

# *Restoring the Power of the Sacred Feminine*

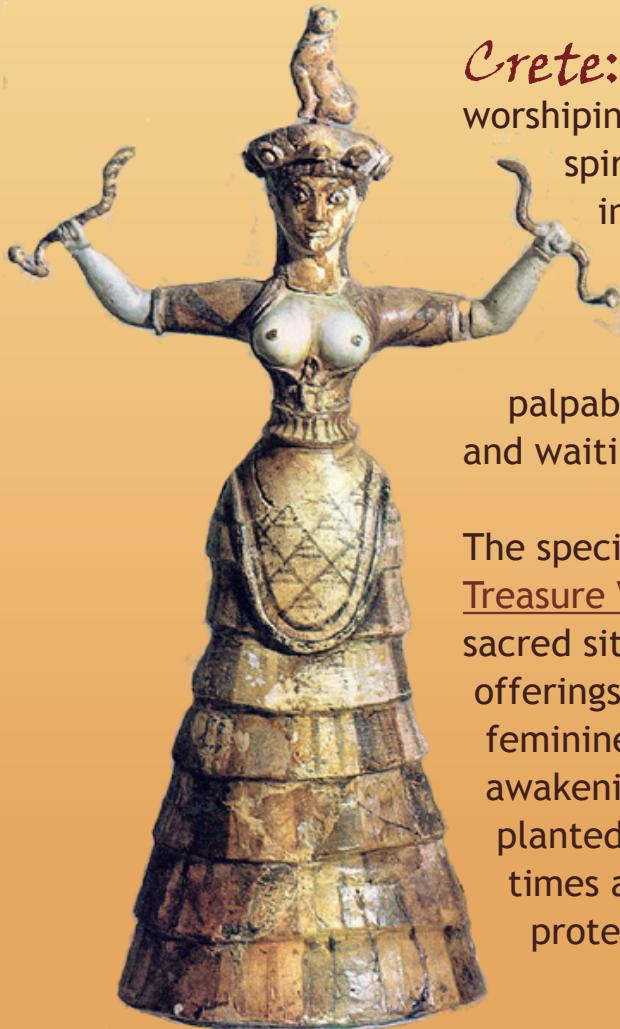
## *An Earth Treasure Vase Pilgrimage to Crete*



With Cynthia Jurs, Brad Laughlin and Eleni and Vasiliki Skrekou

September 14-24, 2019

*Plus Optional Pre-Add-On September 9-13 to the Island of Aegina*



**Crete:** One of the last places on Earth where the goddess-worshiping Neolithic culture thrived—where priestesses held spiritual power, and the masculine and feminine lived in balance and harmony. Minoan society revered fertility, the Great Earth Mother and qualities such as peace, joy, beauty, community, sharing and abundance for all. This extraordinary field is still palpable there—still alive in the palace ruins, land and art—and waiting to be revived in our modern times.

The special vehicle to facilitate our journey will be an Earth Treasure Vase (ETV). Through ceremony, ritual and practice at sacred sites, we will fill this holy vessel with prayers and offerings dedicated to restoring the power of the sacred feminine, balancing the masculine and feminine and awakening joy and beauty. On the Equinox, the Vase will be planted in Crete's fertile soil to seed a new story for these times and connect with a global mandala of healing, protection and renewal for the Earth.

## *The Practice of the Earth Treasure Vases*

Almost 30 years ago, on a life-changing pilgrimage to meet a 106-year-old lama living in a remote cave in Nepal, Cynthia Jurs met the great master, Charok Rinpoche, who gave her the practice of the Earth Treasure Vases when she asked him, “What can we do to bring healing and protection to the Earth?” Since then, these holy vessels have been filled with prayers and offerings and taken around the world to create a mandala of healing and protection for the Earth. Forty-five vases have been accomplished to date, and it has now become clear that an Earth Treasure Vase is needed to serve as a vessel for our prayers and offerings to help restore the sacred feminine in the world.



We will follow the steps of the Minoan Goddess Aphaea from Aegina to Crete. It is here we have been called to bring the Earth Treasure Vase into ceremony at the sacred sites, temples and caves, and among the fertile valleys and mountain villages, connecting us to a mythic landscape that still holds the energy of those long ago times. Together we will seed our practice of sacred activism by planting the Vase on Crete with our prayers, dance, songs and heartfelt offerings for the balance of masculine and feminine in us and in the world.

