The Virgin Mary church on Tinos Island is one of most important pilgrimage places in Greece and more generally in the Orthodox Christian World. The Pilgrimage developed during the 19th century, after the discovery of the icon of Panagia Evangelistria, meaning Our Lady of Good Tidings.

The icon, presented in a monumental church was built in the 19th century, and brought thousands of visitors and pilgrims in Tinos throughout the years. Because of the early development of pilgrimage in Tinos, tourism patterns on this island took a radically different orientation than neighboring islands in the Cyclades such as, for example, Mykonos.

During the last years, in a context of profound social changes, pilgrimage tourism has been experiencing a decrease. At the same time other types of tourism are developing. A conflict of image positioning, but also of the tourism product starts to be perceived in Tinos. On the one hand, pilgrimage protected the island from some forms of tourism that are already criticized, preparing thus the floor for alternative forms of tourism. On the other hand, the religious identity of the island is clearly not compatible with new tourism demands. Island authorities are therefore at a crossroad, trying to develop a more complex and sophisticated tourism product giving emphasis to the high quality gastronomic products of the island, to culture and art, and to the incredible and very well preserved landscape of Tinos.

The inscription of traditional marble craftsmanship in the Representative List of intangible heritage of UNESCO in 2015 offers the possibility to the local decision makers to develop a new image for Tinos, without blurring its religious imaginary - the church of Panagia Evangelistria, but also the hundred other village or rural churches of the island being the best illustrations of the incredible local marble craftsmanship.

Tinos is a particular interesting case of a tourism destination that capitalizes on former and current pilgrimage tourism in order to build, for the next years, a more complex and sophisticated tourism product.