

Pilgrimage Issue

THE EPISCOPAL NEW YORKER

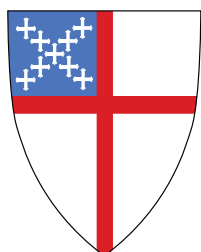
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William Blake, *Christian Reading in His Book*. Watercolor, from Blake's unfinished series illustrating John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

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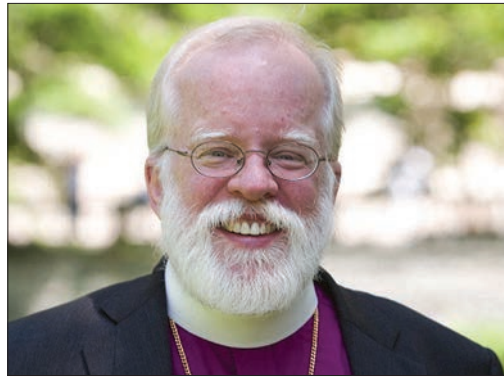
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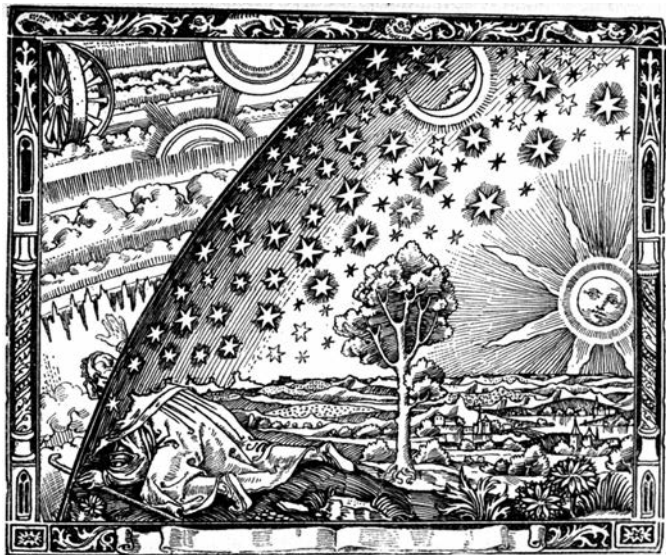


I Carry My Pilgrimage with Me

By the Rt. Rev. Andrew M.L. Dietsche

I have two shelves of a bookcase in my home office which are filled with a whole lot of small rocks and stones. Over many years I have gathered them at places of extraordinary spiritual significance for me. They range from a palm-sized slab of mortar from the stone dock my grandfather built in West Virginia's Greenbrier River; to a small piece of red brick calved from an outbuilding at William Faulkner's Mississippi home Rowan Oak; to two ancient fossilized clams from the beach where Margaret went into labor with our second child; to a scorched broken chunk of the rubble inside our cathedral on the morning following the fire in 2001. For a long time, it still smelled like smoke. And there are rocks from the cotton field of my father-in-law's farm; and a stone I collected from the icy Yukon River in the arctic village of Venetie during the House of Bishops meeting in Alaska last fall; and a few pebbles from the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. And more...

I guess I carry my pilgrimage with me. Because when I look at those shelves and those stones I remember exactly where they came from, and I can still see my hand reaching down for them. I remember why I was there and why it mattered. And I remember that in each of these places I had an authentic experience of God and I knew it while it was happening, and tried to understand. And I felt the movement of the Holy Spirit pass by. And when I pick the stones up again and turn them in my hand, the same Spirit comes to me and takes me back.



Un missionnaire du moyen âge raconte qu'il avait trouvé le point où le ciel et la Terre se touchent...

Once someone defined "place" as "space where important things have happened." These rocks came from places where, at least to my sight and maybe mine only, the world shifted on its axis for a second. Where important things happened. Some of these places have formed the background to my dreams for all my life. Joshua stood on the banks of the promised land and looked back at the Jordan River, and he said to the Hebrew people, "When your children ask you in time to come, 'What do these stones mean?,' you tell them how God stretched out his mighty arm and brought you through many dangers to this new place; a place of milk and honey." That is how I think about the stones scattered on my bookshelf. What do these stones mean? I pick them up, and in the labyrinth of my imagination I retrace the winding, mysterious path that has been the pilgrimage of my life.

All religious people make pilgrimage. This is a universal need and desire. Christians get up and go away and spend five weeks

walking the Camino de Santiago in Spain. Or they dwell apart for a month and follow the Ignatian Exercises. Or they keep a miniature labyrinth on their desk and trace it with their finger, and make the pilgrimage in their heart right in the middle of their workday. Many have followed the Way of the Cross through the narrow lanes of the Old City of Jerusalem. I have done that, but I have also walked the same pilgrim path at the Stations of the Cross in our churches, or on the large bronze medallions embedded in the floor of our cathedral which mark the Pilgrim Pavement to the high altar. We can follow highways or flight paths or mountain trails into far-away places or we can be a pilgrim right where we are, but there must be some kind of movement, however we define and understand that. After the mythological beginnings of the Bible, the first word God spoke to an historical person was Go. "Go," God said to Abraham, "from your father's house, and I will show you something you've never thought of in a place you've never been."

It is very easy to move through this world following the blue dot on the blue line on your Google Maps app. It is all too easy to move through this world for years and years and never know where you are. Probably all of us sleepwalk through life from time to time, but Jesus invites us to live much more interesting lives, certainly more meaningful lives, and to trace our path through this world awake and aware, paying attention to the things God puts in front of us and the people God joins us to and the places where God leads us. And see and remember. In the middle of a long journey, and after a fitful night, Jacob woke and looked about himself and said, "Surely the Lord was in this place and I didn't know it." And he set up a stone (What do these stones mean?), so everyone could find it again. That is what pilgrims do.

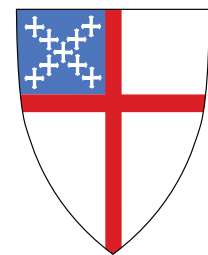
So that it is possible, though it takes attention and intention, to be a traveler, a sojourner, moving from clearing to clearing in the thicket of this world, attuned to the thin places where God is just that close, and to the places where those who went before us showed that they were brave and strong and faithful when all the odds were against them, and to the places where love happened, and to the places where things were revealed that could not have been known in any other way but by having them shown to us, and to the places where others helped us and guided us, and step by step and learning by learning we became the adult faithful we now are. And maybe saw things we had never thought of in places we had never been. And remembered.

