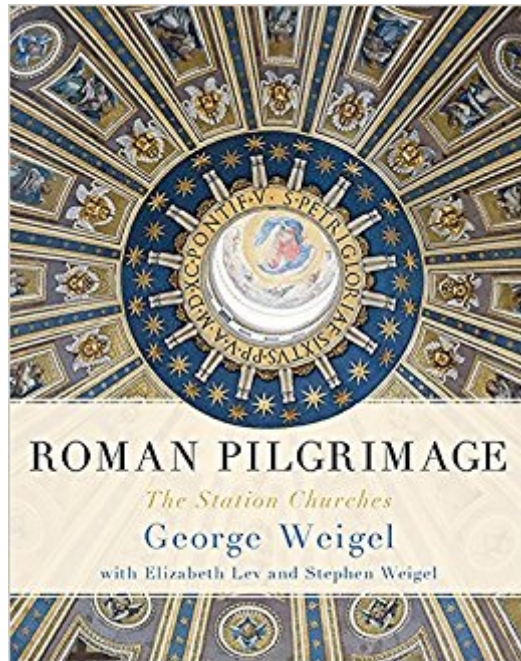




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# Roman Pilgrimage: The Station Churches



## Synopsis

The annual Lenten pilgrimage to dozens of Rome's most striking churches is a sacred tradition dating back almost two millennia, to the earliest days of Christianity. Along this historic spiritual pathway, today's pilgrims confront the mysteries of the Christian faith through a program of biblical and early Christian readings amplified by some of the greatest art and architecture of western civilization. In *Roman Pilgrimage*, bestselling theologian and papal biographer George Weigel, art historian Elizabeth Lev, and photographer Stephen Weigel lead readers through this unique religious and aesthetic journey with magnificent photographs and revealing commentaries on the pilgrimage's liturgies, art, and architecture. Through reflections on each day's readings about faith and doubt, heroism and weakness, self-examination and conversion, sin and grace, Rome's familiar sites take on a new resonance. And along that same historical path, typically unexplored treasures—artifacts of ancient history and hidden artistic wonders—appear in their original luster, revealing new dimensions of one of the world's most intriguing and multi-layered cities. A compelling guide to the Eternal City, the Lenten Season, and the itinerary of conversion that is Christian life throughout the year, *Roman Pilgrimage* reminds readers that the imitation of Christ through faith, hope, and love is the template of all true discipleship, as the exquisite beauty of the Roman station churches invites reflection on the deepest truths of Christianity.

## Customer Reviews

Rome's station churches date from the early Christian era, with architectural and traditional elaborations added to many in the Renaissance and major repairs made as recently as the past decade. Their visitation by believers during Lent follows a specific order, with aspects of the faith related to each edifice. Weigel, a Vatican analyst for NBC news, presents a readily accessible overview of how these "stational churches" correlate to and support Roman Catholic Lenten practice and affirmations while at the same time providing an attractive meditative tour for any visitor. Art historian Elizabeth Lev uses Weigel's color photos to discuss architectural details along with the buildings' history. This is a unique guide book, referencing not only theology but the history of Western art, modern and post modern literature, urban history, and church history. Valuable to believers, scholars, students, armchair travelers, and those planning pilgrimages following Phil Cousineau's guides. --Francisca Goldsmith

Bruce Cole, Chairman, National Endowment for the Humanities, 2001-2009; A splendid vade

mecum to the annual Lenten pilgrimage in Rome. Visitors to the Eternal City, either in their armchairs or on foot, will learn much about the spiritual journey of Lent and Easter through Rome's station churches, many of them little-known artistic treasures. — Noel Fahey, Irish ambassador to the Holy See, 2007-2011; George Weigel's original, contemporary reflections on the station church liturgies of Lent and Easter are greatly enhanced by Elizabeth Lev's descriptions of the station churches and Stephen Weigel's evocative photographs. An indispensable guide. — Edwin Cardinal O'Brien, Grand Master of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem; The Lenten station church pilgrimage is increasingly popular in Rome, especially among English-speaking Catholics. Zealously promoted and led by the students of the Pontifical North American College, the daily Eucharistic celebrations at these earliest of the Eternal City's churches commemorate the martyrs of the first three centuries, whose witness is being emulated throughout the world today. Up to now, though, these sunrise pilgrimages have been known to few outside Rome. No more! — Boston Globe; If you're not in Rome, the next best thing is reading Weigel and Lev's text and taking in Stephen Weigel's evocative photos. Anyone interested in Catholic spirituality and the significance of the Lenten season will find Roman Pilgrimage absorbing reading. — National Review; George Weigel's new book Roman Pilgrimage, done in collaboration with Elizabeth Lev and his son Stephen, provides nourishment for both the inquirer and the believer, from a city whose bread and butter is Catholicism.... In a time that seems to have a tolerance only for nebulous spirituality and superficial religion, [Roman Pilgrimage] provides a way of proposal and rediscovery, where at every turn is a meeting with one — a saint, a martyr, the Savior — who walked this walk before and guides anyone willing through the next step. — Catholic World Report

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