

PASSIONIST
EARTH & SPIRIT CENTER

1924 Newburg Road • Louisville, KY 40205 • 502.452.2749 • www.earthandspiritcenter.org



A Pilgrimage to India

January 14-31, 2012



“INDIA ... the sole country under the sun that is endowed with imperishable interest for alien prince and alien peasant, for lettered and ignorant, wise and fool, rich and poor, bond and free, the one land all desire to see, and having seen once, by even a glimpse, would not give that glimpse for the shows of all the rest of the globe combined.” — Mark Twain, 1887

For thousands of years India has been a powerful spiritual vortex, a magnet that has attracted some of the most influential minds that have shaped human consciousness. India's spiritual depth and power had a profound influence on spiritual luminaries such as Ramana Maharshi, Sri Aurobindo, Swami Vivekananda, Fr. Bede Griffiths, Swami Abhishiktananda, Fr. Anthony DeMello and many others who helped bridge the eastern and western spiritual traditions. You too can enhance your vision of life by going on a pilgrimage to south India. It is an opportunity to make your world bigger!



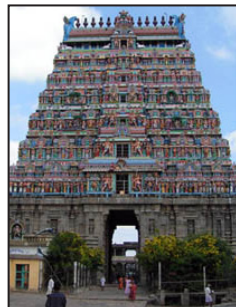
A Pilgrimage

- A pilgrimage is significantly different from a tour. Our focus is not primarily on tourist attractions, but on experiencing the spiritual vitality of India from within. We will live in an urban Hindu ashram and a rural Christian ashram, meet resident spiritual teachers, explore exotic temples, connect with Passionist ministries in remote villages, visit local families, and dine on regional foods.
- This trip is an opportunity to experience and participate in the rich and diverse cultures and traditions of India. It is for people who want to get off the beaten track and breathe the spiritual air of an amazing and unique country.
- Accommodations will be simple, clean, and safe. This is not for those envisioning 4-star hotels.
- Most travel within India will be in vans with Indian Passionists serving as local guides. There will be two over-night train rides.
- Registration is limited to 15 people.



Guides

- The pilgrimage will be led by Fr. Joe Mitchell and Fr. Nelson Alphonse (a native of Tamil Nadu, India), along with support from the Passionist communities of south India.



Total Cost: \$1250

- Cost includes accommodations, services of local guides, stipend for teachers, ground transportation within India, porter fees, tips, entry tickets, and almost all meals.
- Cost does not include some meals other than those specified as per itinerary, camera fee, any optional services, or expenses of personal nature such as laundry, telephones, etc.
- Cost does not include international flight tickets.
- \$50 deposit is required to submit a registration request.
- Payment schedule: 50% payment (\$600) is due by August 15, 2011; the remaining balance payment (\$600) is due by October 1, 2011. This is required in order to make advance purchase of travel tickets within India. Make checks payable to Passionist Earth & Spirit Center.

International Travel

- Each participant will arrange and pay separately for their international air travel. Currently (as of April 2011), roundtrip tickets from Louisville to Bangalore cost in the \$1300-\$1400 range.
- A tourist visa is required for entering India. A six-month multiple-entry visa costs \$73.00.
- Some immunization vaccinations are suggested. Consult your local travel clinic for advice.

Cancellation Charge

- Before October 31, 2011 – 80% of full payment is refundable.
- After November 1, 2011 – 50% of full payment is refundable.
- After December 1, 2011 – No refund possible unless your place can be filled by person on the waitlist.





