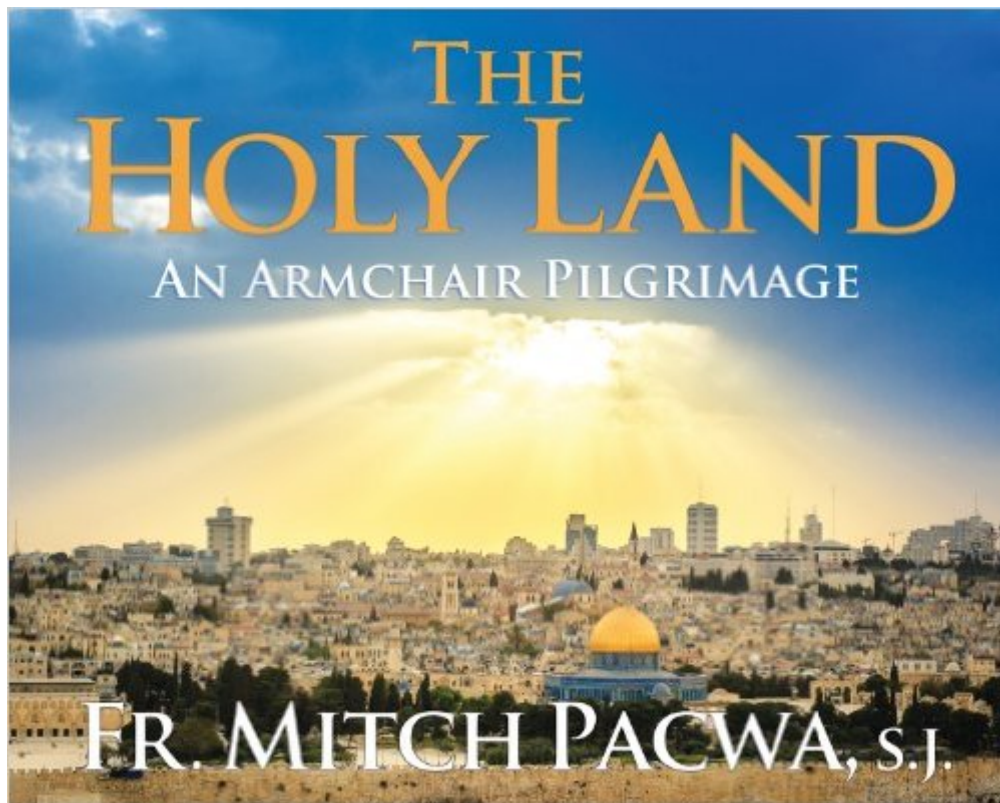


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# The Holy Land: An Armchair Pilgrimage



## Synopsis

What's the next best thing to going on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land with Fr. Mitch Pacwa? Being able to travel with him from the comfort of your home as the holy sites come to life through the pages of this book. With stunning images and thoughtful commentary, *The Holy Land: An Armchair Pilgrimage* is more than your typical travel guide. It also contains: A short commentary on each site, explaining its importance in salvation history A meditation for you to consider, encouraging questions such as, "What can I learn from this place? Why does it matter to me?" • Prayers that Fr. Mitch uses on his annual pilgrimages, focusing on a personal faith response to the spiritual events commemorated at each site. Travel with Fr. Mitch to the sites of all twenty mysteries of the rosary, as well as other significant spots in the history of Israel and in the life of Jesus. Whether you've been to the Holy Land, plan to travel there one day, or prefer to stay in your armchair, this classic book will be a beautiful addition to your library.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

*The Holy Land: An Armchair Pilgrimage* is a gorgeous coffee table book, which highlights significant Biblical places (e.g., Gethsemane and Cana) and churches of importance (e.g., Ascension Chapel).

The book is divided into the following eight geographical sections: 1. Bethlehem and Ein Karem 2.

Jerusalem Old City 3. Mount of Olives 4. East of Jerusalem 5. Mount Zion 6. North of Jerusalem 7.

Western Galilee 8. The Sea of Galilee When I first opened this book, I went through it and only

looked at the pictures. I must confess that if this book included nothing but those pictures, it would

be worth the price for the pictures alone. After my surface investigation of this book, I decided to get

serious and take the time to actually read the accompanying text. His descriptions and attention to detail make you feel like you are on an actual pilgrimage with Fr. Pacwa. It also makes you wish for even more pictures in the book or perhaps for an accompanying DVD tour. Each chapter then ends with a prayer, which can be used for guided meditation. So far I have only had time to quietly reflect on a couple of these places. I plan to re-visit the book many times in the future though, especially when the places tie in with major feast days in the Church. My favorite place to read about was a toss-up between The Holy Sepulcher Church and the Church of the Dormition of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Holy Sepulcher Church is venerated as the site where Jesus was both crucified and buried. Underneath the altar is an actual rock from Calvary. How awesome this place must be in which to worship. There is a yearly miracle that occurs here, which Fr. Pacwa failed to mention, and that is the Miracle of Holy Fire.

I've always been on the look out for something that would help me picture in my mind and spur my imagination with the "life and times" aspect of our Lord. I've tried reading other commentary books on the Holy Land and came away disappointed. Thankfully, this book by Fr Packwa is very satisfying. As a Catholic, and for some reason especially in these times, I'm always on guard to read truly inspirational material and not "Catholic Lite" writings that seem to be more an apology for the faith rather than apologetics. Fr Packwa's book brings together in very matter of fact and clear prose the history of the region as a place where divinity intersected humanity, elements of Catholic doctrine that came forth from this encounter, and examples of how humanity responded (both positively and negatively) in its call to holiness. By site, the book contains great color pictures (the book format is "landscape" which enhances many of the long-shot photos) a brief reading from Scripture to set context, then a summary in Fr Pacwa's own style of certain special features that relate to the physicality of the site, and finally a meditation from Fr Pacwa for the reader to draw them into the scene more deeply. The book contained several good "nuggets" of insight about the region that I either had not thought about or misunderstood. I'll leave details about this to prospective readers since this becomes subjective based on a person's spiritual journey.

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