+Andy



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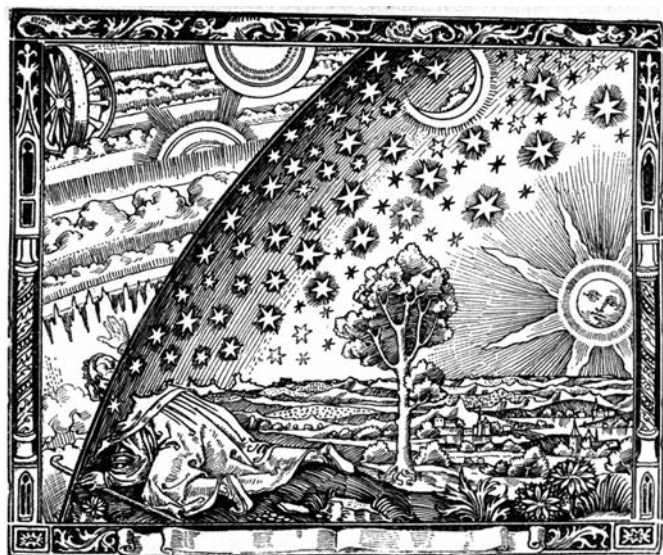
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Me Llevo Mi Peregrinaje Conmigo

Por el Revdmo. Obispo Andrew M.L. Dietsche

Tengo dos estantes de un librero en la oficina de mi casa los cuales están colmados de muchas piedrecitas y rocas. Durante muchos años las he recogido en lugares de una significación espiritual extraordinaria. Ellas varían desde una losa de argamasa del tamaño de la palma de una mano de un muelle de piedra que mi abuelo construyó en el Río Greenbrier de West Virginia; hasta un pedazo pequeño de ladrillo rojo, arrancado de una dependencia de la casa con nombre Rowan Oak de William Faulkner en Mississipi; dos almejas de tiempos ancestrales fosilizadas que encontré en la playa donde Margaret dio a luz a nuestro segundo hijo; hasta un pedazo de escombros calcinado que recogí dentro de

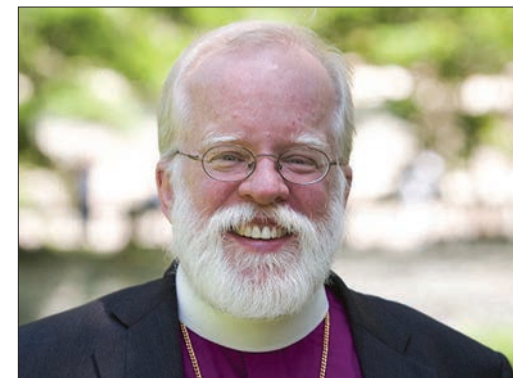


Un missionnaire du moyen âge raconte qu'il avait trouvé le point où le ciel et la Terre se touchent...

en Alaska el pasado otoño, y algunos guijarros del Monte del Templo en Jerusalén. Y más...

Supongo que llevo conmigo mi peregrinaje. Ya que cuando miro a esos estantes y a esas piedras recuerdo exactamente de donde provienen, y aún puedo ver mi mano extendiéndose para recogerlas. Recuerdo el motivo por los cuales estaba allí y el porqué de su importancia. Yo recuerdo que en cada uno de esos lugares yo tuve una experiencia auténtica de Dios y lo supe mientras sucedía, e intenté entender. Y sentí el movimiento del Espíritu Santo de cerca. Y cuando recojo las piedras nuevamente y les doy vueltas en mi mano, siento el mismo Espíritu y me trae esos recuerdos.

Una vez alguien a definido “lugar” como “un espacio donde hayan ocurrido cosas importantes.” Esas piedras vinieron de lugares donde, al menos desde mi perspectiva y quizás sea sólo la mía, el mundo se movió sobre su eje por un segundo. Donde cosas importantes ocurrieron. Algunos de esos lugares han formado el trasfondo de mis sueños para toda mi vida. Joshua se paró en los márgenes de la tierra prometida y miró de nuevo al Río Jordán, y él le dijo al pueblo hebreo, “Cuando sus hijos les pregunten en tiempos venideros, ‘¿Qué significado tienen esas piedras?, ‘ustedes les dicen a ellos cómo Dios extendió su brazo poderoso y los trajo a este nuevo lugar atravesando muchos peligros; un lugar donde hay leche y miel.” Es así como pienso de las piedras esparcidas en mis estantes. ¿Qué significan esas piedras? Yo las recojo, y en el laber-



into de mi imaginación rememoro el sendero sinuoso, misterioso que ha sido el peregrinaje de mi vida

Todas las personas religiosas realizan un peregrinaje. Esa es una necesidad y un deseo universal. Los cristianos vamos y pasamos cinco semanas caminando en el Camino de Santiago de Compostela en España. O se van a vivir a un lugar apartado por un mes y cumplen con los ejercicios de San Ignacio. O ellos conservan un laberinto en miniatura en sus escritorios y lo recorren con sus dedos, y realizan el peregrinaje en sus corazones en medio de su jornada laboral. Muchos han seguido el Vía Crucis a lo largo de los carriles angostos de la Ciudad Vieja de Jerusalén. Yo he hecho eso, pero también he caminado la misma peregrinación en la Estación del Vía Crucis en nuestras iglesias, o sobre los medallones de bronce incrustados en el piso de nuestra catedral que marca el Pavimento del Peregrino hasta el altar mayor. Puede que recorramos carreteras, rutas aéreas o senderos montañosos en lugares remotos o podemos peregrinar aquí mismo donde estamos, pero debe haber algún tipo de movimiento, como sea que lo definamos y entendamos. Después de los inicios mitológicos de la biblia, la primera palabra que Dios le dijo a un personaje histórico fue Vete. “Vete” Dios le dijo a Abraham, “de la casa de tu padre, y te mostraré algo que nunca imaginaste en un lugar donde nunca has estado.”

Es muy fácil moverse a lo largo de este mundo siguiendo el punto azul sobre la línea azul en su Aplicación de Google Maps. Es demasiado fácil movernos a lo largo de este mundo por años y nunca saber dónde estamos. Probablemente todos nosotros hemos camino dormidos a través de la vida de vez en cuando, pero Jesús nos invita a vivir vidas mucho más interesantes, ciertamente vidas más significativas, y trazarnos un sendero a través de este mundo despiertos y conscientes, poniendo atención a las cosas que Dios nos pone enfrente y las personas con las cuales Dios nos junta y los lugares donde Dios nos lleva. Ver y recordar. En medio de un largo viaje, y después de una inquieta noche, Jacobo se levantó y miró a su alrededor y dijo: “Seguramente el Señor estuvo en este lugar y yo no lo sabía.” Y él erigió una piedra en ese lugar (¿Qué significan esas piedras?), de esa manera todos la podían encontrar otra vez. Eso es lo que hacen los peregrinos.

