

— A *Rafiki* Initiative: A Journey of Friendship —



JOURNEY TO AFRICA

Kenya and Tanzania Immersion Experience

— Co-Sponsored by the Passionist Community and the Africa Student Fund —

Building Friendships Across Cultures Since 2014



January 6-24, 2027

Journey to Africa

Step into the heart of Africa. This immersive experience, formerly offered by the Passionist Earth & Spirit Center, invites participants to engage with the cultures, land, and people of Kenya and Tanzania. This is the Africa you've always dreamed of: vast savannas, stirring landscapes, abundant wildlife, snow-capped Kilimanjaro, and vibrant cultures rooted in ancient traditions on the very soil where human life first emerged.

Since 2014, this journey has been grounded in one simple idea: *rafiki* – the Swahili word for friendship. This is not a typical tour. While we visit premier game parks and encounter extraordinary wildlife, our focus is not simply on sightseeing, but on experiencing the vitality and daily life of Africa from within.

This journey is for those who want to travel as companions, to encounter different ways of seeing the world, and to build relationships that open us to new perspectives and lasting friendships.

We experience Kenya's dynamic capital, Nairobi, and travel to the remote forest regions of western Kenya, including an overnight stay on Lake Victoria. We meet members of the Maasai community and explore world-class game parks. Along the way, we build relationships with grassroots leaders working to overcome the challenges of poverty and deepen our understanding of what it means to be responsible global citizens.

A remarkable opportunity to make your world bigger.

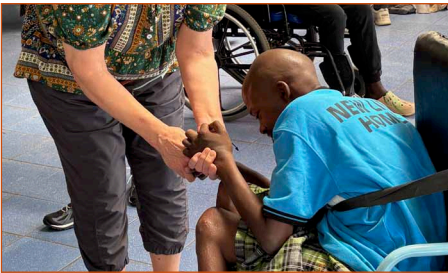
The Journey

This 19-day African journey offers a unique opportunity to combine cultural immersion with breathtaking safaris. Native Passionists serve as our hosts and companions throughout, making it possible to experience the cultures of Kenya and Tanzania from within

- Participants should be in reasonably good health, able to climb at least two flights of stairs, and walk moderate distances, occasionally on uneven ground.
- Guest house accommodations are clean, comfortable, and well suited to the journey – simple, safe, and welcoming. This experience is not designed for those expecting five-star hotels.
- Travel within Kenya and Tanzania is by air-conditioned bus and Land Rovers for safaris
- The journey is led by Fr. Joe Mitchell, along with priests and brothers of the Passionist communities in Kenya and Tanzania, as well as local guides.
- Registration is limited to 18 participants.

Cost for 19 Days: \$3,300

- Includes double-occupancy accommodations, all meals, ground transportation within Africa, services of local guides, stipends for Passionist communities, donations to schools and social service organizations we visit, game park entry, and all related fees.
- Does not include international airfare, visas, or suggested vaccinations.
- Does not include tips or personal expenses such as alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.
- A \$700 deposit is required upon registration to reserve your place.
- 50% of the remaining balance (\$1,300) is due by August 1, 2026.
- Final payment (\$1,300) is due by September 15, 2026.
- A 3.5% surcharge is added to all credit card transactions.



International Travel

- Participants arrange and pay separately for international airfare, flying into and out of Nairobi (Jomo Kenyatta International Airport).
- Single-entry tourist visas are required for both Kenya and Tanzania.
- Some immunizations are recommended; consult a travel clinic for guidance.

Cancellation Policy

- Before July 15, 2026: Full refund minus \$100 processing fee
- After July 15, 2026: 60% of total cost is refundable
- After September 15, 2026: 40% of total cost is refundable
- After November 15, 2026: No refund unless the trip is filled and there is a waiting list

Sponsoring Organization: Africa Student Fund

Founded in 2014, the Africa Student Fund was created by previous participants of the Kenya and Tanzania Immersion Experiences to help educate, equip, and empower youth of those countries by supporting learning experiences and creative opportunities for a hopeful future. Over the years, this 501(c)3 organization has contributed over \$300,000 to help needy children in East Africa.

