

# **Pre-trip Preparation TURKEY**

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## **Topics Covered:**

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## **1. PAYMENTS, CANCELLATION & INSURANCE**

### **Payments:**

Payment Schedule:

Payment 1: \$1500.00 non-refundable down payment due January 10, 2016

Payment 2: \$1000.00 due February 10, 2016

Payment 3: \$1000.00 due March 10, 2016

Payment can be made in one of two ways: one payment for the full amount of \$3500 due on January 22, 2016, or in three installments of \$1500 non-refundable (due January 22, 2016), \$1000 (due February 19, 2016), and the final payment of \$1000 (due March 18, 2016). Failure to complete payment by March 18, 2016 may result in forfeiture of the total cost that has been paid unless special arrangements have been made prior to payment. Students will receive a refund of the balance left that has been paid after \$1500 has been deducted from the total should they have an emergency cancellations (\$1500 is the non-refundable deposit made for payment of plane tickets and accommodations in country). Emergency cancellations will be handled on a case-by-case basis but will only be considered if the student has experienced a severe issue such as a health problem that prevents them from participating in the trip or death of a close relative. No refunds for students who change their minds or decide not to go on the trip for any other reason. All payments are to be made by check, which should be made out to FRANCISCAN MISSIONARY UNION and mailed in care of Br. Paul O'Keeffe at his address provided at the last page of this document.

### **Cancellation**

Br. Paul O'Keeffe must receive cancellation notices in writing as soon as possible. Your \$1500 deposit is non-refundable.

In the event that a Travel Warning is issued by the US State Department regarding travel to Turkey, we will do our best to either change our itinerary in Turkey to avoid the conflict areas or if need be to cancel the trip. Participants will be refunded any recoverable expenses.

All participants are encouraged to purchase trip cancellation or interruption insurance in the event of a personal or family illness or other unforeseen events. This insurance may not be provided by your schools and is not part of the fee charged for this trip.

## **Trip Insurance**

We recommend you purchase trip cancellation insurance to protect yourself against emergencies that might prevent you from traveling. Some examples of unforeseen disruptions that could require you to cancel your trip are: you or a family member becomes sick or dies; bad weather or natural disasters that results in closed airports, roads, or hotels; calls to serve on jury duty; terrorist attacks/civil unrest in-country or at home; health epidemics (such as H1N1 virus, more commonly known as the swine flu).

Most travel insurance companies have specific policies in relation to the H1N1 virus. Please check with your provider on their policies for H1N1 coverage. Some companies may offer "Cancel for Any Reason" clauses at an additional cost that will allow you to cancel for any reason. When purchasing these products, we recommend you call the company to discuss any exclusion.

NOTE: For many types of cancellation insurance, you must purchase the insurance within 14 days of your first payment towards any trip related costs (i.e.: deposit on program, airline ticket, final payment, etc.)

## **Cancellation Insurance We Recommend**

You are free to use any insurance company. Make sure the company you work with offers cancellation and trip interruption coverage as a part of the package. Check with your college or university to see if they have coverage for student travel.

## **Medical Insurance**

This insurance is not part of the fees paid for this trip. It provides primary coverage for international emergencies and accidents. If purchased, you do not need any other type of health insurance for the program. There are various types of plans that cover Accidental Death and Disability, Repatriation of Remains, Emergency Medical Evacuation and Emergency Travel Assistance. However, most medical insurance policies do not cover trip cancellation/interruption.

Please consult your current health insurance plan to see if you are covered or for recommendations for medical insurance while traveling abroad. You should also consult with your school to see if they provide any kind of medical coverage for students traveling on school sponsored international trips.

NOTE: For many types of medical insurance you must purchase the insurance within 14 days of your first payment towards any trip related costs (i.e.: deposit on program, airline ticket, final payment, etc.)

## **2. PASSPORT, VISA AND ENTRY REQUIREMENTS**

The information below addresses passport requirements for U.S. and Canadian citizens. Citizens of other countries living in the U.S. should contact Br. Paul O'Keeffe for further information.

Turkish tourist visas are generally valid for 6 months; therefore U.S. citizens should have a passport that is valid for **eight months** beyond entry date. While the average processing time for a standard passport application is six weeks, it can possibly take much longer. Passports should have enough blank space to allow for Turkish entry and exit stamps. If your trip is taking place within six weeks and you have to renew your passport, we recommend using Expedited Service. Consult the U.S. Department of State's Web page for fees and procedures: [http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html)

Once you receive your new or renewed passport, sign it on the designated page opposite your picture to validate it. Please send us a photocopy of this page after signing it. Make sure you also have a photocopy for yourself to keep with you during the trip separately from where you keep your passport. It is also a good idea to leave a photocopy with a family member or friend at home.