Esto es posible, aunque requiera atención e intención, ser un viajero, un forastero, moverse de espacios abiertos a espacios abiertos en la espesura de este mundo, en sintonía con los lugares donde la tierra y el cielo están más cercanos, donde Dios está simplemente más cerca, y a los lugares donde aquellos que fueron antes que nosotros mostraron que ellos fueron valientes y fuertes y fieles cuando todo estaba en su contra, y a los lugares donde se enamoraron, y a los lugares donde fueron reveladas las cosas que no podríamos conocer de ninguna forma, salvo al tenerlos a ellos para que nos mostraran, y a los lugares donde otros nos ayudaron y guiaron, y paso a paso aprendiendo a aprender nos convertimos en los adultos fieles que ahora somos. Y quizás vimos cosas que nunca imaginamos en lugares donde nunca habíamos estado. Y recordamos.

+Andy

Invaders or Pilgrims?

By the Rt. Rev. Allen K. Shin

Pilgrimage is a rather modern term, with a first known usage dating to the 13th century. It comes from the 11th century French word, *pelegrimage*, which simply means “a distant journey,” and the word, pilgrim, comes from the French word, *pelerin*, which means “foreigner, stranger.” In the Christian tradition, pilgrimage has its origin in the early liturgy. The Latin word *peregrinatio* refers to a liturgical devotion in Jerusalem dating back to the 4th century. In the Greek Orthodox tradition, *proskinima* refers to a journey to a shrine, and is a devotional act performed on entering the church. In the Middle Ages, crusades were often called pilgrimage and crusaders, pilgrims. It is most likely during this period that the word pilgrimage took on its current spiritual dimension, having previously simply being a distant journey.

Since the 1970s many anthropologists have engaged in studying pilgrimage. Victor and Edith Turner, in their groundbreaking 1978 work, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture*, observed that “If mysticism is an interior pilgrimage, pilgrimage is exteriorized mysticism.” They focused on the ritual dimension of pilgrimage and argued that it allowed participants to leave behind the conflicts, difficulties, guilt and occasions of sin of everyday life. Renato Rosaldo, in his 1989 book, *Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis*, expanded the social implications of the ritual perspective of pilgrimage and noted that if rituals are busy intersections where a number of distinct social processes intersect, then pilgrimage is one of the busiest intersections in the ritual world. Pilgrimage has political implications derived from the pilgrims’ engagement with the sacred, and may at times in some places reflect newly resurgent forms of nationalism or identity. Lately, the global nature of pilgrimage has also attracted much attention.



One study of particular interest to me is *Pilgrimage and Healing*, edited by Michael Winkelman and Jill Dubisch and published in 2005. While pilgrimage is motivated by a variety of needs and desires, and driven by a range of individual and communal motives, the authors noted that a powerful common theme of spiritual healing and transformation can be observed in many historical and contemporary pilgrimage accounts. They therefore propose healing, transformation and popular empowerment as three important dimensions of pilgrimage. Of these, popular empowerment is to me particularly intriguing.

I cannot help thinking about the connection between pilgrimage and migration: both are rooted in deep-seated spiritual yearning and need. Human beings began migrating far and wide a long, long time ago. Migration is a part of human DNA—and pilgrimage is rooted in the same spiritual instinct. When, therefore, migration is described as invasion, and migrants as invaders or criminals, spiritual integrity and human dignity are denied to those who travel far in search of healing and transformation. The Bible is filled with stories of migration, each of which has spiritual meaning and purpose: whatever the journey, God’s redemptive grace is discerned in its events. If God’s grace can be discerned in Abraham’s migration to Canaan and in Jacob’s migration to Egypt, can we also discern it in the migration and refugee crisis of today? Can we walk with grace alongside those who have traveled thousands of miles in search of healing and transformation, and stop denigrating them as invaders or criminals, but instead see them as pilgrims in search of healing and transformation?

+ Allen

¿Invasores o Peregrinos?

Por el Revdmo. Obispo Allen K. Shin

El peregrinaje es más bien un término moderno, con su uso inicial fechada al siglo 13. Procede de la palabra francesa, *pelegrimage*, del siglo 11 que simplemente significa “un viaje distante”, y la palabra, peregrino, procede de la palabra francesa, *pelerin*, la cual significa, “forastero, extranjero.” En la tradición cristiana, el peregrinaje tiene su origen en la antigua liturgia. La palabra en latín, *peregrinatio*, se refiere a una devoción litúrgica en Jerusalén, que se remonta al siglo 4. En la tradición Ortodoxa Griega, *proskinima*, se refiere a un viaje a un santuario, y es un acto devocional realizado al entrar a la iglesia. En el medioevo, las cruzadas con frecuencia eran llamadas peregrinaje y a los cruzados, peregrinos. Los más probable que durante ese período la palabra peregrinaje adquirió la dimensión espiritual actual, la cual en un principio simplemente era un viaje distante.

Desde la década que inició en el 1970, muchos antropólogos se han ocupado en estudiar el peregrinaje. Víctor y Edith Turner, en su trabajo innovador de 1978, *Imagen y Peregrinaje en la Cultura Cristiana*, observaron que “Si el misticismo es un peregrinaje interior, el peregrinaje es un misticismo exteriorizado.” Ellos se centraron en la dimensión del ritual de peregrinaje y arguyen que les permitían a los participantes dejar atrás los conflictos, dificultades, culpa y en ocasiones el pecado de sus vidas diarias. Renato Rosaldo, en su libro de 1989, *Cultura y Verdad: La Nueva Versión del Análisis Social*, expandió las implicaciones sociales de la perspectiva ritual del peregrinaje y observó que, si los rituales son intersecciones muy congestionadas, donde un número de procesos sociales distintos se interceptan, entonces el peregrinaje es una de las intersecciones más congestionadas en el mundo ritual. El peregrinaje tiene implicaciones políticas derivadas del compromiso de los peregrinos con lo sagrado, y podría en ocasiones en algunos lugares reflejar el recién resurgir de las formas de nacionalismo o identidad. Recientemente, la índole del peregrinaje global ha atraído mucha atención

Un estudio que es de especial interés para mí es el *Peregrinaje y Sanación*, editado por Michael Winkelman y Jill Dubish y que fue publicado el 2005. Aunque el peregrinaje está motivado por una variedad de necesidades y deseos y son impulsados por una gama de individuos y motivos comunes, los autores observaron que un denominador común poderoso de sanación espiritual y transformación pueden ser observados en muchos testimonios históricos y contemporáneos sobre el peregrinaje. Por lo tanto, el peregrinaje ofrece sanación, transformación y empoderamiento popular como las tres dimensiones del peregrinaje. Entre esas dimensiones, el empoderamiento popular es para mí en especial intrigante.