The Africa Student Fund is joining the Passionist Community to sponsor the annual Africa journey, previously sponsored by the Passionist Earth & Spirit Center.

For additional INFORMATION and online REGISTRATION, go to
www.AfricaStudentFund.net
 Contact: Fr. Joe Mitchell at 502.451.2330, ext 25
 Email: AfricaStudentFundJourney@yahoo.com

.....REGISTER ONLINE OR USE THIS FORM.....

I would like to submit a request to participate in the *Journey to Africa* – Kenya and Tanzania Immersion Experience – January 6-24, 2027.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State/Zip _____

Mobile Phone _____

Email _____

Pay DEPOSIT by CHECK: \$700 enclosed
Make check payable to "Africa Student Fund." In the memo line write "January 2027 Africa Journey."

Pay DEPOSIT by CREDIT CARD: \$700, plus 3.5% surcharge (\$24.50) = \$724.50

Visa MasterCard American Express

Card number _____

Expiration date _____ CVV _____

Cardholder Name _____

Billing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

MAIL TO
 Journey to Africa
 c/o Africa Student Fund • Passionist Community
 1924 Newburg Road • Louisville, KY 40205

Daily Itinerary



Day 1 – Wednesday, January 6, 2027: Departure

Day 2 – Thursday, January 7, 2027: Arrival in Nairobi

Arriving at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, we are warmly welcomed by our Kenyan hosts – Jacob Oyugi (Passionist priest) and Peter Mutinda, our phenomenal driver – with the Swahili greeting *karibu* (“welcome”). They accompany us throughout this journey into the heart of Africa. Overnight at the Passionist retreat center in Nairobi. (Most international flights from Europe arrive into Nairobi in the evening.)

Day 3 – Welcome to Kenya: Rest, Renewal, and First Encounters

We stay at the Passionist retreat center in Karen-Langata, a tranquil area on the outskirts of Nairobi. The morning offers time to rest and recover from travel. In the afternoon, we begin to explore the neighborhood, visiting a nearby school and local craft center – a gentle introduction to daily life in Kenya. Overnight at the Passionist retreat center in Nairobi.



Day 4 – Exploring Nairobi: Culture, Color, City Life

Nairobi is a vibrant blend of cultures and contrasts. As East Africa’s commercial hub and home to numerous United Nations offices, it offers a dynamic urban experience. In the morning, we explore downtown Nairobi, wander through a lively food market (sampling tropical fruits), and visit the National Museum. In the afternoon, we visit the Giraffe Centre for a lecture and up-close look at these magnificent creatures. Overnight at the retreat center in Nairobi.

Day 5 – Vibrant Faith and Hope in Kibera

We participate in the colorful, music-filled Sunday services at Guadalupe Church in Kibera – an experience of vibrant, faith-filled worship unlike any other. Following the service, we visit the New Life Home for disabled and abandoned children. The afternoon includes a presentation on Kenyan culture and history. Overnight at the retreat center in Nairobi.

Day 6 – Into the Rift Valley: Wild Beauty Unfolds

We travel through the dramatic landscapes of the Great Rift Valley toward Molo, a farming community in the central highlands. Along the way, depending on wildlife conditions, we visit either Lake Nakuru National Park or the Crescent Island Game Sanctuary for our first safari. Overnight at the Ukurimu retreat center in Molo.

Day 7 – Kenya Highlands: Tea Fields and Timeless Landscapes

As we drive from Molo to Karungu, expansive vistas and verdant agricultural lands unfold before us. The rolling hills and manicured tea fields of central Kenya offer an opportunity to visit a tea plantation in Kericho and witness the production of some of the world’s finest tea. We arrive in Karungu in time to enjoy beverages and a sunset over Lake Victoria. Overnight at the Passionist retreat center in Karungu.

Day 8 – Life on Lake Victoria: Beauty, Community, and Caring



Our home base is the Passionist retreat center, set along the sloping shores of Lake Victoria – the legendary source of the Nile and a region tied to early human history. The calls of birds fill this lush garden setting. We visit a local boy’s school, St. Camillus Mission Hospital, and the Blessed Luigi Tezza School for the Deaf. Overnight in Karungu.

