of Cashel**, possibly the most photographed site in Ireland and one of Ireland's leading tourist attractions. Towering over the town of Cashel from its perch on a 200-foot high outcrop of limestone, the Rock of Cashel was once the seat

of the Kings of Munster. St. Patrick visited the rock in 450, while Brian Boru was crowned the 1st high King of Ireland here in the 10th century. Granted to the church in the 12th century, by the O'Brien clan, the Rock became the seat of the archbishop of Cashel. It was during this period that Cormac's Chapel was built. In 1647 Cromwellian forces under the leadership of Lord Inchiquin ransacked the Rock.

Today, impressive stone walls enclose a round tower, a cathedral, a twelfth century Romanesque chapel and high crosses. The gothic cathedral dates back to the thirteenth century and attached to it is the palace of the Archbishop of Cashel. Cormac's chapel, smaller in structure, displays some typical Romanesque features while the Hall of the Vicar's Choral, at the entrance to the Rock, is a fifteenth century house. The Vicars Choral has been recently restored and its basement houses a small museum of artefacts found on the site.

Continue via County Cork and stop in the town of Blarney, where we visit the **Blarney Castle**. Attracting visitors from all over the world, Blarney Castle is situated in Blarney 8 km from Cork City. An ancient stronghold of the McCarthy's, Lords of Muskerry, it is one of Ireland's oldest and most historic castles, and indeed one of the strongest fortresses in Munster. Built in 1446, Blarney Castle is famous for its *Blarney* stone - The Stone of Eloquence, which is traditionally believed, to have the power to bestow the gift of eloquence on all those who kiss it. Many legends tell the story of the Stone, but why not kiss it and find out the truth behind the legend.



We will take some time for **shopping at Blarney Woollen Mills**. The presence of the Woollen Mills during the famine shielded Blarney from the worst effects of the famine, due to its employment of local workers. The success story at the mills continued until a disastrous fire in 1869. By August 1871, the mill was once again operational with a labour force of 222. In 1976 Chris Kelleher, himself a mill worker, bought the old mill property. Within a short period of time Chris and his family transformed the mill into what is perhaps the largest quality craft shop in Ireland. We continue on to Kerry where we will stop for the night. (B, D)
Overnight - In Killarney or area – 1 night

Day 4 - Burren & Cliffs of Moher

Today we depart for Galway via the Atlantic west coast of Clare. We travel northwards to Tarbert and from here cross the river Shannon by car ferry to Killimer, into County Clare.

Travel along the coast to the **Cliffs of Moher**. Situated on the Atlantic Ocean and bordering the Burren Area, the Cliffs of Moher are one of Ireland's most spectacular sights. Standing 230 metres above the ground at their highest point and 8km long, the Cliffs boast one of the most amazing views in Ireland. On a clear day, the Aran Islands are visible in Galway Bay as well as the valleys and hills of Connemara. To the south of the cliffs is Hag's Head and was once the site of a castle. The cliffs reach their highest point just north of O' Brien's Tower. Cornelius O' Brien, a descendant of Brian Boru (he who defeated the Vikings in battle), built a Tower at the cliffs in order to enjoy some tea with his lady friends. The Tower is adjacent to the seastack, *Breanan Mór*, which stands over 70 metres above the foaming waves and is home to some of the Burren's wildlife.

We continue to Westport via the **Burren Region**. The Burren is a strange and unique region in Europe. "Burren" means "large stones": in fact its name describes this impressive scenery



perfectly well. Often described as lunar, the Burren is a high plateau of porous limestone situated in Northern Clare between Ballyvaughan and Kilfenora. No trees are growing here, no land is covering the stone, and the limestone is bare. But the Burren is not as deserted as we believe: the cracks allow different types of flowers to grow all year round, though spring would be the best season for the botanists to explore. The rocks hide many caves like Ailwee, as well as "Turloughs", an interesting phenomenon which transforms lakes into fields during the summer.