No se puede evitar pensar acerca de la conexión entre el peregrinaje y la migración: ambas están arraigadas en lo más profundos anhelos y necesidades espirituales. Los seres humanos comienzan a emigran a todas partes hace mucho, mucho tiempo. La migración forma parte del ADN humano— y el peregrinaje está arraigado en el mismo instinto espiritual. Por lo tanto, cuando la migración es descrita como invasión, y los inmigrantes como invasores o criminales, la integridad espiritual y dignidad humana son denegadas a esos que viajan de muy lejos en búsqueda de sanación y transformación. La Biblia está atiborrada de historias de migraciones, cada una tiene un significado espiritual y objetivo: cualquiera que sea el viaje, la gracia redentora de Dios es discernida en sus eventos. Si la gracia de Dios puede ser discernida en la migración de Abraham a Canaan y la migración de Jacobo a Egipto, ¿la podemos discernir también en la migración y crisis de refugiados en la actualidad? ¿Podemos caminar con gracia junto a esos que han viajado miles de millas en búsqueda de sanación y transformación?

+ Allen

Some Thoughts on Pilgrimage

By the Rt. Rev. Mary D. Glasspool

We usually think of *pilgrimage* as a journey—more especially a long journey, to a sacred place, as an act of religious devotion. For the ancient Hebrew people, pilgrimage took one to the sacred city of Jerusalem and to the most sacred spot in Judaism, the Temple. As the pilgrims moved toward Jerusalem, they moved toward the sacred center, to observe festivals that gave their lives meaning and direction. On the way, they sang psalms. Psalms 120 – 134 are known as *Songs of Ascents*. They are relatively short (except Psalm 132), and so easy to memorize. According to *The New Interpreter's Bible* (Volume IV, p. 1176), the noun translated ascents is from a Hebrew root meaning to go up. Thus, Psalm 122:3-4a: *Jerusalem – built as a city that is bound firmly together. To it the tribes go up ...*

One can actually travel to a sacred place and not make a pilgrimage. You can go to Stonehenge in England, the River Ganges in India, the Western Wall in Jerusalem, or St. Peter's Basilica in Rome and be a tourist. Cynthia Ozick writes that *a traveler passes through the land or place; the place moves through the pilgrim*. Part of what differentiates the traveler or tourist from a pilgrim is purpose. The tourism business offers comfort, predictability, and entertainment. Business travel makes the world of commerce go around. The exploration of a scholar or scientist can add to the human legacy of knowledge. These are legitimate forms of travel. They are just not pilgrimages.



The pilgrimage begins with longing, with desire. This may come about precisely because one is tired of worry-free travel, endless entertainment, or the escapism of Disneyland; or it may come about intentionally, as in keeping the Season of Lent, or Ramadan. It is the cry of the heart for embarking on a meaningful, transformative journey to a sacred center—to some place holy associated with gods, saints, or heroes; to a natural setting imbued with spiritual power; or to a retreat. To people the world over, pilgrimage is a spiritual exercise: an act of devotion to find a source of healing, or to perform penance. Always, it is a journey of risk and renewal: a journey without challenge has no meaning; a journey without purpose has no soul.

Pilgrimage also asks us to be attentive. It is the kind of journeying that marks the movement from mindless to mindful; from soulless to soulful. It is becoming more aware of one's self, one's relationship with God, and one's relationships with others in the world. It is paying attention. To be attentive, we must place ourselves where we are open and receptive and totally present. I think of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. *Watch here and wait with me* he tells his disciples. *Watch and wait*. They cannot do it—but it is a call to pay attention, so that we may see what is holy; so that we may see with the eyes of the heart.

Algunas Reflexiones sobre el Peregrinaje

Por la Revdma. Obispa Mary D. Glasspool

Nosotros generalmente consideramos el peregrinaje como un viaje— sobre todo un viaje largo, a un lugar sagrado, como un acto de devoción religiosa. Para el antiguo pueblo hebreo, el peregrinaje los llevó a la ciudad sagrada de Jerusalén y a los sitios más sagrados del judaísmo, el Templo. A medida que los peregrinos se movían en dirección a Jerusalén, ellos avanzaban al centro sagrado, a observar los festivales que les dio a sus vidas un significado y sentido. Por el camino, ellos cantaban los salmos. Los salmos 120 – 134 son conocidos como Cánticos Graduales. Esos salmos son relativamente cortos (excepto Salmo 132), y son demasiado fáciles de memorizar. Según la *New Interpreter's Bible* (Volumen IV, p. 1176), el sustantivo traducido *ascender se deriva de la raíz hebrea que significa subir. Por tanto, el Salmo 122:3-4a: Jerusalén –que está edificada como ciudad compacta, bien unida. A la cual suben sus tribus...*

En realidad, alguien puede viajar a un lugar sagrado y no realizar un peregrinaje. Usted puede ir al Stonehenge en Inglaterra, el Río Ganges en la India, al Muro Occidental en Jerusalén, o la Basílica de San Pedro en Roma y ser un turista. Cynthia Ozic escribe que un *viajero pasa por la tierra o lugar; el lugar se mueve a través del peregrino*. Parte de lo que diferencia al viajero o a un turista de un peregrino es el objetivo. El negocio del turismo ofrece comodidad, predictibilidad, y diversión. El negocio de viajes hace que el mundo del comercio vaya por todo el planeta. El explorar de un erudito o científico puede añadir conocimiento al legado humano. Esas son formas legítimas de viajar. Solo que no son peregrinaciones.

El peregrinaje comienza con la nostalgia, con el deseo. Eso podría ocurrir precisamente porque alguien está cansado de los viajes sin preocupaciones, entretenimiento ilimitado, o el escapismo de Disneyland; o esto podría ocurrir intencionalmente, o en conformidad con la Temporada de Cuaresma, o Ramadán. Es la súplica del corazón para embarcarse en un viaje significativo, transformador a un centro sagrado— a algún lugar sagrado asociado con dioses, santos, o héroes; a un entorno natural imbuido con el poder del espíritu, o a un retiro. Para todas las personas del mundo, el peregrinaje es un ejercicio natural: un acto de devoción para encontrar la fuente de sanación, o para hacer penitencia. En todo caso, es un viaje de riesgo y renovación: un viaje sin retos no tiene sentido; un viaje sin objetivo no tiene alma.

El peregrinaje también nos pide estar atentos. Es el tipo de viaje que marca el movimiento de lo irracional a lo consciente; de lo sin alma a lo conmovedor. Es estar más conscientes de sí mismo, la relación de uno con Dios, y la relación de uno con otros en el mundo. Es poner atención. Para estar atentos, debemos ponernos en una postura abierta y receptiva y estar completamente presentes. Yo pienso en Jesús en el Jardín de Getsemaní. *Observen aquí y esperen junto conmigo*, él les dice a sus discípulos. *Observen y esperen*. Ellos no podían hacerlo— pero es un llamado a poner atención, de esa manera podemos ver lo que es sagrado; de esa manera podemos ver con los ojos del corazón.