## *Optional Pre-Add-On, September 9-13, 2019 The Island of Aegina and Myth of Aphaea Athena*

Goddess Aphaea—“the invisible one”—is a potent archetype for our current times, in which the suppressed power of the feminine is reawakening and re-uniting with the out-of-balance masculine energies in the world.



Her story begins on Crete as Vritomatis (“sweet maiden”), a powerful goddess—the alter ego of her sister, Artemis. As the Minoan civilization was ending, King Minos, son of Zeus and Europa, lusted after her. To escape his pursuit, she threw herself into the sea and swam to the island of Aegina, where she was caught in fishermen’s nets. She hid herself away in a cave on top of a hill and became known as Aphaea, “the invisible one”. During patriarchal times, she became associated with the goddess Athena. Above Aphaea’s cave an exquisite Doric temple was erected for Aphaea Athena’s worship, one of the most well-preserved classical temples in Europe today.

On our pilgrimage we will explore this myth, rich with archetypal meaning. Taking the ETV to the Aphaea Athena temple—amidst a tranquil, forested area with breathtaking views—we will invite Aphaea, the invisible goddess, to reemerge and accompany us back to Crete on our journey of restoring the power of the sacred feminine.

# *Aegina, Amforeas Estate and the Skrekou Sisters*

We will begin our pilgrimage on the island of Aegina where we will stay at the beautiful [Amforeas Leisure Estate](#), home of our dear friends, the Skrekou family. Sisters Vasiliki and Eleni will not only host us on Aegina but also accompany us on our Cretan

pilgrimage, serving as our local Earth Treasure Vase stewards. While briefly hosting an ETV for Turkey, the sisters resonated deeply with the practice. And as fate would have it, the name of their estate, Amforeas, means sacred vessel or vase! Now they feel a strong calling to act as stewards for the first ETV to be buried in Hellenic soil. Along our journey they will very graciously open rare and precious doors for us to experience their local, authentic and personal



Hellas (Greece). This is one of the greatest gifts we receive on our intimate journey to this beautiful country.

Eleni has been living for years on Aegina and Crete, hearing the call of Aphrodite and Zeus. She has been exploring the interconnections of archetypes and places through mythology, archaeology, psychology and philosophy, as well as through personal insights and visions. Throughout our journey she will share with us her fascinating findings, unraveling the thread of mythological archaeology from Aegina to Crete.

As part of our ceremonies, Vasiliki will lead us in ancient, traditional, sacred dance rituals. She calls this [Hellenic Archetypal Expression](#), a psychosomatic technique she is developing, utilizing the ancient alphabet of improvised bodily movement and sound to facilitate integration, release and embodiment of the energies we long to reawaken on this pilgrimage.



# *Our Mythic Journey on Crete*

Traveling on to Crete, we will weave the mythic elements throughout our journey as we visit ancient sacred sites, archaeological ruins and places of great spiritual power and natural beauty. Our pilgrimage on Crete begins with the full moon in Pisces, sign of transcendence and unity. As we travel, we will explore the deeper meaning of the myths associated with the sites, often revealing fascinating insights about the transition from the Neolithic era into the Patriarchal era and the imbalances occurring then between the masculine and feminine. We will also explore how they relate to our current time of transition from the Patriarchal era into a new paradigm of heart-centered consciousness and masculine-feminine balance.



*Some of the sites we will visit include:*

**Ruins of the Palace at Knossos:** This ceremonial and political center of Minoan civilization is associated with the famous labyrinth myth: King Minos lived here and had a labyrinth constructed in which to retain his son, the Minotaur, who was half man, half bull and who ritually devoured Athenian youth. Theseus, a prince from Athens, sailed to Crete to fight the powerful creature. The king's daughter, Ariadne, fell in love with Theseus. Before he entered the labyrinth to fight the Minotaur, Ariadne gave him a ball of golden thread, which he unwound while navigating the Labyrinth so that he could find his way back by following it. Theseus succeeded in killing the Minotaur and escaped with Ariadne.

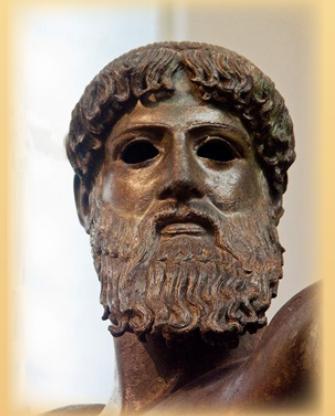


**Heraklion Archaeological Museum:** The superabundance of Minoan frescoes, statues, pottery, jewelry and other art here evoke an exquisite feminine energy. Often depicting the female form and aspects of nature, the curvaceous, flowing and sometimes whimsical designs convey a feeling of joy and beauty. The Minoan energy in these magnificent pieces is still alive, uplifting and infectious. From gallery to gallery we will explore the change in vibration of each phase of the Minoan culture from the goddess-worshiping beauty, lightness and flow, to patriarchal rigidity and austerity.



