4TH INTERNATIONAL
Bible Conference

TOUR BOOK
ROME
JUNE 11–21, 2018
Welcome to Rome!

The church in Rome was an important part of the early church: Paul wrote his longest epistle to the church in Rome, and he died in Rome at the time of Nero—around AD 68. The city became an important center of Christianity after Emperor Constantine in AD 330 moved his capital from Rome to Byzantium (Istanbul). Today, the small city-state of the Vatican, in the heart of Rome, is the seat of the papacy and the religious center of the Roman Catholic Church.

Most of the places we will visit in Rome are important sites in church history. We will drive along the Via Appia on which Paul arrived in Rome, and visit the Marmertine Prison where, according to tradition, Paul was imprisoned. We will see the catacombs and the Colosseum where many Christians lost their lives by being thrown to the lions. The Roman Forum and the Arch of Titus will bring alive the Roman Empire’s long history.

In Vatican City you will stand on St. Peter’s square surrounded by the 246 columns of Bernini’s colonnades, four columns deep, symbolizing the “embrace of St. Peter to the world.” You will visit St. Peter’s Basilica, with impressive art such as Michelangelo’s Pietà and Bernini’s St. Peter’s Baldachin, and the Vatican Museum—a treasure trove of iconic art and architecture. The museum contains ancient Roman sculptures such as the famed Laocoön and His Sons as well as Renaissance frescoes and the Sistine Chapel, famous for Michelangelo’s ceiling.

Among other places of interest, we will visit the Basilica of San Giovanni, the Cathedral of Rome, the Lateran Place where in 1929 the Vatican State was created, and the Scala Sancta. May visiting these places help you gain a deeper understanding of the prophecies involving Rome.

Yours in His service,

Elias Brasil de Souza
Director, Biblical Research Institute
FACTS

CAPITAL:
Rome is the capital of the Republic of Italy

POPULATION:
approximately 2.8 million; Metropolitan Rome: 4.3 million.

LANGUAGE:
Italian, belonging to the Indo-European language family.

RELIGION:
Roman Catholic majority; Russian and Greek Orthodox, Protestant, Jewish, and Muslim minorities.

MONEY:
EUR 1.00 = approximately USD 1.23 (March 6, 2018)

CHRONOLOGY

ca. 1000 BC  Etruscans settle in central Italy.
753  Legendary founding of Rome by Romulus.
510  Last of the Etruscan kings—Tarquin the Proud—expelled from Rome; Republic founded, headed by two annually elected consuls. First Temple of Jupiter on the Capitol built.
312  Appius Claudius begins construction of the Via Appia and Aqua Appia, Rome’s first aqueduct.
260–41  First Punic War: Rome struggles with Carthage in North Africa for control of central Mediterranean; gains Sicily.
219–02  Second Punic War: Hannibal invades Italy and destroys the Roman army in 216; Scipio Africanus carries war back to Spain and to Carthage; in 206 Rome gains control of Spain; in 203 Hannibal defeated by Scipio.
168  Rome begins colonization of Greece and defeats Macedonia.
149–46  Third Punic War: Carthage is laid to waste for good.
146  Rome completes conquest of Greece.
71  Slaves revolt under Spartacus.
66–63  Pompey colonizes Syria and Palestine.
49  Gallic War: Julius Caesar defeats Gaul.
47–45  Civil War: Julius Caesar becomes ruler of Rome.
46  Julian calendar introduced.
44  Julius Caesar assassinated.
31  Octavian (later Augustus) defeats Antony and Cleopatra in the battle of Actium and becomes sole ruler of Rome.
27 BC Octavian becomes Emperor Augustus: Imperial Age begins.

AD 50 Population of Rome reaches one million; it is the largest city in the world.

64 Rome burns; Nero (54–68) begins rebuilding the city.

79 Emperor Titus (79–81) completes the Colosseum.

284–305 Rule of Diocletian; empire divided between West and East.