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Definitions

By the Rev. Jacob A. Smith

In Lent of 2017, the Parish of Calvary-St. George's went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. When I returned home, I was immediately asked by well-meaning friends, "how was your vacation to Israel?" I responded by regaling them with my stories of visits to churches, eye-opening travel to the West Bank, and getting my first tattoo at the oldest tattoo parlor in the world. However, I ended every response piously with the statement, "it was not a vacation, it was a pilgrimage." To which someone finally asked, "well what is the difference?"

I could not immediately articulate the difference. I have been to many countries around the world and I love to explore their religious history. I have come back with great stories, and have had revelatory experiences...but pilgrimages they were not. I am sure there are many circumstances and conditions that distinguish a pilgrimage from a vacation. But after some reflection, four qualities emerge as the distinguishing characteristics of a pilgrimage: prayer, communion, transformation, and evangelism.

The first defining characteristic of a pilgrimage is prayer. There is a saying amongst the Israelis, "Haifa is where you play, Tel-Aviv is where you stay, and Jerusalem is where you pray." Whether or not the locales of these actions are correct, the distinction between Haifa and Jerusalem articulates one of the key differences between a vacation and a pilgrimage—namely a pilgrimage begins and ends, intentionally, with prayer.

On our pilgrimage we found ourselves praying almost without ceasing. As our footsteps followed Jesus, every breath became a moment for prayer: collects at each site, extemporaneous prayers for the pilgrim who was always late to the bus and for the pilgrim who twisted an ankle. Prayers would ascend for old friends on the pilgrimage and for new friends whom we met along the way, and for the

divided land in which they live. We prayed for the bus driver, tour guide, the shop keeper who sold us coffee or the well-deserved cold beverage at the end of the day. Prayer is also what makes a pilgrimage possible, whether thousands of miles away or within your own neighborhood. Therefore without prayer there is no pilgrimage.

The second characteristic of a pilgrimage is communion. The old Holy Communion Church, on 6th Avenue and West 20th Street in Manhattan, was named not after the sacrament, but after the community bound by word and sacrament on pilgrimage together. A pilgrimage, like a vacation, can offer respite from the day-to-day hustle of our normal lives. What separates a pilgrimage from a vacation, however, is the deep communal bond—the Holy Communion—that is created through prayer on that journey. As pilgrims in the Holy Land, prayer created a holy communion between each other, the land, and the people who live there, which just does not emerge on a vacation. For us, this communion continues today, as the pilgrims still gather together for prayer and meals and we discern how we can be more involved with the people and places of our pilgrimage.

The third characteristic of a pilgrimage is that it is transformational. A vacation tends to be inwardly focused and can have little to no lasting impact upon your life. But a pilgrimage should never leave you the same way. James Harpur in his book *The Pilgrims Journey: A History of Pilgrimage in the Western World* describes this transformation as the "sacred metamorphosis." According to Harpur, when this metamorphosis occurs it will signify "not the end of the journey, but the start: a gateway into a new way of being, of seeing life afresh with spiritually cleansed eyes."

I went to the Holy Land mostly to see the sites with an unconsciously inward focus. It could have been just another vacation or study tour as I sought to have a visual experience of the places which are so central to my sermons. However, as we made our way through Israel and the West Bank, the barbed wire, the armed soldiers, and the massive wall (which is twice the size of the former Berlin Wall) that rips right through the town of Bethlehem, a "sacred metamorphosis" occurred in my very soul.

Within a few days my eyes (and most importantly my heart) were opened to the turmoil and conflict within the land of Jesus. Occupation and oppression is, as in Jesus' day, a present and dark reality. As a result of this transformation, the other pilgrims and I could no longer be indifferent to the injustice and conflict in the region. We had been transformed by our pilgrimage from complacency and indifference into action: remembering the Holy Land in our prayers, supporting the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem with our resources, and making other Americans aware of the plight of the Palestinians living in Israel and the West Bank.

A pilgrimage, while having some of the characteristics of a vacation, is so much more. Rather a pilgrimage is to encounter the living God in the faces of fellow pilgrims, the people, and sites of a specific place, and be changed forever. A pilgrimage, therefore, becomes evangelistic because the transformational aspect of a pilgrimage is too profound to be kept to one's self. Rather, all one can do is share, share, share this sacred journey and invite others to encounter that same living God through our testimony, and to join the pilgrimage themselves.



"The distinction between Haifa and Jerusalem articulates one of the key differences between a vacation and a pilgrimage." Photo: Deror Avi/Wikimedia Commons and Andrew Shiva / Wikipedia.

The author is rector of Calvary-St. George's, Manhattan.

Something Bigger

By Heidi Thorsen Oxford

As a twenty-year-old, I understood the concept of pilgrimage—not through “old world” history or even modern images of Muslims making hajj, but through the eyes of pop culture. The very idea of Jack Kerouac was enough of a premise when I was deciding what to do for the final project of my creative writing class in college. I planned to drive to St. Mary’s Hospital in San Francisco, to the place where my uncle Norman was brought over 20 years ago after his accident. It was about uncle Norman, yes, but it was mostly about me. It was about the way the rain hit the windshield and cast shadows on my face and made me feel just a little older, wiser.

My uncle Norman was the first person I knew to die. He was in a car accident a few years before I was born, and lived as a quadriplegic on a respirator for 16 years after that. I was 13 when he died. My uncle Norman’s life, and death, have always loomed large in my imagination. Perhaps I just didn’t know what to do with grief as an adolescent. So I turned it into a story instead, one that I keep working on well into my twenties.

I had never been to St. Mary’s before, so I asked my dad to tell me his version of the story. My grandparents stayed in the motel up the street from the hospital for a month, while my uncle was in the ICU. I parked close to the motel, and walked down the steep hill and through the front door of the hospital lobby.

Everything was marble and tile. Portraits of distinguished men lined the walls, and the names of donors were etched on the wall in gold. As luck would have it, I had never been in a hospital before, not that I could remember. It suddenly occurred to me that I had no idea where I was going, or what I hoped to see. I took the elevator to a random floor and mustered all my courage just to ask the nurse, “where’s the bathroom?” I used the bathroom (might as well), wandered through the gift shop, and had no idea what to do next. I drove home.

When on a pilgrimage, it’s a good idea to know where you’re going. But no printed map on the internet could have brought me to that place I was searching for—a place of connection with my father and my grandmother, and my uncle most of all. It wasn’t there. Or if it was, it was buried beneath new tile and marble facing. It wasn’t there anymore.

I didn’t think about that trip for years. After all, it was more or less a failed enterprise. It’s impossible to summarize the steps that led me, across time and space, to the halls of Yale New Haven Hospital seven years later. I look much more like an adult now than I used to, and more like an adult than, at times, I want to: black clogs and blazer to blend in with the hospital environment, and a badge bearing the all-access title “Chaplain.”