**Cave of Zeus at Mount Ida:** Newborn

Zeus was hidden in this cave by his mother Rhea to escape the rage of his father, Kronos, who ate his children for fear of their taking his power. Rhea gave Kronos a stone wrapped as a baby to swallow instead. It is here that the father of the gods took his first steps and brought qualities of unification to the land of Crete. Zeus means the one who pairs the two poles, the integrator. In Minoan iconography he is the male counterpart of the goddess; however, later, in patriarchal times he acquired the opposite quality, one of division, of separation. Now in modern Hellenic language he is called Dias, literally meaning the one who separates.



**Ruins of the Phaestos Palace:** While a kind of sister palace to Knossos, Phaestos is more off the beaten tourist route. When



we visited previously, we were able to find quiet places to sit, meditate, feel the energy and experience the Minoan culture as still alive! For those who are sensitive, the joy, beauty and reverence for the feminine energy are palpable here. Balance, peace and happiness permeate these ancient ruins.

**Amari Valley:** This magnificent, verdant valley is identified in Cretan mythology as the holy grove of Amarios (immortal) Zeus. Myth and land blend in a magical way in this hidden gem of Crete that resides timeless and protected from modern-time invasions. Our base will be Meronas, a small, picturesque village off the beaten tourist path.

Meronas sits high atop a hill, overlooking Amari Valley and Mount Ida. We will explore the quaint village, stroll along beautiful mountain trails, visit ancient ruins, hear the many local myths and sample the local delicacies. The kindness of the locals and the fecundity of the Earth are highlights. We will connect with Cretan nature during our stay in

luxury, walk-in tents with wooden floors and en suite bathrooms at an eco-camp in a peaceful, forested area just outside the village.



**Asterousia:** The birthplace of Minoan civilization. Here in Gortys, disguised as a bull, Zeus mated with Europa. Bearing three sons, she was given by Zeus to Asterion, the eponymous first King of Crete, in marriage. Europa and Asterion raised Zeus's sons, who grew up to create the first kingdoms of Crete.

We will hold ceremonies in Gortys, and immerse ourselves in the secret hideouts of the goddess. We plan to bury the Earth Treasure Vase in this region on the Equinox. We will stay at the unique, traditional and beautifully renovated village, Thalori. From here we can explore the area with local friends, including Manolis, an organic farmer and keeper of the goddess wisdom, who will prepare a delicious, healing meal for us in his home, and Nikos, a keeper of the ancient art of grape distillation and wine making. During our stay, we will visit beautiful nearby beaches where we will integrate our experiences and celebrate at the sea.



## About Your Facilitators

Cynthia Jurs is a Lama in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition and a Dharmacharya in the Order of Interbeing of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh. For 30 years she has been the guiding teacher at Open Way Sangha in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where she teaches a dharma path of sacred activism in response to the call of the Earth. Cynthia also directs the nonprofit, Alliance for the Earth, which is dedicated to facilitating a global community committed to planetary healing and collective awakening through the Earth Treasure Vase Global Healing Project and supporting the Peace Hut Alliance for Conflict Transformation, a mindfulness-based peace-building program in Liberia, Africa. Since receiving the practice of the Earth Treasure Vases, Cynthia has led pilgrimages worldwide to create a global mandala of healing and protection for the Earth. She is currently at work on a book and documentary film entitled, Summoned By The Earth.



Brad Laughlin is the Executive Director of the international non-profit organization, CoreLight, which is dedicated to fostering outer peace in the world through developing personal inner peace. For over 20 years he has taught classes in the transformation of consciousness, using innovative ways of helping people awaken during these times of great change—the Squares technique being one of the most effective ways of unifying polarity and moving beyond separation, which we will explore on this particular pilgrimage. He is the co-author of books, which offer tools, guidance and inspiration for spiritual transformation through the teachings of non-duality. Brad facilitates journeys to sacred sites worldwide, focusing on meditation, prayer and ceremony on the Earth's ley lines. He is a co-founder of Seeds of Light, CoreLight's humanitarian arm, serving marginalized communities and AIDS orphans in South Africa. He has a B.S. degree from Duke University and when not with his life-partner, Leslie Temple-Thurston, in South Africa, is traveling and offering events in other parts of the world.



