Dear Friends,

You are invited to join a special study tour of the Holy land, May 27 to June 9, 2023, sponsored by Catholic Theological Union. This will be a specially designed visit to Israel and Jordan where you will discover some of the most fascinating scenery and historical sites in the world, ones with profound meaning for our Christian heritage. I will be joined on the trip by my colleague, Colleen Kennedy, Vice President for Institutional Advancement at CTU, a veteran traveler to the Middle East and a superb administrator of our travel arrangements. We will do everything we can to make your trip enjoyable and memorable.

Some, I realize, may have concerns about how safe it is to travel in this region because of the perennial unrest in some areas. I want to assure you that travel conditions will be safe and enjoyable. Our itinerary does not take us to places, such as in Gaza or some parts of the West Bank, where tension exists. Every year we have had the privilege of leading groups to Israel and Jordan without encountering any problems at all. In a particular way, the Christians of this region are eager to have fellow Christians come to visit them. One of the highlights of our trip is always a visit with members of the Christian community in Bethlehem.

Israel and Jordan have both been vigilant about the threat of Covid 19. Currently both countries require proof of vaccination; we will be alert to any changes in such regulations as the time of our trip draws nearer. For the common good, we ourselves do require that all participants in the program be fully vaccinated (including a current booster).

This year we have a wonderful tour in mind. We will begin our journey in Israel, visiting all the major biblical sites including the flowered hills of Galilee, the majestic vistas of the desert, and the haunting beauty of Jerusalem. You will visit fascinating places most commercial tours never dream of. Our trip will also include a few days in Jordan, a land of extraordinary beauty and warm hospitality--exploring important sites such as Mount Nebo, Madaba, and, of course, Petra, one of the true wonders of the world. Our travel will be safe and peaceful in all the areas we visit. Our tour will be professional in every detail, and we will stay in first class accommodations. Particularly in Israel I will have the privilege of introducing you to the biblical sites and the other remarkable traces of history that are there, offering background on the biblical and archaeological significance of each place. In Jordan we are obliged to have a state guide, but I will have plenty of input there, too.

The cost for the entire trip will be similar to this past year, but with some increase due to the impact of inflation worldwide. The cost for the entire 2023 program will be $6,250 per
person. This includes all ground transportation in spacious new air-conditioned coaches, accommodations in five-star hotels (double occupancy; there is an additional fee of $2,000 for a single room), half-board (full breakfast and dinner), all entrance fees, gratuities, and other miscellaneous costs. Not included are trans-Atlantic airfare, lunches (there are plenty of clean and attractive snack bars and restaurants along our way), or of course any private expenses you incur on your own.

If you are interested in joining us for an unforgettable visit to the lands of the Bible, please let us know as soon as possible since in the past the trip tends to fill up rather quickly. If you have family or friends who might like to join us, please share this information with them. [We are also sending this letter to those who have gone previously in case they want to let family members or friends know about the trip.] We have included an application form for you to indicate your level of interest at this stage. Returning the form does not oblige you to anything at this point but gives us some idea of your level of interest and we will reserve a place on the program for you until you may decide otherwise.

Later we will be in touch with you to confirm your reservation and to give you further information about the itinerary, including suggestions for booking transatlantic flights and detailed information on how to prepare for the trip (including a reading list for those who are interested).

Prior to our departure, we will also offer an orientation session for those in the Chicago area. Details will be forthcoming. If you have any further questions, please don’t hesitate to call one of us: Donald Senior, phone: 773-575-4949 or email: donald@ctu.edu; Colleen Kennedy, phone: 773-371-5417; email: ckenney@ctu.edu.

I hope you will consider joining us. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,

Fr. Donald Senior, C.P.  
Chancellor & President Emeritus

Colleen Kennedy  
Vice President for Institutional Advancement

Enc. Itinerary
Response form