“Hey, do you have a moment? The patient in 828 is a recent transfer from MICU. She’s asking for Father Jim.”

I take a moment to explain that Father Jim doesn’t work on this floor, but as the unit chaplain I’d be more than happy to stop in. The nurse fills me in on the



St. Mary’s Medical Center, San Francisco, with St. Ignatius Church to the right. “I took the elevator to a random floor, and mustered all my courage just to ask the nurse, ‘where’s the bathroom?’”
Photo: Frank Farm, Flickr.

patient: late 40s, Caucasian woman, two-month stay in MICU and recent quadriplegic due to a rare infection. She has a tracheostomy and communicates by lip-read only.

The hospital is no longer a foreign country to me. I put on a gown and gloves, and head into the room.

The patient, Ronnie, lies buried in a pile of sheets. I draw close and introduce myself, explaining that Father Jim is still available, although while she is on this floor I am her chaplain, here to be with her. She says it’s okay. She just doesn’t want to be alone.

Over the next two weeks, I get to know Ronnie. We talk about her adult daughter, whom she loves very much and who lives far away. We cry about her losses—of mobility, independence, dignity. I fail to read her lips well enough, most of the time. We get frustrated with each other; we are only human. I ask her if she thinks about God; she says “always.” I ask her if she thinks that God thinks about her. She says “sometimes.”

I tell her about my uncle, though not in great detail, because I want her to know that being in her room feels significant to me. I don’t tell her that things will get better because I just don’t know. We wallow together, and that makes life a bit more bearable. It’s like sitting in a garden late at night when everyone else has left, or fallen asleep.

I don’t tell her that I have finally arrived at that place I was looking for seven years ago, but I can’t shake a sense of wonder that I was meant to be here.

It wasn’t ever about a particular place. It was about journeying away from myself towards someone else, towards something other. Towards something bigger. By the grace of God, I made it.

The author is a postulant for the priesthood in the diocese.

An Outward and Inward Journey

By the Rev. Masud Ibn Syedullah, TSSF

For millennia, the idea and experience of spiritual pilgrimage have been part of many religious traditions. The concept, of course, is one of making a journey to a far-off place associated with holiness. Such places were often the site of some miraculous occurrence: a healing, a vision of a saint, a church of some particular spiritual significance, or some other extraordinary event attributed to God. The purpose of such a journey was to experience some degree of peace, of wholeness, of blessing.

The ancient Temple in Jerusalem was viewed as such a place. Its innermost chamber, the Holy of Holies, was considered the place where the singularly intense and concentrated Presence of God dwelled. Only the High Priest was permitted to enter it once a year, on the Day of Atonement. Being such a locus of spiritual power, the people of God made solemn pilgrimage to the Temple to pray and to make their offerings of sacrifice. They journeyed up to Mount Zion, to Jerusalem (the City of God) and to the Temple (the House of God) to experience something of God's presence: to be blessed.

Two thousand years later, long after the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, there remain places around the world to which tens of thousands of people continue to flock in hope of a blessing: healing, fresh insight, new-found courage. The waters of Lourdes, in France; the walk of the Camino de Santiago, in Spain; the Ecumenical Community of Taizé, in France; and yes, the Western Wall in Jerusalem are but a few of such holy places.

In each case, there is "the place" to which people go that is considered holy, but there is also the journey itself that they take to get there. It is the whole process, from beginning to end, that comprises the pilgrimage.

It begins with the sense that one needs or wants to make the journey: with a yearning, perhaps, for something that is missing, or something that will fill or complete that which is missing or desired in one's life.

The pilgrimage may continue with a vision of where such fulfillment might be found. One may begin to imagine what might be gained by journeying towards that special place.

Then there is the actual movement towards "the place": movement with expectation, with hope, and sometime even with doubt or questions as to whether what one is seeking will be found there. It is very common that some who begin a pilgrimage become exhausted, discouraged—give up and turn back. Others find in the challenges opportunities to strengthen their resolve to press onward towards their goal.

Not all pilgrimages are explicitly religious, yet they may be profoundly spiritual. There is the experience of one having a desire to return to the place of their childhood, or to some other significant place of their life. The process mentioned above is the same. There is an inner desire to go to that place, sensing that by doing so, one will experience something of wholeness, of completion, of somehow reconnecting with that which will bring significant meaning to one's life in the present.

As one makes such a journey, one may indeed experience some of the same kinds of thoughts and feelings as on a religious pilgrimage: hopes, expectations, and perhaps even a sense of dread as one anticipates reentering, yes, re-encountering the past. But, as it is often said, "one can never return home." It has changed; you have changed. The place where the old school was might now be the site of a new housing development. There might now be a strip mall where your baseball field use to be. Yet there will be those places, and maybe even people, who remind you (re-mind you)—things, places, and people who, in a deep and profound way, bring about an inner sense of connectedness—of knowing anew, who you are.

Often people return from such an experience refreshed, spiritually reset, having made contact with some of the foundational substance of their life. That is what pilgrimage is: that journey that takes us to that which is fundamental—the ground of our being—that which connects us with ourselves in the deepest parts of ourselves. It is both an outward and inward journey.

The author is vicar of St. Paul's & Trinity Parish, Tivoli, and founding director of Roots & Branches: Programs for Spiritual Growth (www.rootsandbranchesprograms.org).



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Two Roads, Well Met

By Susan E. Brown



Summer calm on the Sea of Galilee – not what this writer experienced.

Photo: Petr Brož, Wikimedia Commons.

Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* signaled April as the month when "folk longed to go on pilgrimage." Robert Frost showed the dilemma, given a choice, of which road to take ("Two roads in a wood diverged...") For centuries, people have set out on pilgrimages hoping to find and grasp that which cannot be held in the hands: a person of long-ago, a belief, a dream—all of it stemming from a desire to meet with the Beloved.

Then there are those who know not why they go or what they are after, and have even less of an idea of what they may find.

Mine is a tale of two pilgrimages, both of them physical and spiritual: two roads leading from separate starting points to their conclusions. Yet they enveloped, wrapped and wove through each other. It is also a story of how God calls us to situations for reasons we do not know, and leads us to the greater discovery of who He is and of the plans He has for each life.

Last summer, I decided that I wanted to find an Education for Ministry (EfM) group conveniently close to home. After searching, it seemed that I might not be so fortunate. But on September 6, 2017, along with several other persons, my first journey through the Word of God began.

Week after week, we read whole books of the Hebrew Bible and commentary, all the while struggling with and deeply engaging with it. Discussion proved that we were studying the Bible, but that it was not a class in Bible study. We were looking at the creation, calling and development of the Israelite nation. We experienced their repeated failures, the discipline they bore because of them, and God's steadfast love for them.