We continue on to **Corcomroe Abbey**, an early 13th-century Cistercian [monastery](#) located in the north of the Burren region of County Clare, Ireland, a few miles east of the village of Ballyvaughan. It was once known as "St. Mary of the Fertile Rock", a reference to the Burren's fertile soil. The abbey is noted for its detailed carvings and other rich ornamentation, which are not commonly found in structures from this period. It features a typical cruciform church facing east, with a small chapel in each transept. We stop for a visit here. We finish our day in Galway for our overnight stop. (B, D)

Overnight - In Galway or area - 3 nights

Day 5 - Connemara & Kylemore Abbey

Today we will enjoy a tour of **Connemara**. This is a land of lakes and rivers, bogs and mountains. A land of small villages where Gaelic is still the spoken language and where little has changed little since the beginning of time. It is without a doubt the wildest and the most romantic part of Ireland. Connemara is a vast peninsula bordered by the arid and rocky coastline of Galway Bay in the south ~ a land characteristic for its stone walls and thatched cottages. On its northern shore the land is harsher and more secret, with spectacular views of the Ocean and the beautiful fjord of Killary Harbour, as well as the steep mountains overlooking numerous lakes and large bog areas. Connemara is a real paradise for Nature lovers and those in search of strong emotions.

We visit **Kylemore Abbey** which is located in the Kylemore Pass in Connemara. A Mitchell



Henry built the House in 1868, after having spent his honeymoon in the area. The architecture is best described as neo-gothic and the house still displays all the characteristics of that period. One of Kylemore Abbey's most famous features is its miniature cathedral, built in 1870 and known locally as the Gothic church. Today, the abbey is home to the Irish order of Benedictine nuns. They bought the house in 1920, having fled their convent in war-torn Belgium in 1914. They established a private school for young girls, which today is the renowned Kylemore Abbey International

School for young girls. Facilities at Kylemore include a visitor centre, an exhibition housed in the

main reception rooms of the house and a video which takes the visitor through the history of the house and its occupants.



We will stop at Ireland's holy mountain, **Croagh Patrick**. Each year, as many as one million pilgrims and visitors make the trek to the top to pray at the stations of the cross, participate in Mass, do penance (in which case the rocky journey is undertaken barefoot) or just enjoy the spectacular view. According to Christian tradition, St. Patrick went up the sacred mountain at festival time in 441 AD. After fasting at the summit for 40 days, he banished all the snakes and demons from Ireland. The site quickly became an important place of Christian

pilgrimage. A stone oratory dating to between 430 and 890 AD was recently discovered on the summit. We return to hotel in Galway for dinner and overnight. (B, D)

Day 6 - Ballintubber Abbey & Knock

This morning, we will visit **Ballintubber Abbey**. Built in 1216, for the Canon Regulars of St Augustine, Ballintubber Abbey is the only church in Ireland that was founded by an Irish King and which is still in use today. It was built next to the site of an earlier church founded by St Patrick in the 5th century. It is also known as "the Abbey that refused to die" as through its many vicissitudes, including burning by Cromwell's army in 1653, the Abbey has remained a place of worship despite years of continuous attacks and religious repression. Ballintubber retains an air of ancient beauty and spirituality and has been restored with simple elegance. Ballintubber is one of the most impressive church buildings in Ireland today and is well worth a visit. There is a video display and an interpretative centre at the Abbey and the grounds are landscaped to portray spiritual themes.

Travel on to spend some time at **Knock Shrine**

This little town is an important pilgrimage centre and has been famous for over a century as the site of visions, apparitions, and miraculous cures. The story of Knock began on the 21st August 1879 when Our Lady, St. Joseph and St. John the Evangelist appeared at the south gable of Knock Parish Church. Fifteen people, young and old witnessed the apparition. From this miraculous occurrence Knock has grown to the status of an internationally recognised Marian Shrine. The personal pilgrimage of Pope John Paul II in 1979, commemorating the centenary of the apparition, inspired an even greater devotion to the Shrine and endorsed the indelible seal of Vatican approval. Mother Teresa of Calcutta visited the Shrine in June of 1993. One and a half million pilgrims visit the Shrine annually. We return to our hotel in Galway for dinner and overnight. (B, D)



Day 7 - Dublin

Today we depart for Dublin, travelling east via Ballinasloe & Athlone, the centre of Ireland.