Vasiliki Skrekou is the co-owner and director of Amforeas Leisure and Integration Estate on the island of Aegina, Hellas. Amforeas, meaning sacred vessel, is a guest house and retreat center founded to facilitate the transition of consciousness from duality to synthesis and unity, thus re-creating our “ancient future”. Her academic background includes a B.A.

in Business Administration from the Economic University of Athens and an MSc in Consciousness and Transpersonal Psychology from John Moore University. She has been teaching laughter therapy and certifying Laughter Yoga leaders since 2008, initiating the Social Laughter Club movement in her country. Her theatrical experience includes acting, writing and producing. For the past four years, she has been developing Hellenic Archetypal Expression, which is a blend of psychological astrology and hieroglyphic bodily movements from ancient Hellas, the orient, Sufism and bodydynamic psychotherapy for the purposes of healing and integration. She offers Hellenic Archetypal Expression in personal sessions and retreats with Amforeas Estate as her base.

*Eleni Skrekou* is a life-long researcher of what makes us Human. Inspired by long-forgotten cultures, she strives to reconstruct the mythos (thread) that connects past, present and future. To this end, after receiving a Bsc in Economics from the University of Athens, she went on to receive an MA in Archaeology and an MSc in Geoarchaeology from Reading University, focusing on prehistoric Aegean civilizations. Called to an immersion into the field of Crete, in 2010 she moved to Gavdos, and joined PIFEA, a multinational commune exploring, by means of applied philosophy and mystery, the predestination of Humanity, namely enlightened embodiment. Since December 2012, following the calling of Zeus, Aphaea, Athena and Medusa, she has been living between Crete and Aegina, exploring these archetypal qualities, which seek integration in a New Human Civilization. Currently, she lives on Aegina and is the co-owner and retreat facilitator of Amforeas Estate, where she offers MindBodyWellness coaching, based on the principles of Eating Psychology and Expansion Method.



*Katia and Maria Mavrelli*, Tour Organizers: Inspiration Ventures was born out of passion, experience, and love for Greece and classical education. With an accumulated experience in the travel industry of over 50 years, Maria and Katia Mavrelli, mother

and daughter, are always ready to craft tailor-made itineraries to Greece based on the unique theme, needs and dynamics of each group. “As Greek boutique tour operators, we are deeply rooted in our local history and culture. It is always an honour and a pleasure for us to welcome in our country guests from all over the world who value not only the history, ancient sites, landscape and gastronomy, but also the secret spiritual gifts that Greece has to offer”.



# Tentative Itinerary: September 2019

Please note that our itinerary is subject to change.



Sept. 9 Optional pre-add-on begins. Arrive Athens and transfer to our hotel, Acropolis Select (or similar). Delicious rooftop dinner with Acropolis view.

Sept. 10 Free morning. Choose to sleep in or take a self-guided tour to the famed Acropolis and Parthenon, pinnacle of Hellenic Classical architecture, to pay tribute to Athena, patron goddess of the city. Brad will accompany those who wish to go and point out the crossing of the Athena (feminine) and Apollo (masculine) ley lines, which form a key node on the Archangel Michael-Apollo axis, one of Earth's primary meridians, where we can meditate and feel the energy. Afternoon ferry to Aegina to meet our hosts the Skrekou family. Overnight at their beautiful home, Amforeas Leisure Estate.

Sept. 11-12 Opening circle; initiation of the ETV with meditation, ceremonies and sacred dance-movement with Vasiliki, including at the Aphaea Athena Temple; exploration of the mythos of the island with Eleni; bathing in the clear, turquoise Mediterranean; dining at quaint, local beach tavernas. Overnight Amforeas.

Sept. 13 Late afternoon ferry to Athens, where we board the overnight ferry to Crete. Sleep peacefully

in your private cabin as we sail across the Mediterranean under the full moon.



Sept. 14 Main retreat begins. Full moon. Early arrival at Heraklion Port, Crete. Morning visit to Knossos Palace ruins, tracing the epic journey of the hero Theseus, who slayed the Minotaur in the labyrinth. Check in to our hotel in the peaceful countryside. Afternoon at rest. Evening full moon ETV ceremony.