Keep any documents inserted into your passport or given to you by immigration officials upon arriving in Turkey. You will need to present them upon departure. Please provide two copies of your passport to your chaperone and Br. Paul BEFORE DEPARTURE.

### **Visa & Entry Requirements**

The information above addresses entry requirements for U.S. citizens residing in the United States. U.S. citizens living outside the U.S. should contact Br. Paul O’Keeffe for further information. If you are a citizen of a country other than the U.S., check with your country’s consulate for visa and entry requirements. Br. Paul O’Keeffe will assist you in reviewing information, but the responsibility for obtaining and paying for proper documentation is yours.

Fortunately, Turkey provides e-Visas. All travelers need visas to visit Turkey. You can obtain your e-Visas online at <https://www.evisa.gov.tr/en/> for \$20, payable only by MasterCard/Visa/UnionPay credit or debit. Please note that sticker visas is no longer be available on arrival at airports and at the ports of entry.

### **3. AIR TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS & TIME ZONE**

Your air travel is included in the cost of the program and will be arranged out of the city closed to your school. We will use the most convenient connections, efficient routing, and lowest fares possible. Some cities have limited service that may result in multiple connections or long layovers. If you have special travel needs please contact Br. Paul O’Keeffe.

It is essential that the name on your travel documents be identical to your name as it appears on your passport. If there is a discrepancy, you could be delayed or required to purchase another ticket on your own. Please check your ticket as soon as you receive it and contact Br. Paul directly if there is any discrepancy. In the event that changes need to be made to the itinerary due to illness, strikes, terrorism, weather, or other causes, these changes will be made to ensure the well-being of all participants. Additional expenses, if any, will be the responsibility of the mission trip participant, although Br. Paul will make every effort to minimize such expenses.

#### **Time Zone:**

Turkey is seven hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time (EST).

### **4. PACKING LIST & LUGGAGE**

**Packing Tips:** Pack comfortable, modest clothing. Cotton slacks, neat blue jeans, t-shirts **without logos** and button-down shirts are appropriate – sweat suits, athletic gear, and tank tops or any other revealing clothing are not permitted. Although not officially prohibited, shorts are generally not worn in public and definitely not in mosques.

**Mosque Visit:** Bring an outfit for mosque visits (i.e. no cleavage or skirts about the knee) and appropriate clothing for all other occasions. Bring two sets of business dress attire for home visits and other special outings. For mosque, men should consider wearing button-down shirts and slacks and women should go for a long dress that covers their legs and arms. Women must cover their hair with scarfs and must dress modestly. Although head scarves are provided at all major mosques, women are encouraged to bring their own.

**When visiting traditional rural areas:** Do wear more conservative clothing outside of large, touristy cities. Shorts and short sleeves are still acceptable.

- It may rain occasionally in the month of October so bring an umbrella with you. Temperatures range from 50° to 70° Fahrenheit.
- Plan to bring items that are lightweight and can be layered in case of weather changes.
- Hotels usually have laundry facilities although they may not be cheap. Prepare to hand wash your clothes.
- Do not bring anything with a camouflage pattern or of a military style.

### **Suggested Packing List**

- Comfortable walking shoes
- Sweater, sweatshirt or a light jacket for use on the plane
- Rain jacket, poncho, or umbrella
- Conservative outfit for mosque visits (see above)
- Toiletries – items such as tampons, mouthwash, and disposable razors are relatively easy to obtain in Turkey; however, you may find it more convenient to bring your own.
- Ear plugs (if you are a light sleeper)
- Medications – most common over-the-counter medications such as Dramamine, Monistat, and Pepto-Bismol are available in Turkey
- Sun protection – hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, insect repellent.
- Photography supplies – camera, extra batteries, and electricity converters to charge batteries, iPhones etc.
- Small flashlight & extra batteries (for dark streets, rural areas).
- A refillable water bottle.
- Power bars or other high protein snacks, especially for vegetarians.
- Small backpack for items you will need for everyday use.
- Notebook or a journal.
- Reading material or deck of cards etc. (for waiting times or just for fun)
- Travel clock, watch, or other timepiece.
- Money belt or neck pouch to hold valuables.
- ATM card, credit cards.
- Moist towelettes and/or hand sanitizer.
- Plug adapter and converter, in case you are bringing electrical appliances (Turkey operates on 220 volts, 50 Hz, with round-prong European-style plugs that fit into recessed wall sockets/points. Adaptors are easily accessible at electronic shops).
- Passport and photocopy of the photo page (packed separately).