312–37 Rule of Constantine; reunites empire but transfers capital to Byzantium (later renamed Constantinople, today known as Istanbul).

313 Edict of Milan gives Christianity legal status; Constantine begins construction of St. Peter’s and San Giovanni in Laterano basilicas.

380 Under Theodosius Christianity is made the state religion.

410 Visigoths under Alaric invade Italy and take Rome.

452 Huns invade northern Italy.

476 Western Empire collapses.

488 Ostrogoths invade Italy; in 493 Theodoric is proclaimed ruler of the Gothic Kingdom of Italy.

553 Italy incorporated into the Eastern Roman or Byzantine Empire.

800 Charlemagne crowned Holy Roman Emperor in Rome.

1054 The Great Schism between the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Christian Churches

1073 Gregory VII elected pope; his rule sees the start of the struggle for supremacy between the papacy and the Germanic Holy Roman Empire. Rome sinks into stagnation and ruin for five centuries.

1309 Papacy moves to Avignon in southern France.

1377 Pope returns to Rome; Gregory XI makes the Vatican the papal residence.

1503–13 Reign of Pope Julius II; begins rebuilding St. Peter’s Basilica and commissions Raphael to decorate his stanza (apartments) and Michelangelo to paint the Sistine Chapel.

1626 St. Peter’s Basilica completed.

1656–67 St. Peter’s Square built.

1797 Napoléon captures Rome. Pope Pius VI is taken prisoner.

1870 Italian nationalists storm Rome and make it the capital of a united Italy; in protest, pope withdraws into voluntary confinement in the Vatican.

1929 The Vatican state is created. Lateran Treaty establishes formal relations between the pope and the state of Italy.


1978 Pope John Paul II, the first Polish pope, elected.

1981 Attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II.

2005 Benedict XVI is elected pope in April 2005.

2013 Francis I elected pope in March 2013.
According to legend, Rome was founded in the eighth century BC by the Latin Romulus, the first of a succession of seven legendary kings. From the second century BC to the fifth century AD the Roman Empire ruled the world. Following the collapse of the Roman Empire, it was first ruled by various Germanic tribes (Ostrogoths, Lombards, Franks) and then by the popes who during the eighth century established the Papal State in Italy with Rome as its capital. The Frankish kings, as patricius Romanorum (“father of Rome”), protected Rome and the pope against all enemies. Rome remained the center of the Papal State until 1870 when Italian troops under King Victor Emmanuel II entered Rome and made it the capital of Italy.

Wednesday, June 13

THE COLOSSEUM

The most spectacular extant edifice of ancient Rome, this sports arena was designed to hold more than fifty thousand spectators for gory entertainments such as combat between wild beasts and gladiators. Here, before the imperial box, gladiators would salute the emperor and cry, Ave, imperator, morituri te salutant (“Hail, emperor, men soon to die salute thee”).

The arena has a circumference of 573 yards (524 meters) and was faced with stone from nearby Tivoli. Its construction was a remarkable feat of engineering, for it stands on marshy terrain reclaimed by draining an artificial lake on the grounds of Nero’s Domus Aurea (Golden House), done to make amends to the Roman people for Nero’s earlier confiscation of the land. Originally known as the Flavian amphitheater, it came to be called the Colosseum by later Romans who identified it with the site of the Colossus of Nero, a 115-foot-tall (35 meters) gilded bronze statue of the emperor in the guise of the sun god.

Designed by order of the Flavian emperor Vespasian in AD 72, the Colosseum was inaugurated by Titus eight years later with a program of games and shows lasting one hundred days. On the opening day alone, five thousand wild beasts perished. Among the stadium’s many wonders was a velarium, an ingenious system of sail-like awnings rigged on ropes and maneuvered by sailors from the imperial fleet, who would unfurl them to protect the arena’s occupants from sun or rain.

