

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land November 5-17, 2012

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Group guide: Thea Van de Kraats

Objectives of presentation

- Recall, remember and relive the pilgrimage
- Give thanks and glory to God
- Generate sharing on other activities and places that could be of interest

November 5/6

Montreal, Zurich, Tel-Aviv

- **30+ pilgrims (not tourists) leave Montreal for the Holy Land on Swiss Airlines flying through Zurich, Switzerland.**
- **During stop-over at Zurich, our pilgrim group starts the day with morning prayer animated by guitar music from Fr. McKee, our spiritual director.**
- **Psalm 122 (I rejoiced when they said to me « Let us go to the house of the Lord. ») was the spirit in which we awaited our connecting flight to Tel-Aviv.**

November 6

Tel-Aviv

- **Were met at Tel-Aviv airport by our tour guide, Thea Van de Kraats, a guide who has an awesome grasp of languages and the Holy Land sites and our driver Perro, who made driving a fine art during our pilgrimage in the Holy Land, as he manoeuvred the bus through the narrow and crowded streets of the cities we visited.**

November 7

Tel-Aviv, Caesarea and Mount Carmel and Nazareth

- **Psalm 86?** 'How lovely are your dwelling places, O Lord of Hosts'

November 7

View from Solomon Hotel, Netanyu



November 7

Caesarea

- **Built by Herod the Great around 30 BC, was lost to the world for many centuries hidden under sand and cultivation**
- **One of the biggest ports of its time**
- **Unearthed at the end of the nineteenth century**
- **The colosseum is reminiscent of the Colosseum in Rome, not surprising since Herod the Great wanted Caesarea to be as great a city as Rome**

November 7

Caesarea



November 7

Caesarea

- Cornelius and Peter
 - Acts 10:1-23 has Caesarea as the setting (read this together)
- Christ is the Lord of the Gentiles as well.
- We who are from all parts of the world can take Cornelius as a model

November 7

Caesarea (contd)



November 7

Mount Carmel - Muharraq

- 1 Kings 18:16-45
- Ahab and the false prophets
- Elijah and the true God
- Mount Carmel and Jezreel

November 7

Mount Carmel



November 7

Mount Carmel



November 7

Mount Carmel

- Our first Eucharist together as pilgrims in the Carmelite Monastery in Carmel
- Beautiful icons cover the little chapel were painted by a Greek Catholic priest who lived in the monastery for many years
- Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est
- Laudate Omnes Gente, Laudate Dominum and Psalm 117

November 7

Eucharist at Mount Carmel



November 7

Nazareth

- Visit to the Claritans and meeting with Sr. Marie Josephine
- Inspired by the life of Charles de Foucauld, the soldier who had a major conversion
- Exhortation to be messengers and witnesses of Christ

November 7

Nazareth

Our guide Thea with Sr. Marie Josephine



November 8

Nazareth

- The Church of the Annunciation is considered a genuine site
- Had Eucharist in the Grotto of St. Joseph
- Luke 1:26-38
- The highlight was the courtyard full of mosaics of Mary depicting the image of Mary from different countries.
- The lower grotto was full of chapels

November 8

Church of the Annunciation



November 8

Church of the Annunciation



November 8

Nazareth

- Visited the church (synagogue) run by the Franciscans and the Melkites.
- Jesus reads the scroll in Luke 4:14-30.
- A visit to St. Gabriel Church of the Source of Water of Mary. A Greek Orthodox church adorned with beautiful icons
- John 2:1-12 describes the wedding feast at Cana. Jesus is the bridegroom.
Renewal of marriage vows in the church

November 9

Mount of Beatitudes

- A beautiful church overlooking the Sea of Galilee built by Antonio Bellucci
- The Mount of the Beatitudes is indeed impressive
- The joy of meeting Christians from all over the world
- Matthew 5:1-12 contains the Beatitudes

November 9

Church of the Beatitudes



November 9

View from the Mount of the Beatitudes



November 9

Mount of Beatitudes



November 9

Tabagha Benedictine Monastery

- By tradition, this church of seven springs (Heptageon) is considered a possible site where Jesus multiplied the loaves and the fish.
- Matthew 14:13-26 and Luke 9:10-17

November 9

Tabagha Monastery



November 9

Church of the Heptageon (Seven Springs)



November 9

Church of the Primacy of Peter

- Matthew 16:13-20 and John 21:15-21
- While we were taking in the Sea of Galilee from St. Peter's restaurant (just a name), a sudden sharp downpour and in a few minutes sunny skies again. This is typical of weather patterns in this part of the world. Weather can change dramatically within a few minutes

November 9

Church of the Primacy of Peter



November 9

The Waters of the Sea of Galilee
at the foot of the Church of the Primacy of
Peter