### **Luggage**

We will be using the most economical airline possible to get the best value for travel arrangements to Turkey. We urge you to follow the standards of the airline that you will be traveling on. Carry-on and other guidelines can be found on the website once we know which airline we will be using. Participants may take 2 bags of 23 kilos each (approx. 50 pounds per bag). While in Turkey we will be taking several flights within the country. Domestic flight baggage allowance is 15 kilos total. Participants will be allowed to store unused luggage at our hotel in Istanbul. Participants should bring a smaller bag or backpack for traveling on domestic flights. Domestic airlines can be very strict about weight limits so it's best to pack light for trips outside of Istanbul.

## **5. WEATHER**

**Turkey (Istanbul):** Istanbul has a borderline Mediterranean climate, humid subtropical climate and transitional climatic zone. The average high temperature in the month of October is 66°F. The average low however is 55°F. Since our trip will be nearing the end of October, expect temperatures

to average between 50° to 70° Fahrenheit with low temperatures 40s °F at night (especially in Konya). There will be occasional precipitation so be sure to bring an umbrella or rain jacket.

**Izmir:** The average temperature in Izmir in October is somewhat warm at 65.12 °F with occasional rain. Afternoons get fairly hot with average high temperatures reaching 74.3°F.

**Cappadocia:** The weather in Cappadocia can be unpredictable. In general, it should be nice and warm in the daytime, about 77 °F, but nights are quite chilly, around 41°F to 46°F. Prepare for big changes in temperature because this is a more arid climate.

**Konya:** Due to the elevation of Konya daytime temperatures can fluctuate but expect and range or about 55° highs, and 40° to 45° lows.

## **6. MONEY**

Most participants find that US \$200 to \$300 is sufficient spending money for a two-week mission trip. Of course, how much you bring will depend on your personal spending habits. Remember that all meals and program expenses are included in your mission trip cost with the exception of **one meal out which students will be responsible for paying**. \$35 should be more than enough to cover the cost of this meal.

ATM cards are the most convenient way to obtain cash in the local currency, Lira. It's usually best to obtain your Turkish liras in Turkey as the exchange rates outside Turkey are usually not as good as those inside the country. Note that many people in Turkey will not accept large bills or notes for small payments so carry some smaller amounts of Lira with you. Our trip guide will stop at a local forex bureau after we leave the airport so there will be no need to exchange money at the airport.

Visa, MasterCard and American Express are accepted in many stores. **Important:** call your credit card company to let them know that you will be using you card outside of the country for a set time. Some people encounter trouble using a credit card abroad because the credit card company assumes the card is stolen. We strongly encourage you to bring a money belt.

## **7. ACCOMMODATIONS & ELECTRICAL GADGETS**

Accommodations: In keeping with the style and philosophy of the mission trip, you will stay at a modest bed and breakfast with two persons per room.

### **Electrical Current**

Turkish power plugs are two round pins running at 220-240V, unlike the American plugs that run at between 110-120V. For most U.S. appliances, you will need a voltage converter, unless the appliance already has a built-in switch to change the voltage and an adapter for the plug. If you intend to use your appliances, purchase a plug that will fit between your appliance and the adapter once you arrive in Turkey, although it is best that you do without appliances if possible. Please note that if you plug a 110-125V surge protector into a 220-240V outlet your surge protector will be destroyed.

## **8. HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION**

Review your vaccinations: Check with your doctor or the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) regarding recommended vaccinations for travel to Turkey. Currently, the CDC recommends that you be up-to-date on measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccine,

varicella (chickenpox) vaccine, polio vaccine, and your yearly flu shot. No other vaccinations or prophylaxis are necessary. You may call the CDC at 404/332-4559 or visit their Web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/>

- *Bring enough medical/health supplies.* If you take a prescription or medication, make sure you bring enough to last your entire mission trip, including a possible day or two of delay. Be prepared, and bring medical and health supplies for potential problems.
- *Drink lots of water*
- *Wash hands:* Wash your hands with soap whenever possible or use hand sanitizer when soap and water is not available.
- *Watch your food:* Br. Paul will give you more information on safe eating and drinking habits in country.
- *Pace yourself:* While strenuous walking is not a regular part of any mission trip, there may be an occasion when a long walk is necessary to reach a certain location. If a particular health condition makes strenuous walking a concern, please be prepared to communicate your limitations with your group leader and the chaperones.
- *Sickness:* If you get sick while traveling, please let Br. Paul know right away. This will help to pinpoint problems with food and water, and help you to get better and arrange a visit to a doctor or medical clinic if necessary.