Day 9 – Village Life and Cultural Encounters in Tonga

Kenya is home to 42 distinct ethnic groups, each with its own language and traditions. Karungu lies within the Luo region, the third-largest community in Kenya. We experience local hospitality with a visit to the remote village of Tonga, meeting residents and learning about daily life in this tropical setting. We also visit a local school and enjoy performances prepared by the students. Overnight in Karungu.

Day 10 – Crossing the Primal Rift Valley: Return to Nairobi

We return to Nairobi, traveling through the luminous green highlands. Along the way, we share lunch with the Passionist community in Sotik and stop to see artisans carving the famous Kisii soapstone (with an opportunity

to purchase). After a full day crossing the awe-inspiring Great Rift Valley, we arrive back at our retreat center in Nairobi.

Day 11 – Life in Kibera: Strength and Resilience

We meet residents of Kibera – one of the largest informal slum settlements in Africa – and hear their stories. We also engage with grassroots leaders working to address the profound challenges of poverty in the community. More than half the population is under the age of twelve. The afternoon offers time to rest or to explore optional activities, such as visiting the Karen Blixen Museum, made famous by the film *Out of Africa*. Overnight in Nairobi.

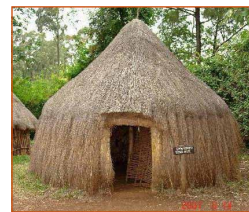
Day 12 – Crossing Borders: Into Tanzania’s Northern Frontier

Today we travel south from Nairobi into Tanzania. On a clear day, Mount Kilimanjaro rises on the horizon. After crossing the international border, we arrive in Arusha, the gateway to Tanzania’s northern safari circuit. Situated below majestic Mount Meru, Arusha enjoys a mild climate year-round. In the evening, we share conversation and dinner with university students from across East Africa. Overnight at the Passionist guesthouse in Arusha.

Day 13 – Into the Crater Highlands: Journey to Karatu

The morning introduces the culture and history of Tanzania, often described as the cradle of human evolution. After lunch, we journey to Karatu, ascending from the dry Rift Valley into lush green highlands along the slopes of the Ngorongoro Crater. It is a stunning and scenic drive. Overnight at the Daughters of Maria guesthouse, set within a coffee plantation outside Karatu.

Day 14 – Safari in the Ngorongoro Crater: Africa’s Garden of Eden



The Ngorongoro Crater is one of the densest wildlife areas in the world. Within the vast crater, zebra, wildebeest, gazelle, and buffalo graze in large herds while lions rest nearby and hyenas lurk in the bushes. With luck, the endangered black rhino appears in the morning mist while baboons frolic in the trees and warthogs shuffle through the grass. After a full day of safari – including

lunch at the hippo pool – we return to Karatu. Overnight at the Daughters of Maria guesthouse.

Day 15 – Wild Tanzania: Elephants and Baobabs in Tarangire

We visit Tarangire National Park, known for its vast herds of elephants and iconic baobab trees. The diverse landscape supports abundant wildlife, including impalas, wildebeest, zebra, giraffes, baboons, and even tree-climbing leopards. We return to Arusha in the evening. Overnight at the Passionist guesthouse.

Day 16 – Maasai Traditions: Tribal Culture and Connection

The day begins with a visit to the Maasai Market for shopping. Later, we visit a Maasai village, where we are welcomed with traditional song, dance, and conversation. The Maasai are known for their strong commitment to preserving their traditional way of life, offering a meaningful opportunity for cultural exchange and deeper understanding. Overnight in Arusha.

Day 17 – Return to Nairobi: Celebration and Reflection

We travel back to Kenya and return to our retreat center in Nairobi. In the evening, we share a festive meal to celebrate our African journey. Overnight in Nairobi.

Day 18 – January 23, 2027 – Farewell to Africa

The morning is yours to enjoy at your own pace. You may feel drawn to a local market, the Langata Botanical Gardens, or the Bomas of Kenya Cultural Centre to be entertained with traditional tribal dances. In the evening, we bid farewell to Africa and begin the journey home.



Day 19 – January 24, 2027 – Arrival Home

This may be the end of the adventure, but it’s also the beginning of your personal journey to carry your experience forward.

* Unanticipated itinerary changes may be necessary due to local circumstances or needs.