



Franciscan University
of Steubenville
AUSTRIAN PROGRAM

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KARTAUSE GAMING

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Dear Prospective Pilgrim,

February 6, 2017

May God give you peace!

I'm writing briefly to encourage you to make the investment to go on pilgrimage with Steve and Janet Ray and/or Franciscan University of Steubenville. I work for FUS at our study abroad campus in Gaming, Austria and am fresh off the Family Holy Land Pilgrimage—Dec. 28 to Jan. 6th, 2017—where I had the opportunity to serve as chaplain for a wonderful group of nearly one-hundred. It was my first time in the Holy Land and I thank God that I was able to be a pilgrim with Steve and Janet. We had a blast and maximized our experience of the holy sites because of Steve and his team's expertise. At both Mt. Tabor and the Mt. of Beatitudes, we were the first group on site, which enabled us to be first to celebrate Eucharist and to 'take it all in' before the masses arrived. Only a seasoned guide like Steve would know what a blessing that is for the pilgrim experiencing the place for the first time. Steve's knowledge of Scripture and the Church Fathers also gave the trip great theological depth while at the same time being understandable for the average person. At most locations, Steve gives a talk about the significance of the site and the truths of the faith that pertain to it. As a priest and teacher, I was amazed at Steve's command of subjects from archaeology to salvation history to the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. He truly has a gift and is a gift to the Church.

Steve Ray is a sought Holy Land guide for good reason. The trip was fantastic all around and I heartily endorse Steve, Janet and their ministry and recommend investing in a pilgrimage to the Holy Land with the Ray's especially for those who have never been there before.

Sincerely in Christ Jesus,

Fr. Matt Russick, TOR