Sept. 15-16 Visits to Cave of Zeus and Heraklion Archaeological Museum to explore exquisite Minoan art; ETV ceremonies; deepening in meditation; sacred dance-movement; exploring mythos.

Sept. 17 Drive to the picturesque, mountaintop village of Meronas, with stunning views of the Amari Valley, where we will stay in luxury tents at an eco-village in the peaceful woods, drink pure mountain spring water and sample the delicious, local fruits of the Earth.

Sept. 18-19 Outdoor adventure with our host George to a pristine, private beach, easily accessible by kayak. Walk along mountain trails with exquisite panoramas. Explore the village and meet local town folk, including Aris, a lover of Amari nature and myth and self-described devotee of Pan. ETV ceremony.



Sept. 20 Drive to Asterousia, birthplace of Minoan civilization. Visit the Palace ruins of Phaestos, where the joy and beauty of the Minoan culture is still alive and palpable at a subtle level. Check into our comfortable, charming hotel, Thalori, from which we will explore the surrounding area, rich with history and myth.

Sept. 21-23 Visits to: Gortys, the mythic site where Zeus mated with Europa; the home of Manolis, organic farmer, chef and keeper of the goddess wisdom, who will prepare a meal for us; the traditional handmade distillery and winery of Nikos where we will taste fine raki and local delicacies.



The culmination of our journey is the burial of the ETV on the Equinox, when we will plant the seed of a new story of masculine-feminine balance in Crete's fertile soil. Final day at leisure to explore the region and integrate our experience. Optional activities include walks in nature, horse riding, time at a secluded beach, or just relax.

Sept. 24 Departures from Heraklion port or airport for home,

or...continue your Greek adventure on your own with the help of Inspiration Ventures!

## *Logistics*

**Early-bird discount for main Crete retreat (Sept 14-24):** If you register by January 15, 2019, the cost of the main Crete retreat is \$5,950—a savings of \$500 off the regular price. The regular price (after January 15, 2019) is \$6,450.

**Optional pre-add-on to Athens-Aegina (Sept 9-13):** The cost is \$1,850. A minimum of four participants is required for the Athens-Aegina retreat. If you register for it, we will be in contact with you to confirm the status as soon as we know, and your deposit for the add-on will not be processed until that time.

**The trip includes:** all meals, all lodging and domestic transportation in Greece/Hellas.

**The trip does not include:** Airfare and items such as: laundry, phone calls, snacks, and alcoholic beverages.

**The optional pre-add-on does not include:** transfers to-from Athens airport.

**Single occupancy for main Crete retreat:** Please add \$1,100 to the cost of the retreat.

**Single occupancy for optional pre-add-on to Athens-Aegina:** Please add \$400 to the cost of the retreat. We will offer singles where available and will let you know as soon as we know if they are available, which may be closer to the time of the retreat. The single supplement fee will be billed to your credit card at that time. If singles are not available everywhere, the fee may be less.



**Deposit:** A non-refundable, non-transferable deposit of \$950 is required to reserve your space. Half the balance is due by April 15, 2019. The final balance is due by June 15, 2019.

**Arrival for optional pre-add-on:** Please arrive in Athens no later than the afternoon of September 9, 2019. **Arrival for main Crete retreat:** Please arrive in Heraklion, Crete no later than the afternoon of September 14, 2019.

**Early arrivals:** If you want to arrive a day or more early, this can be arranged via our guides at Inspiration Ventures, Katia and Maria Mavrelli. They are also available to arrange tours following our retreat if you want to stay longer. **After we receive your application and deposit:** Upon acceptance,

we will send you further logistical information. To attend, you will be required to purchase travel medical insurance, including “medical evacuation” insurance with a minimum deductible of \$100,000. (Approximately \$100.)



## *Refund Policy*

We strongly recommend that you take out travel insurance in the event that you have to cancel your trip for any reason. Our cancellation policy is that all monies paid are non-refundable. If we have to cancel due to what we perceive as conditions that would jeopardize the health or safety of our travelers, all money will be refunded or applied to a later journey. We have never had to cancel for these reasons in our 20-year history.

*To apply for the trip, please complete the application below and send to Dhari Gray at CoreLight:  
[dhari@corelight.org](mailto:dhari@corelight.org) Dhari can be reached at (505) 424-8844, extension 2.*

# *Restoring the Power of the Sacred Feminine An Earth Treasure Vase Pilgrimage to Crete*

With Cynthia Jurs, Brad Laughlin and Eleni and Vasiliki Skrekou

Main Crete Retreat: September 14-24, 2019

Optional Pre-Add-On to Athens-Aegina: September 9-13, 2019

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please add me to CoreLight's and Alliance for the Earth's email lists.