Visit **Clonmacnoise**. St. Ciaran founded this great monastery in 548-9. Dermot, a local prince, helped Ciaran build his first church on the site and later when Dermot was elected High King he richly endowed the monastery. Although St. Ciaran did not live long after the foundation, the monastery grew rapidly. It was plundered six times between 834 and 1012, and burned 26 times between 841 and 1204. Clonmacnoise was a great centre of learning, and many manuscripts, including the Annals of Tighermach (11th century) and the Book of the Dun Cow (12th century), were written here.

The Normans attacked Clonmacnoise in 1179, and burned 105 houses, and for the next four hundred years the monastery was often plundered. In 1552 the English garrison from Athlone took all the monastic valuables away. The monastic site never recovered from this attack. The on-site guides provide excellent tours to the many interesting artifacts to be found here, including the High Crosses, the 12th century round tower, and the many Churches and Temples, which adorn this hallowed site. Continue to Dublin for check in to hotel.

We arrive to Dublin in time for the **Opening ceremonies** for the 50th International Eucharistic Congress. We will remain in Dublin for the remainder of our journey. (B)

Overnight - In Dublin area – 8 nights

Day 8: Monday 11 June 2012 – Eucharistic Congress

Attend the 50th International Eucharistic Congress in Dublin. Activities as per Congress package. (B)

Day 9 – Eucharistic Congress

Attend the 50th International Eucharistic Congress in Dublin. Activities as per Congress package. (B)

Day 10 - Eucharistic Congress

Attend the 50th International Eucharistic Congress in Dublin. Activities as per Congress package. (B)

Day 11 - Eucharistic Congress

Attend the 50th International Eucharistic Congress in Dublin. Activities as per Congress package. (B)

Day 12 – Eucharistic Congress

Attend the 50th International Eucharistic Congress in Dublin. Activities as per Congress package. (B)

Day 13 – Eucharistic Congress

Attend the 50th International Eucharistic Congress in Dublin. Activities as per Congress package. (B)

Day 14 – Eucharistic Congress

Attend the **Closing Ceremony** of the 50th International Eucharistic Congress in Dublin.
(B, Farewell Dinner)

Day 15 – Depart Dublin to return home

After a final Irish breakfast, meet with coach and driver at hotel and transfer to Dublin Airport for departure flight home. (B)

It is our intention to operate all tours as described in the itineraries. Local operational situations occasionally force changes to be made and we reserve the right to do so.

Your journey includes:

- 13 nights at 3* hotels, all rooms with private bath / shower
- Full Irish breakfast at hotels each day
- 6 Dinners as listed on itinerary
- Visits:

Glendalough	Rock of Cashel	Blarney Castle
Cliffs of Moher	Corcomroe Abbey	Kylemore Abbey
Knock Shrine	Ballintubber Abbey	Clonmacnoise
- Car ferry from Tarbert to Killimer on day 4
- 7 day package for the Eucharistic Congress (Full programme in the RDS to include the Closing Ceremony, attendance from 10th – 17th June, plus a pilgrim pack).
- Modern motor coach with driver/guide on days 2 – 7
- Unlimited public transit passes for to and from Congress venue days 8 - 14.
- Modern motor coach with driver for direct airport transfer on day 15
- Porterage of one bag per person in/out of each hotel
- Spiritual Guidance by Fr. John and Fr. Matt.
- Services of professional Tour Manager

Does Not Include:

- Gratuities and Mass Donations will be calculated and collected from all guests prior to departure.
- Meals not included on itinerary
- Items of a personal nature
- Travel Insurance