THE ROMAN FORUM

This was once the heart of Republican Rome, the austere enclave that preceded the hedonistic society that grew up under the emperors in the first to fourth centuries AD, but was soon transformed by the pleasure-crazed citizens of imperial Rome. It developed over many centuries; what can be seen today are not the ruins from just one period but from a span of almost nine hundred years, from about 500 BC to AD 400. The most important remains of the Forum are:

The Arch of Titus

This triumphal arch was erected in AD 81 to celebrate the sack of Jerusalem ten years earlier, after the great Jewish revolt. The view of the Colosseum from the arch is superb and reminds one that it was emperor Titus who helped finish the vast amphitheater, begun earlier by his father Vespasian. Under the arch are two great sculpted reliefs, both showing scenes from Titus’s triumphal parade along this very Via Sacra, including the spoils of war plundered from Herod’s Temple—a gigantic seven-branched candelabrum...
Basilica of Maxentius
Today, the greatly arched vaults of this structure still dominate the north side of the Via Sacra. Begun under emperor Maxentius in AD 306, the edifice was a center of judicial and commercial activity, the last of its kind to be built in Rome. Over the centuries, like so many Roman monuments it was exploited as a quarry for building materials and stripped of its sumptuous marble and stucco decorations. The term “basilica” does not strictly refer to a church, but to a particular architectural form developed by the Romans. A rectangular hall flanked by colonnades, it could serve as a court of law or a center for business and commerce. Some Roman basilicas were later converted into churches, and the early models proved remarkably durable in the design of later Roman churches.

The Curia (Council)
The best-preserved building of the Forum, this large brick building next to the Arch of Septimius Severus was built during the era of Diocletian in the late third century AD. By that time the Senate, which met here, had lost practically all of the power and prestige it had possessed during the Republican era, becoming a mere echo chamber for the decisions reached in other centers of power.

The Temple of Antoninus and Faustina
Erected by the Senate in honor of Faustina, deified wife of Emperor Antoninus Pius (AD 138–161), Hadrian’s successor, this temple was rededicated to the emperor himself upon his death. Because the church of San Lorenzo in Miranda was built inside in the early Middle Ages, it’s one of the best-preserved ancient structures in the Forum.

The Temple of the Vestal Virgins
The three magnificent extant columns of this circular temple loom over the center of the Forum. This is where the highly privileged vestal virgins kept alive the sacred flame of Vesta, the goddess of the household hearth. Next to the temple, the ruins of the House of the Vestals give no hint of the splendor in which the women lived out their thirty-year vows of chastity.

The Arch of Septimius Severus
One of the grandest triumphal arches erected by a Roman emperor, this richly decorated monument was built in AD 203 to celebrate Severus’s victory over the Parthians. It was once topped by a bronze statuary group of a chariot drawn by four or perhaps as many as six life-size horses. Masterpieces of Roman statuary, the stone reliefs on the arch were probably based on huge painted panels depicting the event, a kind of visual report on his foreign campaigns that would have been displayed during the emperor’s triumphal parade in Rome to impress his subjects.

MAMERTINE PRISON
Under the Church of San Guiseppe dei Falegnами is a prison dating back to the first century AD. Peter and Paul were most likely imprisoned in such a prison, but there is no direct evidence that it was this particular prison. The inscription above the metal column to which the prisoners were chained says: “This is the column to which the holy apostles Peter and Paul were bound. They converted the holy martyrs Processo and Martiniano, prison guards, and forty-seven other people to the Christian faith. These were
baptized here with water which appeared miraculously." The hole in the middle of the room was the only entrance to the lower prison.

Friday, June 15

THE CATACOMBS

Even before Christianity reached Rome, those citizens who couldn’t afford a fine funeral monument along one of the consular roads were either cremated or buried in a necropolis outside the city gates. An imperial law prohibited burial within the city—except for deified emperors. During the first and second centuries AD, Rome’s Christians were buried together with their pagan brothers in these common burial grounds. Because of Rome’s booming population, burials—including Christian ones—soon required more space. Christians then began to build cemeteries of their own, in which they performed their religious rites. With the approval of the city fathers, they dug their cemeteries in the hilly slopes that lined the consular roads, usually on private land that the owner—often a Christian himself—granted for this purpose. As the need for space became more pressing, the cemeteries were extended in a series of galleries, often on two or more levels.