**Early-bird discount for main Crete retreat:** If you register by January 15, 2019, the cost of the retreat is \$5,950.

**The regular price for main Crete retreat** (after January 15) is \$6,450.

**Optional pre-add-on to Athens-Aegina:** The cost is \$1,850. This fee will not be processed until we confirm a minimum of four participants.

**The trip includes:** all meals, all lodging and domestic transportation in Greece/Hellas.

**The trip does not include:** Airfare, transfers to-from Athens airport and items such as: laundry, phone calls, snacks, and alcoholic beverages.

**The optional pre-add-on does not include:** transfers to-from Athens airport.

## **ROOMMATE SELECTION**

- Name of preferred roommate: \_\_\_\_\_  
(I have made a confirmed agreement with this person.)
- I do not have a preferred roommate; please choose one for me.
- I would like a single room for the main Crete retreat (which is \$1,100 extra).
- I would like a single room for the pre-add-on to Athens-Aegina (which is \$400 extra).

## **PAYMENT SCHEDULE**

- Please charge the nonrefundable deposit of \$950 USD to my credit card below.  
Or contact Dhari Gray at [dhari@corelight.org](mailto:dhari@corelight.org) or (505) 424-8844 ext. 2.
- Please charge half the non-refundable balance due to my credit card below on April 15, 2019.
- Please charge the final non-refundable balance due to my credit card below on June 15, 2019.
- Please charge the non-refundable pre-add-on cost of \$1,850 to my credit card below when a minimum of four participants is confirmed.

Name on card: \_\_\_\_\_

Your CC #: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Address (City, State, Zip): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPLICATION ESSAY:** Please write a short essay answering the following questions: What are your intentions for coming to the retreat? Please explain what you hope to receive from the experience and what you hope to give. How would you respond if for some unexpected reason, there arose the need to change the itinerary of the pilgrimage? How would you feel and how would you act?

**Please return this form to:**

CoreLight, 223 North Guadalupe Street # 275, Santa Fe, NM 87501-1850

Phone: (505) 424-8844 ext. 2 / Fax: (505) 424-8848 / Email:[dhari@corelight.org](mailto:dhari@corelight.org)

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Main Crete Retreat: September 14-24, 2019

Optional Pre-Add-On to Athens-Aegina: September 9-13, 2019

Please read and sign:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby release CoreLight, Brad Laughlin, Alliance for the Earth and Cynthia Jurs from any injury or damage which I may sustain during the retreat in Greece, September 9-24, 2019. The right is reserved to alter the itinerary or to cancel the tour prior to departure. In the event that this trip is cancelled, liability will be limited to a refund of all payments received. The right is reserved to decline to accept or retain any person at any time should such person's health, mental condition, physical infirmity or general deportment impede the welfare and enjoyment of other participants. Any physical disability requiring special attention or treatment must be reported when this application is presented. We recommend the purchase of travel accident insurance, baggage insurance and trip cancellation insurance.

This pilgrimage involves hiking and walking on uneven ground, on mountain paths and up and down steps. For the optional pre-add-on, the ferry between Athens and the island of Aegina is about a one-hour ride each way, and the overnight ferry between Athens and Crete is about a nine-hour ride one-way. For several days on the main Crete retreat, we will be driving on curving, mountainous roads.

- I have physical issues that may prevent me from being able to cope with the walking, hiking and/or boat rides and /or riding in a bus on curving, mountainous roads. (Please describe on a separate page.)
- I am in good physical shape, will have no trouble walking and hiking, and am okay with both boat rides and with riding in a bus on curving, mountainous roads.
- I have read the above and agree to the terms and conditions as stated.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

In case of emergency, please name a contact person:

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone numbers: \_\_\_\_\_

Physician: \_\_\_\_\_ Physician's Ph. #: \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any health conditions (heart disease, diabetes, etc.) that we should know about? If yes, please describe, and add a page if necessary:

Do you have any dietary restrictions? If yes, please describe:

**Please return this form to:**

CoreLight, 223 North Guadalupe Street # 275, Santa Fe, NM 87501-1850

Phone: (505) 424-8844 ext. 2 / Fax: (505) 424-8848 / Email:[dhari@corelight.org](mailto:dhari@corelight.org)