November 9

Capernaum, the town of Jesus



November 9

Church of Capernaum

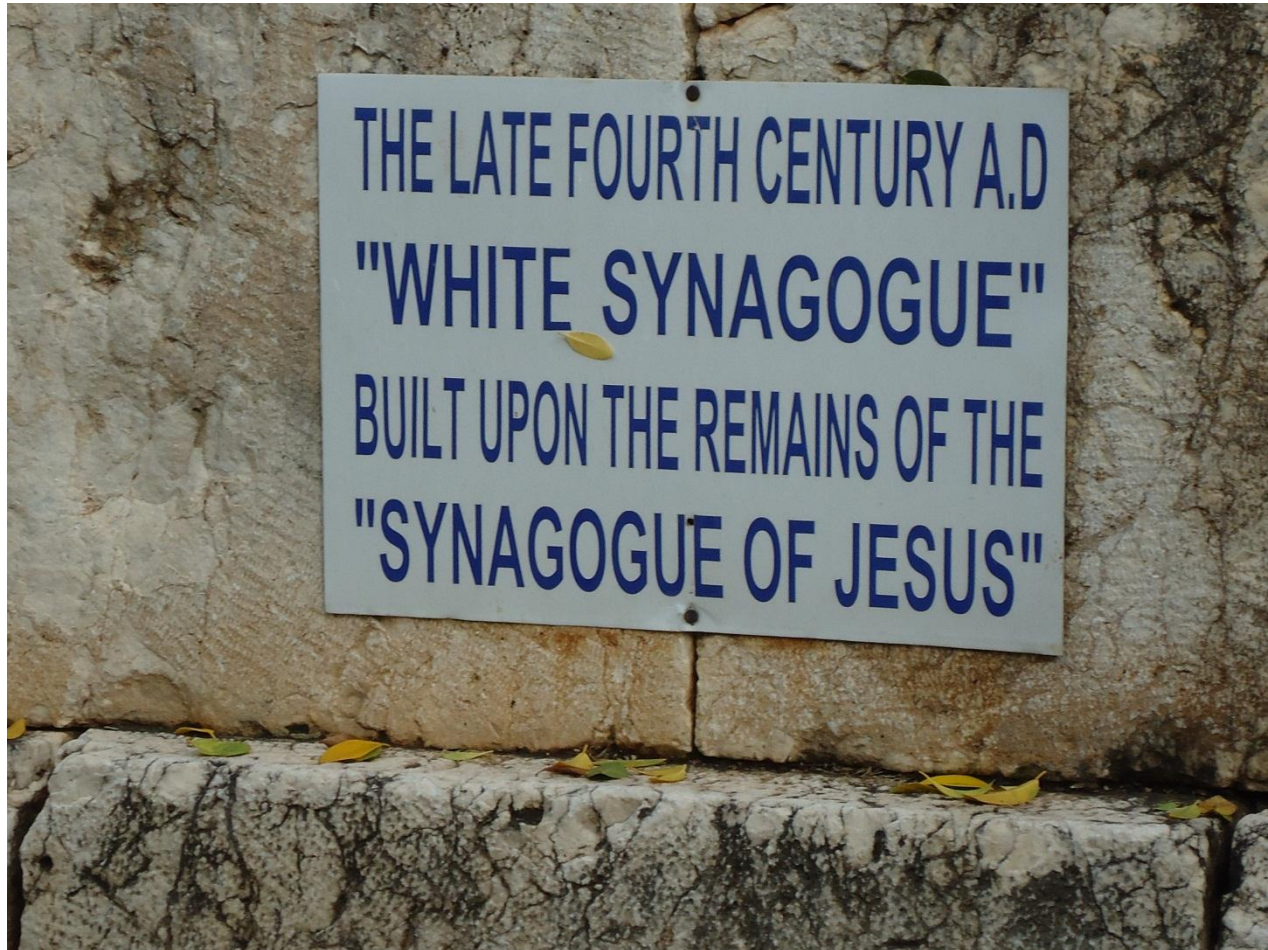
- Site of one of the oldest synagogues
One new white step has been cut to fit an older black one underneath, likely a genuine site. Celebrated an awesome mass with a group from the Philippines
- Matthew 4:13
- The house of Peter's mother-in-law was probably nearby
- Drove past Magdala

Mass in the Church of Capharnaum (house of Pater's mother-in-law)



November 9

The White Synagogue from the fourth century



November 9

Boat ride on the Sea of Galilee

- What an excellent end to a day filled with history of places Jesus lived and visited, the Mount of Beatitudes, the Church of Peter's Primacy, Capernaum and the Jezreel Valley
- Return to Nazareth via Tiberius