I read of patriarchs, prophets and places from thousands of years ago; and though I had read all of it before, this time they put on flesh, came alive, left the page, and moved and spoke to me as they never had before. The story of a journey from twelve tribes to kingdom; to dissolution into civil war and exile; to the coming of outsiders, "the other," who would send them back, and the problems they would face in determining who was genuine, who belonged, and who was the alien.

It was not so much about that time alone. In our day, in that room, we were

Fighting with the Bible and trying to grasp *The Dream of God*. What was it that "amazed" me, "bewildered" me, "confused" me or "delighted" me about the texts? Think! Think! Traveling back and forth through those times to today's headlines, the discovery was that things today are as they were back then. The past is present with us.

On we walked, the seven of us, through the seasons of the Church year, wrapped in a new appreciation of community, of a growing fellowship of love, orchestrated by the Holy Spirit. We had been strangers, for the most part, when we met. All people of color, coming from different cultures and backgrounds, and on we walked together.

January 22, 2018—Ten people fly El Al Airlines to Israel and I am among them. Why??? I had been to the Holy Land almost 20 years ago during the summer. I had been there. I had seen what was to be seen. I had "walked where Jesus walked." Why go again? Something, someone (The Holy Spirit ?) had prompted me to join and to travel with my church group this time.

With Bible readings fresh in my mind and visiting the places I had visited before, I experienced a new reality. It was not the same thing. This time, it was winter. I was bundled up—no shorts.

Riding the Sea of Galilee was much rougher this time, and it was pouring rain. Visibility was limited—not like that clear, calm day of so long ago. Still, in gratitude, we sang songs of praise along with the

music playing from the CD player. The hills seemed steeper and were oh-so-slippery. What was old, old, old was everywhere torn up to be renovated, refurbished or restored. Places were roped off; closer access denied. Scaffolding filled the spaces and much was unrecognizable to my vision of twenty years ago.

Al Aqsa, the Western Wall and the Via Dolorosa... Jerusalem, the place where the three faiths meet... now woven into a common time and space continuum... standing solidly as a witness to and a testament to the events that had unfolded there.

My head spun with the thoughts of studies in that room and now the sight of places present before me: there was King David's Tomb; there were people praying at the Wailing Wall and tucking prayers into any crevice they could find in it; there shivering pilgrims, dressed in their white robes, awaited their turn to be baptized in the frigid waters of the Jordan. The past is still present with us. My eyes and my heart took in this spectacle that was telescoping and echoing down through the ages. My God! My God!

Back home with my EfM group, I marveled at the beauty, uniqueness and sincerity present in each person there. I was filled with gratitude for being a part of this group. We were one, moving together, worshiping and singing while evaluating and challenging the texts before us. All along, we were examining ourselves: our hearts, our souls, our minds—and sharing insights as we grew together.

Through it all, LOVE showed forth through the new and different foods we shared, the ancient drumming and the playing of an instrument whose sound was sweet, haunting, and mysterious all at the same time. Shivers. Praise God for the mystery. I could do no less because of the beautiful new community He had knit together. It was not happenstance. We are family.

Two pilgrimages: they were not "two roads in a wood diverged," but one, well-met, used by the Lord for the outworking of His plan. And now, I rest in Him, wait on Him, and Trust in Him. There is more to come. What would You have me do next, Lord? Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.

The author is a member of St. Augustine's Church, Manhattan.

It's Hard

By the Rev. Rhonda J. Rubinson

Pilgrimage is not tourism (although a tour company may book the arrangements for the trip and often provide a guide). Pilgrimage is not sight seeing (although you will see many sights). Pilgrimage is not comfortable (even though you may stay in nice hotels and travel in a climate-controlled bus).

Pilgrimage is arduous; it is not meant to be easy. Pilgrims strain as they seek, striving to come close to God. Sacrifices will always be demanded of the pilgrim, and these can take many different forms—financial, physical, emotional and of course, spiritual. The key for the pilgrim is trusting in God's companionship on this very special journey, as new, difficult, and wondrous experiences bring the presence of the sacred near. If the pilgrim does her or his job right, life will be changed—permanently branded by the burning kiss of the Holy Spirit, given to all who truly seek God.

Three churches from the Diocese of New York joined together for a Holy Land Pilgrimage in January, 2018; our group numbered thirty-five souls. Very few of us were in what could be called optimal physical shape for what promised to be a tough ten days: some members of our group have respiratory issues, several are diabetic, many have difficulty walking, and a number are north of 80 years old. One had been hospitalized in critical condition at Columbia-Presbyterian with flu complications less than three weeks prior to our leaving.

All of us were embarking on a pilgrimage beginning with a 12-hour flight to Tel Aviv and a long drive to Tiberias, followed by daily activities beginning at 8 a.m. and lasting to 6 p.m. or later, while expecting to be on our feet for most of the time. That is what we knew as we boarded the plane.

Here's what we didn't know: that we wouldn't be just walking but *hiking* a good deal of the time, sometimes nearly vertically up city streets (in Nazareth to reach the Church of the Nativity), sometimes nearly straight down (from the top of the Mount of Olives to the Kidron Valley), often over weathered, unstable, rocky paths and wadis (at Megiddo, Beit Sh'ean, and Muchraka). We didn't know we would be standing on endless lines in suffocating crowds of fellow travelers, pushing through the hordes while trying desperately to stay together in the narrow souk of the Old City.

We were warned that it was the rainy season—but none of the Israelis we spoke to could recall a storm as long and intense as the week-long wind and rain event we experienced while there. An Israeli friend of mine whom I lunched with while in Jerusalem had trouble believing me—"It *never* rains at Masada!!" (We had nearly blown off of Masada the day before in a miserable, wind-driven downpour.) Nor did we know that the steep path down the Mount of Olives turns oil-slick slippery when wet—landing one of our group who has serious back problems flat on the ground—fortunately injuring nothing more than his dignity. We were in a constant state of chill and dampness—not what one normally imagines when contemplating the Holy Land.

Ah, but the sites we visited blazed with the Holy Spirit, jolting the oh-so familiar words of Holy Scripture off the pages of the Bible and writing them deep into our hearts in letters of holy fire. The experience is profound, but impossible to express in human language. What follows is an attempt to explain the indescribable.

The pace and exhilaration of visiting holy sites accelerated day by day. There were far too many to mention, but here are some highlights: Sailing on the Sea of Galilee and kneeling at the water's edge, the very place that some of the first apostles had launched their boats two millennia before. The recently excavated site of Peter's house in Capernaum, a mere 80 feet from the entrance to the town synagogue where Jesus taught while staying in Peter's home. A stunning chapel dedicated to women in the church at Magdala, the hometown of Mary Magdalene. The view of the

wide, lush Jezreel Valley from Mount Carmel, where Elijah had defeated Jezebel's priests of Baal. The stone in the Church of the Multiplication, where Jesus is said to have laid the bread and fish before feeding the 5,000. The churches of the Annunciation and the Nativity, both redolent with the spirit of Mary and the overwhelming love of the Incarnation. The Western Wall, its massive Herodian stones still pressed hard by hands, heads, tears and written prayers. The Garden of Gethsemane, with its 2,000-year-old olive trees, stoic witnesses to Jesus' agony. The hushed, surprisingly small Edicule surrounding the tomb of Jesus in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, built on the traditional site of Calvary.