The general belief that the catacombs served as secret hiding places for the Christians during the persecutions is not correct. The catacombs were well known to the Romans. Between persecutions, the bodies of martyrs who had fallen under the sword or met death by fire, water, or wild beasts were interred in the catacombs. Their remains were given a place of honor, and their presence conferred great prestige on the underground cemetery in which they lay, attracting a stream of devout pilgrims. The great variety of tombs ranges from a simple rectangular niche in the wall that was closed by bricks or marble slabs, to a sarcophagus carved out of the wall and surmounted by a niche, to a freestanding sarcophagus in terra-cotta, marble, or lead. Each tomb was distinguished by a particular mark or sign so the deceased’s relatives could recognize it among the rows of niches. Sometimes this was an object, such as a coin or oil lamp; sometimes it was an inscription. The wealthier families called in painters to decorate their tombs with frescoes and ordered sculptured sarcophagi from artisans’ workshops.

In the Dark Ages, the popes decreed that the remains of the martyrs be removed from the catacombs and laid to rest in the relative security of Rome’s churches. With the loss of these holy relics and the appearance of the first cemeteries within the city walls, the catacombs fell into disuse and were abandoned and forgotten, with the sole exception of the Catacombs di San Sebastiano. More recently, nineteenth-century archaeologists and twentieth- and twenty-first-century tourists have renewed interest in the catacombs.

VIA APPIA—THE APPIAN WAY

Via Appia was the most important Roman road in Italy, leading from Rome to the south and southeastern regions of the country. It was built in 312 BC and in time was extended as far as Brundisium (Brindisi) on the eastern coast of Italy. Along the section of the road leading south were several stations, two of which are mentioned in connection with the arrival of St Paul in Rome—the Appii Forum and the Three Taverns. To these places, not yet clearly identified, the Christian brethren came from Rome to meet Paul (Acts 28:15).

OSTIA ANTICA

This is a large archaeological site, close to the modern suburb of Ostia, which is approximately nineteen miles (thirty kilometers) from Rome. “Ostia” (plural of “ostium”) is a derivation of os, the Latin word for “mouth”. At the mouth of the River Tiber, Ostia was Rome’s seaport, but due to silting the site now lies two miles (three kilometers) from the sea. The site is noted for the excellent preservation of its ancient buildings, magnificent frescoes, and impressive mosaics. The main road, the Decumanus Maxi-
mus, crosses the city from end to end. The Forum holds the monumental remains of the city’s most important temple, dedicated to the “Capitoline Triad”: Jupiter, the king of the gods; Juno his wife and sister; and Jupiter’s daughter Minerva, the goddess of wisdom.

Monday, June 18

THE VATICAN

As the Roman Empire declined, the bishop of Rome gained prestige. The seat of the popes was established over the supposed tomb of St. Peter, thereby making the Vatican the spiritual core of the Roman Catholic Church. Vatican City covers 108 acres (0.4 square kilometers) on a hill west of the Tiber and is separated from the city of Rome on all sides, except at Piazza di San Pietro, by high walls. Within the walls, about one thousand people are permanent residents. The Vatican has its own daily newspaper (L’Osservatore Romano), issues its own stamps, mints its own coins, and has its own postal system. Within its territory are administrative and foreign offices, a pharmacy, banks, an astronomical observatory, a print shop, a mosaic school and art restoration institute, a tiny train station, a supermarket, a small department store, and several gas stations. Radio Vaticana broadcasts in thirty-five languages to six different continents.

The sovereign of this city-state is Pope Francis (elected March 2013). He has full legislative, judicial, and executive powers, with complete freedom under the Lateran Treaty to organize armed forces within the state (the Swiss Guards and the Vatican police) and to live in or move through Italian territory whenever he so desires.