### **Possible Ailments**

- *Traveler's Diarrhea:* Just the change in food, water and climate can lead to an upset stomach. If you get diarrhea, treat it with Pepto-Bismol and drink lots of water. Br. Paul recommends that you get a prescription from your doctor for Ciprofloxacin (Cipro) in case you have a bout of unmanageable diarrhea that is bacterial.
- *Hepatitis A:* According to the CDC, travelers to Turkey must guard against Hepatitis A because you can get hepatitis A through contaminated food or water in Turkey, regardless of where you are eating or staying.

### **Safety and Safety Guidelines**

We will not hesitate to cancel or end a trip should something occur that would make it appear to be unsafe to travel to a specific part of Turkey.

Apart from protecting you, the safety guidelines also enhance the group's educational experience and foster long-term relationships of trust, which the Center seeks to develop in the region.

If all participants follow these guidelines, it means less inconvenience for you and the group and less work for our staff. Please read these guidelines carefully and be familiar with them before your departure.

### **Terrorism concerns:**

Due to a record of past terrorist attacks in Turkey and a continuing threat from both transnational and indigenous groups, the threat level for the possibility of further terrorist attacks against U.S. citizens and interests remains critical. Here are some helpful security tips:

- Exercise caution and good judgment, keep a low profile, and remain vigilant with regard to your personal security. Terrorists do not distinguish between official and civilian targets.
- Do not accept letters, parcels, or other items from strangers for delivery either inside or outside of Turkey. The KGK (a terrorist group) has attempted to use foreigners to deliver messages and packages.
- International and domestic political issues sometimes trigger demonstrations in major cities in

Turkey. They can become violent. Avoid all demonstrations.

- In addition to terrorist activities, there have been instances of religious violence targeting individuals in Turkey working as religious missionaries (which is severely restricted in Turkey) or viewed as having proselytized for a non-Islamic religion. Threats and actual instances of crime have targeted Christian and Jewish individuals, groups, and places of worship in Turkey.
- Enroll in the free [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEM\)](#) so we can keep you up to date with important safety and security announcements.
- Follow the U.S. Embassy in Turkey on [Twitter](#) and visit the Embassy's [website](#).

### **Other security concerns**

- Shorts, short skirts, tank tops or flip-flops are often not appropriate for meetings with resource people. You may however wear them at the Bed and Breakfasts where we will be staying.
- Military clothing and military style hats could be mistaken for military apparel and should not be taken on the trip. Apparel with U.S. patriotic messages or symbols (such as conspicuously displayed flags) could provoke aggressive responses and should be left at home.
- Bring a small lock for your bag. You should also bring a money belt that can be hidden under your clothes in which to keep your money and important documents.
- Please do not bring flashy jewelry. Any expensive jewelry or watches, or any that looks expensive, should be left at home.
- Bring a pair of closed-toed, flat, non-athletic shoes for township and other visits.

If in doubt about the appropriateness of an item, it is best to err on the side of caution.

### **When you arrive at the airport in Turkey**

The officials may ask you what your itinerary and schedule is. The official purpose of your trip is tourism. Watch your bags and documents at the airport, as bags have been stolen before and while loading luggage into the vans.

## **9. DOS AND DON'TS WHILE ON THIS MISSION TRIP**

### **Dos:**

- Listen carefully to all safety information during your in-country orientation.
- Keep a copy of your passport with you at all times, inside your clothing if possible; you may leave your passport at our accommodations while out on tour.
- Stay close together as a group when you are out in public and always travel in groups of two or more.
- Ask for permission before taping/photographing others.
- Be careful about what you say in public, as many people will understand English.
- Speak at a moderate volume; North Americans tend to speak in louder voices so be mindful of this fact.
- Be respectful of others- especially those you disagree with; don't be afraid to ask difficult questions, but do it in a non-confrontational manner.
- Be respectful of other group members. Before asking multiple questions of resource people, look around to see if other people have questions and remember that people have varied learning styles and may need more time before asking questions. Remember that you are part of a mission group and not simply an independent traveler.
- Drink a lot of purified water to maintain good health and wash your hands frequently. Because Turkey is an arid climate you may not notice you are thirsty as easily as at home.

