



330 Palos Verdes Blvd. ♦ Redondo Beach, CA 90277 ♦ (310) 375-5528

"The world is a book, and those who do not travel read only a page."

-Saint Augustine

August 14, 2009

Dear Students, Parents, and Past Travelers:

The 2009-2010 school year marks the seventh year of the RHLS Easter trips abroad, and the upcoming trip brings us back to Europe after our visit to Japan last year. Because of the declining dollar in United Kingdom, I have changed the planned trip to Scotland and Ireland in order to make it a more affordable option for families. We will be traveling instead to **France**, providing an opportunity to immerse ourselves in both the life and history of Paris, and also in the medieval past of the French countryside.

This year's trip will be from March 27 – April 7, 2010. Highlights of the trip will include tours of Paris and its districts; a visit to Versailles and Chartres Cathedral; an optional day trip to Normandy; staying in the Medieval village of Rocamadour, which is built on the side of a cliff overlooking the Dordogne River; Easter weekend in the World Heritage city of Carcassonne; and a stay in the French Riviera city of Nice, which will include a visit to Monaco. As with all previous trips, travelers will have free time available to personalize portions of the trip and optional add-on tours on some days. Travel between cities will be via train and bus.

Before getting into the travel details, however, some background on how these trips began may be of interest to the new families entering the middle school. As an avid traveler, I wanted to create an opportunity where RHLS students could broaden their perspectives about history and culture. Social Studies readings no longer needed to remain illustrated by photographs on the page but could be experienced in-person within a new culture and environment. I wanted students to actually walk in the steps of the men and women they read about in their textbooks and in the Bible. At the same time, though, I am not a fan of the "organized tour" and sought to create a travel experience as close as possible to thirty to forty friends deciding to take a trip together – free time and flexibility needed to be paramount. The end result became the Easter vacation trips to southern Italy (2004), England and Scotland (2005), Greece (2006), Spain (2007), northern Italy (2008), and Japan (2009). From staying in the Scottish Highlands at Inverlochy Castle to following the footsteps of the Apostle Paul in Athens and Corinth, special memories have been forged between all of us who have traveled together.

The Easter trips are open to all students in the middle school, their parents, their siblings (ten years and older), and anyone who has previously traveled with us. Students in the sixth grade must be accompanied by an adult, while students in the seventh grade or higher may travel unaccompanied and will be placed in a room with other students traveling alone. As always, previous travelers will be given preference if a waitlist becomes necessary. The trip will be limited to approximately forty participants determined by date of enrollment.

Riviera Village Travel is once again helping me coordinate the trip, and has been able to secure a tour price less than last year's Japan trip and comparable to the 2008 Italy trip. Attached please find an itinerary for the trip, a fact sheet about the trip, and a registration form. **An information meeting will be held on Thursday, September 17 at 6:30 pm** in the Eighth Grade room for those persons interested in learning about where we will be traveling in France, signing-up, or obtaining some more information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sean Lathrom', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Sean Lathrom