2011 Pilgrims with Temple Priests after Evening Puga in Thiruvannamalai

ITINERARY*

- **Jan 14 – Day 1 – Depart Louisville**
- **Jan 15 – Day 2 – En route**
- **Jan 16 – Day 3 – Arrive Bangalore**
Upon arriving at Bangalore's modern international airport, you will be met by members of the Passionist community and then enjoy a day to get acclimated to India and recuperate from your travels in the comfort of the Passionist Retreat Center.
- **Jan 17 – Day 4 – Visit Bangalore and Joythir Bhavan**
Bangalore is known as the Garden City because of its many beautiful parks and the Silicon Valley of India because of the high concentration of IT industry in the city. We will tour parts of the city and visit the theology residence Joythir Bhavan for an evening lecture on Indian-Christian spirituality.
- **Jan 18 – Day 5 – Fireflies Ashram or Optional Visit to Mysore**
You will have an opportunity to explore the rich heritage of Mysore, the city of palaces and the cultural center of south India. It was once the capital of the Wodeyar rulers, who were great patrons of art and culture. Or you can visit Fireflies, a secular ashram in Bangalore, with a lecture by Siddhartha.
- **Jan 19 – Day 6 – Random, Tamil Nadu**
Our journey south begins, driving to Random, a tiny remote village, where you will have an experience of rural life in India. We will walk through the village with Fr. Nelson (who was once pastor there), visit the school children and meet local families.
- **Jan 20 – Day 7 – Drive to Thiruvannamalai and Sri Ramana Ashram**
Thiruvannamalai is one of the ancient spiritual centers of South India. Over the last thousands of years, a multitude of pilgrims have come seeking enlightenment. Many yogis and siddhars continue to live in the caves and huts around the sacred mountain, Arunachala.
- **Jan 21 – Day 8 – Sri Ramana Maharishi Ashram**
We will spend three nights at the bustling ashram of Sri Ramana Maharshi, one of the great spiritual gurus of the 20th century who died in 1950. Though his physical presence no longer graces the ashram, his spiritual presence is as alive as ever. We will abide by the schedule of this traditional ashram steeped in the tradition of Advaita Vedanta. There will be an opportunity to meditate inside Sri Ramana cave, where he spent six years in meditation.



* *Unanticipated itinerary changes may be necessary due to local circumstances.*

..... REGISTRATION

Yes, I would like to submit a registration request for the Pilgrimage to India – January 14-31, 2012

Name _____ Phone (HOME) _____

Address _____ Phone (WORK) _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email _____ DEPOSIT amount of \$50 enclosed

Enclose \$50 deposit to submit a registration. Make checks payable to "Passionist Earth & Spirit Center."

Notification of acceptance of registration will be sent.

MAIL TO: Passionist Earth & Spirit Center • 1924 Newburg Road • Louisville, KY 40205 • 502.452.2749

- **Jan 22 – Day 9 – Sri Ramana Maharishi Ashram**
This second day at the venerable ashram will allow you to continue your spiritual practice as well as visit the great Annamalaiyar Temple. This vast place of worship is one of the greatest Shiva Temples of India. It occupies a special place in the Saivite realm and is regarded as one of the Pancha Bhoota Sthalams, one of the five great temples of south India.
- **Jan 23 – Day 10 – Drive to Trichy and Shantivanam Ashram**
- **Jan 24 – Day 11 – Shantivanam Ashram**
Shantivanam is a rural ashram located on the bank of sacred river Kaveri. It was founded in 1950 by two Catholic priests, Jules Monchanin and Henry Le Saux (who assumed the name Swami Abishiktananda). In 1968, Fr. Bede Griffiths took over direction of the ashram until his death in 1993. The ashram continues to be a center of contemplative life and dialogue between Christianity and Hinduism. The ashram is unassuming; however, there is an unmistakable spiritual energy about the place.

- **Jan 25 – Day 12 – Shantivanam Ashram**
You will have an opportunity to go deeper into the experience of simple ashram life and receive instructions on Indian-Christian spiritual practices.
- **Jan 26 – Day 13 – Visit Trichy and onto Cochin via Train**
Tiruchirapalli, fondly called Trichy, is located on the banks of the Kaveri River and has an ancient history. We will visit the mammoth sized Rock Fort Temple (once the citadel of the Chola kings) and the massive seven-walled Ranganathaswamy Temple complex. Before boarding the overnight train to Cochin, we will enjoy a meal with Fr. Nelson's family.



- **Jan 27 – Day 14 – Explore Cochin**
Cochin is a vibrant city situated on the south-west coast of the Indian peninsula in the scenic state of Kerala, renowned for its Indian spices. While staying in a retreat center, we will visit the Passionist Ashram JXP, plus enjoy a tour of the city, including Church of St. Francis and the Dutch Palace.
- **Jan 28 – Day 15 – Tropical Backwaters of Kerala**
A short drive south to Alleppey, from where you will board a traditionally decorated houseboat for a delightful day of sailing through the scenic tropical backwaters of Kerala. Lunch will be on the boat.

- **Jan 29 – Day 16 – Palliport, Arabian Sea and onto Bangalore**
A short drive north of Cochin is Palliport, a lovely seaside fishing village on the Arabian Sea, where the Passionists have a parish. There will be an opportunity to enjoy time at the beach, with a possible excursion on a fishing boat into the Arabian Sea. You will be able to meet and visit local families and enjoy a traditional Indian dinner at their homes. In the evening we will board the overnight train, returning to Bangalore for the next-day departure.



- **Jan 30 – Day 17– Rest Day and Departure from Bangalore**
An early morning arrival in Bangalore will allow for a day of rest before an evening (or next day) departure from Bangalore International Airport.
- **Jan 31 – Day 18 – Arrive Louisville**