



# Catholic Thailand including visit by Pope Francis

7 days – November 18 to 24, 2019

Pope Francis will make an official trip to Thailand from 20 to 23 November 2019 ahead of an already announced visit to Japan. He will be the first pontiff in nearly four decades to go to either country. The late Pope John Paul visited Thailand in 1984. The trip is part of Francis' push to increase dialogue with other religions in order to promote world peace.

The stop in Thailand will coincide with the 350th anniversary of the founding of the "Mission de Siam" by Pope Clement IX to oversee missions in Siam, the former name of Thailand.

To allow pilgrims to see the Pope in Thailand and commemorate the work of the Catholic Church in Thailand, Guidepost Tours have arranged a group programme which includes attendance at the main events and Mass celebrated by Pope Francis as well as sightseeing to the Catholic shrines, cathedrals and other sites around Bangkok.



Day 01: 18 Nov

**BANGKOK SUVARNABHUMI - ARRIVAL**

Upon arrival, meet our guide and private transfer with guide from Bangkok Airport to hotel in Bangkok. Check in and free time at leisure.



**Meals: Nil**  
**Hotel: Hua Chang Heritage Hotel Bangkok (Deluxe)**

Day 02: 19 Nov (Tue)

BANGKOK - FREE DAY (B,L)

*Assumption Cathedral,*



*Bangkok*

FULL Day Tour – Catholic & Cultural Bangkok.  
Full Day Assumption Cathedral, Holy Rosary Church, Grand Palace, Santa Cruz Church & Wat Arun incl. lunch (Private)

Today we will visit the Santa Cruz Church, one of the many old Catholic churches in Bangkok. It was built in 1770 during the reign of King Taksin (1868 – 1782). This Church of the Holy Cross is a legacy of Portuguese-Siamese relations that date back to the 16th century. The crimson dome of Santa Cruz Church towers beside the Chao Phraya River as a reminder of the Portuguese who were the first Westerners to befriend Siam. The nearby Baan Kudi Chin Museum and a clutch of Portuguese-influenced bakeries join in to offer a charming and educational excursion in old Thonburi.

We will also visit Assumption Cathedral, the principal Roman Catholic church of Thailand and the main church of the Archdiocese of Bangkok, located within the grounds of Assumption College in the Bang Rak District. The Cathedral is the lingering legacy of French missionaries who first arrived in Thailand in the mid-1600s. Following the moving of the Siamese capital to Bangkok from Ayutthaya in the late 1700s, a French architect designed the original Assumption Cathedral at the request of missionary leader, Brother Pascal, in 1809. Most of the funding was provided by the Catholic Teochew-Chinese businessman and philanthropist, Low Khiok Chiang, or Brother Jacobe.

The initial structure was replaced in the early 1900s by Italian architects during a period when Italians added their artistic touch to a host of buildings and memorials in Bangkok. Assumption Cathedral sustained damage from allied bombing during World War II, after which it was restored to what you see today. Aesthetically, the cathedral's Romanesque twin towers and rectangular structure stray drastically from the styles of Bangkok's other notable Catholic churches.

Later we visit The Portuguese built Holy Rosary Church, an old Bangkok church, built in 1786 with a land grant from King Rama I, four years after Bangkok was established as the capital. Like the Santa Cruz Church, it is beside the Chao Phraya River, this time on the Bangkok bank. It was the Portuguese descendants of the early traders in Ayutthaya who founded this church.

Originally based in Santa Cruz Church in Kudi Jeen Thonburi, the Portuguese felt the need for a separate church after the entry of the French clergy. The result of this rift was the start of Holy Rosary Church in Samphanthawong, just south of Yaowarat, Chinatown. The Thai name for this Catholic church was originally Kalawario, a Thai transliteration of Calvary, the mount on which Jesus Christ was crucified. The name was later changed to Kalawar.



Other sightseeing today will include the magnificent Grand Palace, another sprawling temple complex boasting some of the finest Thai-Buddhist architecture in the entire country. Explore the vast grounds and numerous dazzling buildings, including the highly revered Wat Phra Kaew, home to the prized Emerald Buddha statue dating back to the 14th Century.

