

# *Evelyn and Roger Guzman and their ongoing pilgrimage of faith*

Evelyn and Roger Guzman are globe-trotting On Top of the World residents who have circumnavigated the world three times – once by air and twice aboard the luxurious Queen Mary II.

It's unlikely that their deep sense of fernweh can ever be satisfied, but their latest adventure might have done just that.

Roger and Evelyn met while they were university students at a Catholic leadership conference in the Philippines.

After nurturing two children, two grandchildren and one great-grandchild, they hope to celebrate their 55th wedding anniversary next year.

The profound love they feel for each other, for their family and for God, is palpable.

That's what makes their latest trip so meaningful. It was, above all else, a spiritual pilgrimage with a heaping helping of historical beauty, and a good measure of significance thrown in.

In September of last year, Evelyn and Roger flew from their Mississauga, Ontario, home to Medjugorje, in western Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is a destination where more than 40 million people from all faiths and locations go to find peace and spiritual healing.

While there, they heard mass at Saint James Church and attended talks about the Virgin Mary's messages to nuns and priests.

They climbed the Apparition Hill where Our Lady appeared to six children. It was a challenging climb, but worth every step.

The next destination on their trip was the beautiful city of Dubrovnik, affectionately known as the Pearl of the Adriatic. They soaked in the beauty of the Croatian countryside on a three-hour drive, followed by a walking tour of this historic and religious site.

From there they were off to Zagreb, the capital of Croatia, where they enjoyed a city tour with highlights that included Saint Mark's Church, believed to have been built in the 13th century, the Stone Gate and the Assumption Cathedral.

Vienna was their next destination. There they cruised the Danube River, toured Vienna, admired the Ringstrasse

with its marvelous buildings and the St. Stephen and Votive Churches.

They topped off a nearly perfect day with dinner, music and wine in a traditional tavern in Grinzing.

From there, it was off to Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic, where they toured the city and admired Prague Castle, which dates back to the 9th century and is now the official residence of the president.

The Guzmans were amazed by the Astronomical Clock and enjoyed learning about the St. Vitus Cathedral, the Old Town Hall, the Cathedral of Our Lady of Tyne and the Charles Bridge.

They spent time in the Stradov Library, but not nearly enough for their liking.

In her journal, Evelyn wrote:

"We have always prayed to Infant Jesus of Prague and had our requests granted, but never in a million years did we think that we would be visiting him right in the church where he is personally venerated. So, we bought a silver rosary in remembrance of that."

Krakow, Poland, was their next eagerly awaited destination, where they toured the city and visited the Wavel, the Cloth Hall, Market Square, St. Mary's Basilica and the Masterpiece Altar.

In nearby Wadowice, they visited the home where St. John Paul II was born and lived for 18 years.

From there it was on to Lagiewniki to hear mass at the Divine Mercy Basilica, where they also visited the resting place of Saint Faustina Kowalska.

The next day they heard mass at the Black Madonna, the third most visited place of Our Lady.

The last whistle stop on their journey was Wieliczka Salt Mine, where more than a million people each year come to marvel at the complete under-

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by John Koning



Krakow, Poland was a notable stop on the Guzman's latest European adventure.

ground church and chapel, recognized on UNESCO's list of cultural and natural heritage sites.

For Evelyn, it was a trip of immense pleasure and intense pain.

That's because she took a tumble on the slick cobblestones of Vienna. In her typically joyful way, Evelyn pressed on through the pain and Roger was there by her side as he has always been.