St. Peter’s Square

The Piazza di San Pietro is not only the grand entrance to Vatican territory but is one of the world’s most spectacular urban showpieces, created in 1667 by Italy’s greatest Baroque artist, Gian Lorenzo Bernini. Capable of holding four hundred thousand people, the square is framed by a magnificent curving pair of quadruple colonnades, which are topped by a balustrade and statues of 140 saints. These gigantic enfoldng “arms” welcome visitors to enter the great church, whose facade and dome—another Michelangelo masterstroke—remain one of Rome’s most impressive sights.

St. Peter’s Basilica

The largest church in the world, built over the tomb of St. Peter, is also the most imposing and breathtaking architectural achievement of the Renaissance (although much of the lavish interior dates to the Baroque). The physical statistics are impressive: it covers 18,000 square yards (15,050 square meters), runs 212 yards (194 meters) in length, and carries a dome that rises 435 feet (132 meters) and measures 138 feet (42 meters) across its base.

The history of the original St. Peter’s goes back to AD 349 when emperor Constantine completed a basilica over the supposed site of the tomb of the apostle Peter. The original church stood for more than one thousand years, undergoing a number of restorations and alterations until it was in danger of collapse toward the middle of the fifteenth century. In 1452 a reconstruction job began but was quickly abandoned for lack of money. In 1503 Pope Julius II instructed the architect Bramante to raze all the existing buildings and to build a new basilica, one that would surpass even Constantine’s for grandeur. It wasn’t until 1626 that the basilica was completed and consecrated.

The vault of the vestibule is encrusted with rich stuccowork, and the mosaic above the central entrance to the portico is a much-restored work by the 14th-century painter Giotto that was in the original basilica. The bronze doors of the main entrance also were salvaged from the old basilica. The sculptor Filarete worked on them for 12 twelve years; they show scenes from the martyrdom of St. Peter and St. Paul, and the life of Pope Eugene IV (1431–47), Filarete’s patron.
To the right of the main entrance are the Door of the Sacraments and the Holy Door, opened only during Holy Years.

A number of papal funeral monuments are found on either side of the apse, and in the central crossing of the basilica stands Bernini’s great bronze baldachin—a huge, spiral-columned canopy—over the papal altar. At the far end of the apse behind the baldachin is the Throne of St. Peter (Gloria Della Cattedra), one of Bernini’s most sumptuous inventions, built around the old wooden chair that pious tradition says was used by the apostle Peter.

**Sistine Chapel**
In 1508, Pope Julius II commissioned Michelangelo to fresco more than ten thousand square feet of the Sistine Chapel’s ceiling. (“Sistine” comes from “Sixtus.” Pope Sixtus IV commissioned the chapel itself.) The task took four years, and it is said that for many years afterward, Michelangelo couldn’t read anything without holding it up over his head. The result, however, was a masterpiece.

The lower walls had been decorated by a group of artists including Botticelli, Ghirlandaio, Perugino, Signorelli, and Pinturicchio. They had painted scenes from the life of Moses on one wall and episodes from the life of Christ on the other. Julius II, dissatisfied with the stars painted on the ceiling, decided to call in Michelangelo.

His subject was the story of humanity before the coming of Christ. It is told through scenes depicted in nine central panels. These show, starting from the altar: the *Separation of Light from Darkness*, the *Creation of the Heavenly Bodies*, the *Separation of Land and Sea*, the *Creation of Adam*, the *Creation of Eve*, the *Fall of Man and the Expulsion from Paradise*, the *Sacrifice of Noah*, the *Flood*, and the *Drunkenness of Noah*. The scenes appear in an architectural framework, further embellished with figures such as Old Testament prophets. In the spaces between the windows, Michelangelo painted the ancestors of Christ.