November 9

The Sea of Galilee



November 10

Bethsaida and Caesarea Philippi

- The blind man who can see Jesus, even when blind (Mark 8:22-34)
- The amazing 'Jesus Boat' Museum
- Here, a boat was raised from the water in 11 days after being found in the 1960's?
- Here the technique of building was very distinctive, first the main structure was put in place and then the supports were added, in a reverse order as compared to building boats today
- We drove past Mount Tabor (the Transfiguration)

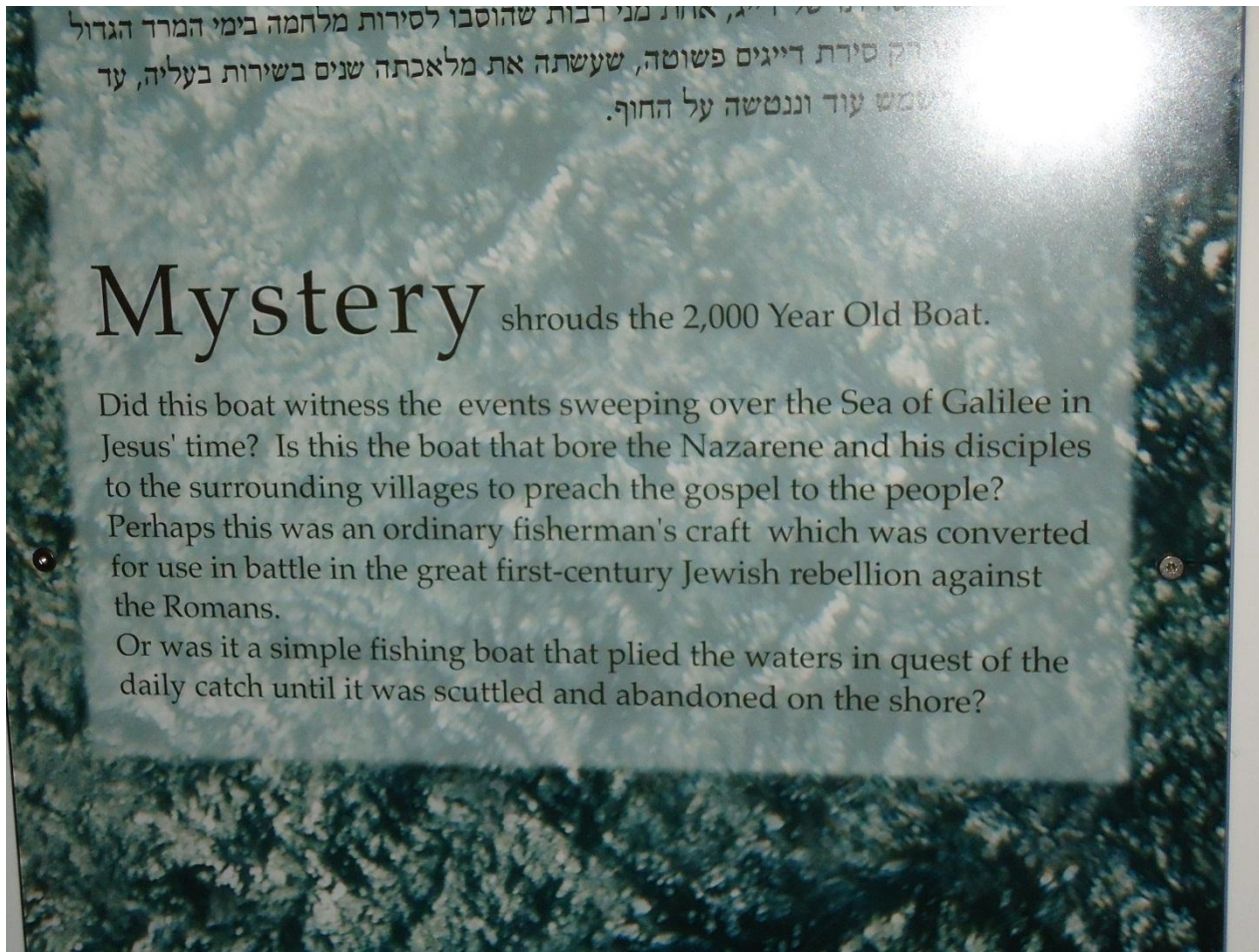
November 10

The Boat Museum



November 10

The Galilee Boat



November 11

Bet-She'an

- The widow's mite Mark 12:38-44
- She gave all she had.
- Very large, impressive ruins
- Baths, theatre, amphitheatre for over 10,000
- The city could have contained over 100,000 people
- Excellent time line just at the entrance to the site

November 11

Bet-She'an



November 11

Model of the bath-house in Bet-She'an



November 11

Mount of Temptation

- There is a Greek Byzantine monastery on the edge of the Mount
- Tradition has it that this is the spot where Jesus was tempted