**Dont:**

- Leave suitcases, bags, or purses unattended—even for a minute!
- Handle large amounts of money in public. Know how much you have and where it is.
- Wear anything expensive looking- watches, jewelry, sunglasses etc.
- Disclose the tentative schedule or names of resource persons and groups of which you may be aware. This information should not be given either to "friendly strangers," to other resource persons on the program, or to anyone outside of your group. If you want to ask someone about information provided by another resource person/organization, find a way to do this without mentioning the other person/organization (e.g. "I read before I came that . . .").
- Photograph military personnel or installations- this may be considered threatening behavior!

Your group will have an orientation session upon arrival in Turkey. You will receive additional information and have the opportunity to ask questions at that time. In the meantime, if you have any questions about the information above, call Br. Paul.

*NOTE:* It's likely you will hear the above guidelines again at various points during your mission trip. We ask for and appreciate your patience with this fact in advance of your trip.

**10. POLICY ON CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES**

Turkey has a particularly strict law on illegal drugs so please take no risks.

The use, possession, transport, or purchase of "controlled substances" (i.e., illegal drugs) by a mission trip participant carries significant risks and penalties for the participant, the entire group, and the reputation of your school and your trip leaders and chaperones.

A participant who uses illegal drugs while on this mission trip will be sent home at his or her own expense. If the participant is detained or arrested, legal officials in the site of the arrest (U.S. or foreign country) likely will not permit travel leaders or chaperones to contact or assist the detained person in any way. Your schools and Br. Paul's responsibility for the participant ends at the time of detention or arrest for drug violations.

United States law prohibits the transport of illegal drugs across its borders. Also, U.S. law does not protect U.S. citizens, U.S. residents, or others traveling abroad who violate foreign drug laws. The laws that prevail are those of the country in which the law was broken.

Please reference the U.S. State Department's Travel Warning on Drugs Abroad for more information [http://travel.state.gov/travel/living/drugs/drugs\\_1237.html/](http://travel.state.gov/travel/living/drugs/drugs_1237.html/)

The police and customs officials have the right to search your luggage for drugs. In many countries local laws make no distinction between hard and soft drugs. United States laws DO NOT apply to Americans abroad who violate foreign laws. Once you are overseas, you are subject to the same penalties for drug violations as the nationals of the country you are visiting.

**11. GIFT GIVING**

As participants on this short-term mission trip we are committed to building long-lasting relationships with the communities in our host countries. As part of that commitment we have a policy of not giving gifts, no matter how small or inexpensive, to people on the streets, including not giving candy to children. Regardless of the intentions, the practice of gift giving can lead to ill feelings among both givers and receivers. It also reinforces the stereotype of North Americans as

patronizing, wealthy foreigners. If you wish to share something with the people you meet, we suggest you bring postcards, photos or mementoes from your home community and family and that you have enough to give to everyone in a group you may encounter.

Some groups may decide to make a monetary donation to one or more of the organizations with which they meet. This is always done in coordination with Br. Paul and the local resource person, and the donation is given to a responsible individual within the organization to ensure that it goes for the intended purpose. This type of gift giving is always voluntary.

## **12. DIVERSITY**

Siena College, Bonaventure University, The University of St. Francis, and The University of Georgia all strive to create an intentionally diverse group of travelers where a variety of cultures and backgrounds are represented. Students, faculty, and staff help each other respond to issues of oppression such as racism, sexism, homophobia, economic inequality, xenophobia, and classism, in an environment where diversity expands the participants' thinking and worldview.

## **13. CONTACT INFORMATION**

Due to the relatively short duration of your mission trip, friends and family should not expect to have regular contact with you either through post, email, or phone calls. However, friends and family may place a direct-dial call to you through Br. Paul's Turkey Cell phone. Before your departure Br. Paul will provide you with direct-dial emergency numbers for the places you will be staying, including his phone number. It is much less expensive to call from the U.S. to Turkey than vice versa. Be prepared to purchase Turkish calling cards upon arrival for calling the U.S. International calling cards purchased in the U.S. as well as 800 numbers do not function when calling from Turkey. None of our accommodations have phones in the rooms; short phone calls to home will be permitted for those students who purchase calling cards in country.

### **Br. Paul's contact information:**

- Br. Paul O'Keeffe, OFM  
St. Anthony Shrine  
100 Arch Street  
Boston, MA 02110
- Cell: 240-393-0532