More than twenty years later, Michelangelo was called on again, this time by the Farnese Pope Paul III, to add to the chapel’s decoration by painting the *Last Judgment* on the wall over the altar. The painting stirred up controversy even before it was unveiled in 1541, shocking many Vatican officials, especially one Biagio di Cesena, who criticized its “indecent” nudes. Michelangelo retaliated by painting Biagio’s face on the figure with donkey’s ears in Hades, in the lower right-hand corner of the work. Biagio pleaded with Pope Paul to have Michelangelo erase his portrait, but the pontiff replied that he could intercede for those in purgatory but had no power over hell. Michelangelo painted his own face on the wrinkled human skin in the hand of St. Bartholomew.

**Vatican Museums**
The museums are part of the Vatican Palace, the residence of the popes since 1377. The palace consists of a number of individual buildings containing an estimated 1,400 rooms, chapels, and galleries. The pope and his household occupy only a small part of the palace, most of the rest of which is given over to the Vatican Library and Museums.

Among the collections are almost one thousand copies of classical sculpture, one of the best known of which is the *Laocoön* group, found on Rome’s Esquiline Hill in 1506, held to be possibly the single most important antique sculpture group in terms of its influence on Renaissance artists. The Hall of the Muses, the Etruscan Museum, the Candelabra Gallery, and the Tapestry Gallery are just a few of the many exhibits in these museums.

The long Gallery of Maps is frescoed with forty maps of Italy and the papal territories, commissioned by Pope Gregory XIII in 1580. On each map is a detailed plan of the region’s principal city. The magnificent ceiling is decorated with episodes from the history of the regions. A massive display case in the Hall of the Immaculate Conception shows precisely bound volumes containing the text of the papal bull promulgating that particular dogma.
Rivaling the Sistine Chapel for artistic interest are the Raphael Rooms, directly over the Borgia apartments. Pope Julius II moved into this suite of rooms in 1507, four years after his election. Reluctant to continue living in the Borgia apartments with their memories of his ill-famed predecessor, Alexander VI, he called in Raphael to decorate his new quarters.

**Scala Sancta**

The staircase leading to the Chapel of St. Laurence (San Lorenzo) is called Scala Sancta. It is believed to be part of Pilate’s Praetorium, and therefore would have been those that Christ descended after he was condemned to death by Pontius Pilate. Martin Luther was appalled to see people crawling up these stairs on their knees to receive a plenary indulgence. The steps are said to have been transferred from Jerusalem by Helena, mother of Emperor Constantine, in the fourth century and are now in the old Lateran Palace. The Chapel of St. Laurence contains a depiction of Jesus believed to have been painted by a supernatural hand.

**THE PIAZZA SAN GIOVANNI IN LATERANO**

At the center of this square stands Rome’s oldest and tallest obelisk, which originally stood in front of the Temple of Ammon in Thebes, Egypt, in the fifteenth century BC. It was brought to Rome by Constantine in AD 357 to stand in the Circus Maximus and finally was set up in this piazza in 1588. On the left is the Lateran Palace; on the right the Basilica of San Giovanni in Laterano.

**ST. JOHN’S BAPTISTERY**

A little apart from the Basilica, in the right-hand corner of the great Piazza San Giovanni, stands an ancient octagonal building, plain but elegant in design. This is the Baptistery, which was built in the fifth century during the pontificate of Six-
tus III, on the site of an earlier one built by Emperor Constantine. On the interior walls, five frescos represent scenes from Constantine’s life, including the apparition of the Holy Cross with the promise in hoc signo vinces (“in this sign you will conquer”), which tradition tells us occurred while the Emperor was encamped with his army in the area of Saxa Rubra on the eve of the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, in which Constantine defeated Maxentius. In the middle of the Baptistery is the circular pool in which Christian catechumens were baptized by immersion, surrounded by eight porphyry pillars with Ionic and Corinthian capitals. These pillars support an architrave inscribed with some Latin verses attributed to Pope Sixtus III (432–440); they contain the words, “This is the spring of life that waters the whole world, taking its origin from the Wounds of Christ. Sinners, to be purified, go down into the holy water. It receives the unregenerate and brings him forth a new man.”

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