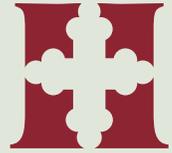


ST. HELEN'S PILGRIMAGE

Holy Cross Master of Divinity Study Abroad Program



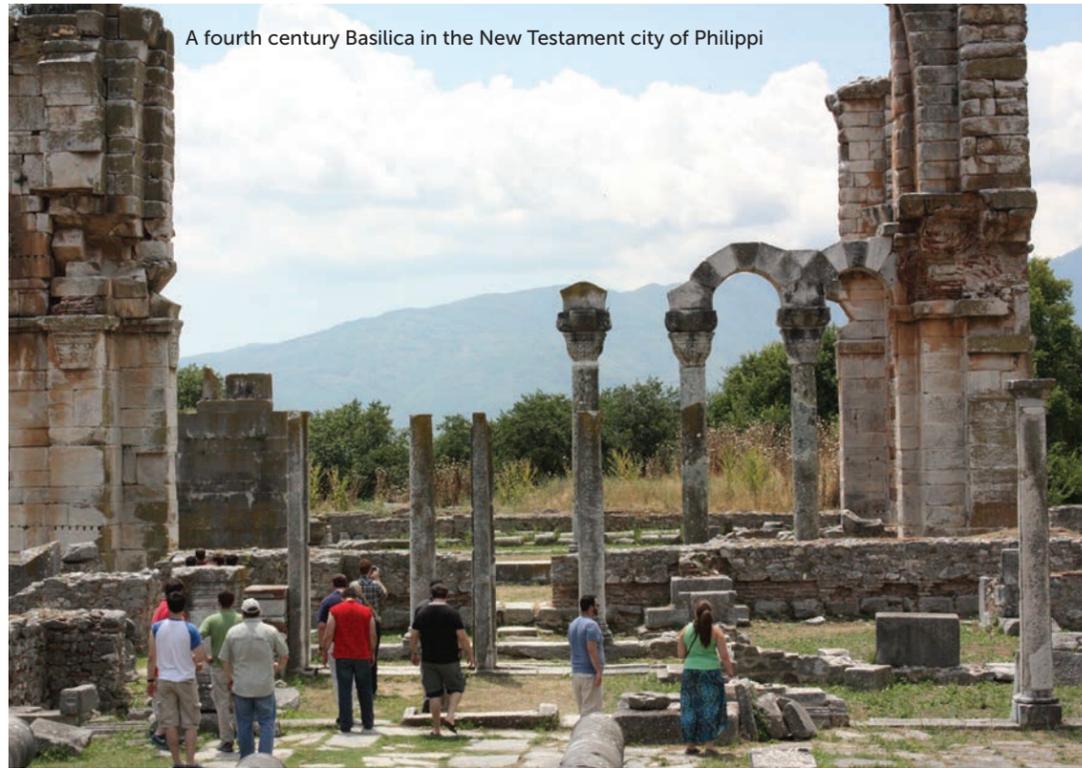
Students chant during their annual audience with His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew in Constantinople

What is St. Helen's Pilgrimage?

- A three-credit class required for all Master of Divinity students in the spring semester of their junior year, coupled with a five- or nine-week study abroad component in the summer
- Class instruction begins with a History of The Ecumenical Patriarchate class taught at Holy Cross in Brookline in the spring semester of the students' junior year
- At the completion of the spring semester in Brookline, the students travel to Thessaloniki for a three-week intensive class in modern Greek at the University of Thessaloniki
- The students go on a pilgrimage to The Ecumenical Patriarchate and Constantinople, where they are able to meet and converse with the Ecumenical Patriarch and see firsthand many of the places they had previously only read about in books or heard about in a classroom
- The students visit Mount Athos for three days (the women students go to Ormylia or Meteora at this time) and then to the Biblical city of Thessaloniki and the Pauline sites of Philippi and Lydia
- The students view Greek antiquities, Byzantine monuments, and Orthodox saints' relics



Tracing the footsteps of St. Paul at the site where he preached in Thessaloniki



A fourth century Basilica in the New Testament city of Philippi



A student discovers an ancient icon of his patron saint



Weekend pilgrimage at I.M. Xenofontos, Mt. Athos

Benefits For Students

- Instruction in the New Testament, Church History, Byzantine History, and Orthodox Spirituality received at Holy Cross comes alive for the students as they visit places like Hagia Sophia, Mount Athos, the site of St. Demetrios' martyrdom, the cathedral where St. Gregory Palamas gave his sermons as Archbishop, and trace the steps of St. Paul across Northern Greece
- Gives students much appreciation for the depth, vastness, and permanency of the Orthodox Church and Orthodox spirituality
- Strengthens their understanding, appreciation, and connection with the Ecumenical Patriarchate—our Mother Church
- Improves conversational Greek skills
- Deepens students' love and appreciation of Greek culture
- Broadens students' understanding of the world (for some, it is their first time travelling outside the US)
- Makes clear the centrality of Greece, Byzantium, and Orthodoxy in the history of Western Europe

The site of St. Lydia's baptism, the first Christian in Europe



A Holy Cross professor translates for the Bishop of Kastoria

Benefits for Greek Orthodox Parishioners in America

- Fosters deeper knowledge of Orthodoxy and Church History
- Enhances Orthodox Spirituality
- Makes Holy Scripture come alive
- Strengthens ties and synergy with our Mother Church
- Improves relationships between priests and parishioners by nurturing better understanding of Greek language and culture on the part of future priests who are not of Greek descent

Why "St. Helen"?

As the person who found the Cross of Christ, the mother of Emperor Constantine, and a true Christian pilgrim who walked in the footsteps of our Lord and the saints in the Holy Lands and throughout the Byzantine Empire, Saint Helen served and advanced the Church significantly in her day, and in a way stands at the intersection of Orthodoxy, Greece, Byzantium and the history of Western Europe.





Chanting Liturgy on the Holy Mountain



Before St. Basil invented the hospital, thermal springs such as this one in ancient Dion were popular

Program Cost

- Currently, this program costs a little less than \$5,000 per student (not including tuition for the three credit class taught in Brookline), and anywhere from 25-35 students complete the Capstone Program each year
- Future plans calling for the addition of a one-week field study in the Holy Lands would increase the total program cost to approximately \$6,500 per student



A monastery of the Ecumenical Patriarchate



Treasured art of Orthodox Christian Europe

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