November 11

Jericho

- Jericho means city of the moon
- Mass at the Good Shepherd Church
- Camel rides near the shop in Jericho

November 11

Good Shepherd Church in Jericho



November 12

Bethlehem

- Luke 2
- God reveals Himself to the lower strata of people – shepherds
- Do not be afraid
- She pondered all these things in her heart

November 12

Bethlehem

- Church of the Nativity, shared by the Greek Orthodox, the Armenian Orthodox and the Catholics
- Sad to learn of infighting between these Christians who are the Guardians of the Church of the Nativity
- St. Jerome spent a lot of time in Bethlehem writing the Vulgate Bible
- The visit to the Childrens' Relief Hospital was very touching and moved some of us to tears

November 12

Visit to the Childrens' Hospital in Bethlehem



November 12

Bethlehem

- Visit to the Grotto of the Shepherds Church, this church had a maple leaf logo at the base of the altar as it was funded from Canada, which financed its refurbishment
- Fr. Francis led us in singing carols at this church. It was a special moment when all the pilgrims from other countries/denominations who were there, joined in and we all sang and remembered the birth of Our Lord Jesus together

November 12

Shepherds' Valley Village Restaurant (Bedouin hospitality)



November 12

Shepherds' Field, Bethlehem



November 12

Shepherds' Field church



November 12

Shepherds' Church, Bethlehem refurbishing funded by Canada



November 13

Jerusalem (City of Peace)

- Psalm 34
- Mass at the Church of Gethsemane run by the Franciscans
- The impressive gold spires of the Russian Orthodox Church of St. Mary Magdalene are behind the Church of Gethsemane
- Visit to the Benedictine-run Church of the Dormition of Mary
- Church run by the Assomptionistes (French order) on the possible site of the torture of Jesus by Caiphas

November 13

A view of Jerusalem



November 13

Church of the Dormition of Mary



November 13

Church of Gethsemane



November 13

Jerusalem (City of Peace)

- Visit to the pool of Siloam (John 9)
- Franciscan church at Bethphage of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem (Mark 11)
- Carmelite Church of Pater Noster (Our Father) (Matt 6)
- Jesus weeps over Jerusalem, Church of Dominus Fleuit. (Matt 23:37, Luke 19:3)

November 13

Hagia Sion



November 13

St Peter in Gallicantu Church



November 13

St Peter in Gallicantu Church



November 14

Jerusalem (City of Peace)

- Mass with the Franciscans and the Polish Bishop at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre
- See Luke 17:11-19
- Attitude of Gratitude. Jesus says: Your faith has saved you

November 14

River Jordan/Dead Sea and Qumran

- Jesus baptised by John the Baptist (Matt 3)
- John was baptising in the Jordan river (Luke 3)
- Naaman washing himself in the river Jordan (2 Kings 5)
- Late morning dip in the Dead Sea
- Visit to Qumran site
- Tension in the Holy Land, start of conflict between Israel and Hamas

November 14

In the river Jordan



November 14

Qumran



November 15

Via Dolorosa

- Psalm 84
- The stations of the Cross at Via Dolorosa and stop for lunch at the Armenian Archidiocèse near the Fifth Station
- Mass in the hotel followed by group sharing of the pilgrimage experience by the pilgrims

November 16

- 8am Mass in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, in the Crusaders' Chapel behind the Church of Mary Magdalene
- When we were leaving the church, we heard that the Holy Sepulchre and other holy sites were being closed for security reasons.
- How blest we are in Canada!! No violence or instability

November 15

Church of the Holy Sepulchre



November 15

Crusaders' Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre Church



November 15

Part of our group at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre



November 16

Ein Karem

- Church of John the Baptist
- Based on Spanish style of architecture
- Very similar to the Portuguese churches of Goa
- Canticle of Zechariah (Luke 1) in a number of languages
- The Canticle is part of every day morning prayer in the Liturgy of the Hours

November 16

- Lazarus, Mary and Martha
- Stayed an extra night in Jerusalem because of rocket near Tel Aviv. But received a scare around 5 pm when sirens went off in the city. A rocket fell 10 miles from Jerusalem

November 16

Tel-Aviv, Zurich and Montreal

- All things must come to an end
- Heightened security at Tel-Aviv
- Fly back via Zurich to Montreal
- Experience the rapid new system of immigration check at Dorval, one of the first to experience this new system, what a timesaver

What next?

- Future pilgrimages (say in 2014)
 - Lourdes and Fatima
 - Medugorge and Prague
 - Another visit to the Holy Land
- Spiritual enrichment
 - Lectio Divina
 - A short series of Faith enrichment teachings over the next few months
 - Catholicism
 - Bible study
 - Year of Faith