Across the Chaophaya River we visit iconic Wat Arun - take time to explore the iconic temple towering 79 metres over the Chao Phraya River.

Please note: Clients should wear long pants, shoes that cover the heel, and shirts that cover the upper arm (no vests). This is to show respect to the Thai people. Sightseeing may be in a different order.

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**Meals: Breakfast / Lunch**

**Hotel: Hua Chang Heritage Hotel Bangkok (Deluxe)**

Day 03: 20 Nov (Wed)

**BANGKOK – PAPAL PROGRAMME (B)**

Arrival of Pope Francis in Bangkok –

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**Meals: Breakfast at the hotel.**

**Hotel: Hua Chang Heritage Hotel Bangkok (Deluxe)**

Day 04: 21 Nov (Thurs)

**BANGKOK – DAY TOUR AYUTTHAYA (B,L,D)**



FULL Day Tour – Bangkok/Ayutthaya tour & cruise including St Joseph's Historic church. *This day can be moved depending on the papal agenda.*

Journey from Bangkok to the country's former capital of Ayutthaya by coach. This is your chance to escape the hustle and bustle of Bangkok. Stop off at the majestic 'Bang-Pa-In' - a gorgeous palace formerly frequented by King Rama IV during the steamy summer months. The waterside complex takes inspiration from Thai, Chinese and gothic design; here, see the intricately carved camel bone dragon, or snap some photos next to the bright red watch tower overlooking the lake. Continue to Wat Niwet Thamprawat, considered the one and only European architectural style temple in Thailand. The intriguing characteristic of this monastery is that it was decorated in Western style. The ordination hall (ubosot) resembles a Christian cathedral with steeply sloped Gothic roofs.

Visit St. Joseph's Church which lies on the opposite bank of the Chaophraya River from the island-city. The Catholic church was founded





*St Joseph's Church, Ayutthaya*

in the mid-seventeenth century by French missionaries, on land granted by King Narai. The original church was destroyed during the Burmese attack of Ayutthaya in the eighteenth century. A restoration by the Catholic fathers was completed in the mid nineteenth century.

In 1831 Father Jean-Baptist Pallegoix began the restoration of the church, which was completed in 1847. More additions in the Romanesque style were made during the tenure of Father René-Marie-Joseph Perros during the reign of King Rama V.

The church has been a place of continuous Catholic worship in Thailand for over 300 years. Hundreds of Christians and many of the missionary priests serving them, were buried at the local churchyard.

Afterwards, dine on-board your cruise boat while making your way back to Bangkok by river. Along the way, enjoy dinner as the riverbank scenery slowly transitions from emerald rice paddy fields to traditional Thai architecture and finally an urban skyline.

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**Meals: Breakfast**

**Hotel: Hua Chang Heritage Hotel Bangkok (Deluxe)**

Day 05: 22 Nov (Fri)

**BANGKOK - FREE DAY (B)**

Papal events as per schedule



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**Meals: Breakfast at the hotel**

**Hotel: Hua Chang Heritage Hotel Bangkok (Deluxe)**



Day 06: 23 Nov (Sat)

**BANGKOK - FREE DAY (B)**

Day at Leisure – shopping etc

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**Meals: Breakfast at the hotel**

**Hotel: Hua Chang Heritage Hotel Bangkok (Deluxe)**

Day 07: 24 Nov (Sun)

**BANGKOK - DEPARTURE (B,)**

Day at Leisure prior to departure – usually evening flights

Attend Mass at one of the Catholic churches or Assumption Cathedral in the morning or afternoon depending on individual departure times. (Own arrangements)

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**Meals: Breakfast at the hotel**

**Hotel: Hua Chang Heritage Hotel Bangkok (Deluxe)**



**Price: AUD \$1395 per person twin share including airport transfers, accommodation, meals as per itinerary, sightseeing Bangkok and Ayutthaya  
Pre and post travel options and flights available.**