Are these sites "authentic"? Are they the actual locations spoken of in the Bible? Some are, probably most aren't. But it doesn't matter. What matters is seeking and praying where countless others have sought and prayed to the same God. At most sites we were able to stop, if only for a few moments, and feel the presence of Spirit, despite the noise, rancor, sights and smells of contemporary life, especially in Jerusalem. The presence of Israeli soldiers in the Old City and the Moslem Waqf security forces on the Temple Mount, the constant din of hawkers shouting from the stalls lining the souk, the aromas of food and spices, the delivery vehicles pushing aside crowds in the streets, and the palpable sense of tension provided strong counter energy to the peace found in prayer at holy sites. It is not the purpose of this article to examine the current issues troubling the people of the Holy Land, and Jerusalem in particular, except to note that moments of stability and peace in this region have been historically few and far between.

All of us made it through the pilgrimage with no health emergencies, although some of us had to recover for some time from the stress and the strain—and in my case, food poisoning—after we returned. But many of us still carry a visible light from the experience. Some of us have burst into tears at hearing Bible passages that mention the sites we visited. All of us have been changed. Now, I am not particularly given to sentimentality, nor do I believe that God is only to be found in certain geographic locations—we don't get compensated for simply showing up somewhere where tradition says that a major Biblical event may have occurred. But God *always* rewards those who truly seek and sacrifice. That is what pilgrimage is about—seeking first the kingdom of God, no matter what the cost.

Pilgrimage is hard. But none of us would trade the experience for anything.

The author is priest-in-charge of the Church of the Intercession, Manhattan.



The house of St. Peter in Capernaum, showing ruins of the octagonal Byzantine church and the modern Church of St. Peter above.
Photo: Konrad Summers, Wikimedia Commons.

Eleven Women

By Lisa V. Pell

April 16, 2018. Eleven women gathered in the airport at Tel Aviv on a journey to the holy lands of Israel and Jordan. Drawn from many backgrounds by the invitation of our leader, Deacon Holly Galgano, we were inspired to make a pilgrimage to the sites that honor the women of the Bible who lived and ministered with Jesus of Nazareth. What did they see? How did it feel to be in His presence? We went to the places where these women were remembered: Grandmother Anna, Mother Mary, Saints Elizabeth, Martha and Mary Magdalene.

Our pilgrimage led us to essential Holy Land sites including the Church of the Nativity, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Via Dolorosa, the Mount of Olives, the Church of the Transfiguration on Mt. Tabor, Tabga, and other renowned shrines to Jesus' life. Searching for the divine feminine, we added the ancient church of St. Anna in Sefhorris, the Magdalene Institute in Magdala, where the oldest temple altar stone has been unearthed, the Church of Martha, Mary and Lazarus at Lazarus' tomb in Bethany, the home and shrine of St. Elizabeth in Ein Karem, Stella Maris Monastery in Haifa and Sisters of the Nazarene in Nazareth. We attended an interdenominational celebration on St. George's Day at St. George's Cathedral, and shared lunch with the Director of the College, the Rev. Dr. Susan Lukens, who remarked on the rarity and need for women's pilgrimages to the Holy Land. We ate an unforgettable lunch cooked in the traditional Palestinian way at the Wujoud Museum and Cultural Center in the old city, run by the Orthodox Arab Women's Society. Here we heard about the plight of Palestinian Christians and the women's struggles to make a decent wage, except through their beautiful handicrafts.

Our understanding of the lost history was enriched by the presence of Kathleen McGowan, author of *The Expected One*. Her years of research on Mary Magdalene and incomparable knowledge of alternate gospels grounded the images we saw in a history that has been almost erased...but not completely. These holy women came alive in her storytelling.

Some of my favorite experiences were at these sites:

In Cana, Holly planned for us to visit the Church of the Wedding Feast, a Greek Orthodox church. We learned it is not open to the public, but Holly persisted, and we were allowed a private visit. How beautiful it is, with gardens with ancient urns and icons of Jesus that seem to be alive and weeping. Many offerings and prayers have been left at the feet of Our Lord in this sacred place.

On the Mount of Olives, I had on past visits seen the splendid golden onion tops of the Orthodox Church of St. Mary Magdalene, yet never entered. This time, we did. It is chock full of images of the Magdalene and her lineage, depicted in scenes that have long been edited from Christian tradition. Some images demonstrate belief streams that were labeled heretical by the Roman Catholic Church. Given the history of exterminations perpetrated by Rome to eradicate such beliefs, it is astonishing to find remaining evidence of traditions related to Mary Magdalene.

Gethsemane: the most holy, beautiful garden on earth. We depart contemplatively. Holly leads us across the narrow street and we enter a narrow entrance where there are steps leading down, down, down. The elders take it slowly and the young people sprint to the site, called Mary's Tomb, where Mother Mary is said to rest, according to the Eastern Orthodox. (Roman Catholic traditions do not honor such sites, as they maintain that Mary was wholly assumed into heaven, therefore she left no body.) Nevertheless, it was a holy place indeed, sacred especially to the Armenians.

The Milk Grotto. On the outskirts of Bethlehem lies a cave, all white. It is said that Mary stopped there to feed the baby Jesus, and a drop of her milk fell to the ground, transforming the rock. Thousands visit annually to seek the blessings of fertility and healing, resulting in countless testimonials of miraculous births and recoveries from illness—the walls are covered with letters and baby pictures. This expression of faith is so lost to American faith—ancient and very similar to pagan worship. Yet, if we are not to ask our Lord and His Mother to bless us in our lives, how else are we to communicate with

that which is beyond our understanding? Perhaps this is why Jesus taught us to pray to the infinite God as if He were our Father.

My life was permanently altered by my first pilgrimage with Iyad Qumri in 2014. I have been back every year since, during which I was introduced to the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem (AFEDJ), a charity to support the Palestinian people. This year's pilgrimage, honoring the women of the Bible, deepened my relationship to the land and to experiencing the profound reality of Jesus' life. It is impossible to express how much pilgrimage to the Holy Land expands and affirms my faith.

Note from Deacon Holly Galgano: We hope to repeat this women's pilgrimage in February/March of 2019. We would like to add to our roster a female priest or bishop...does this call you? If interested in coming on a unique faith journey, please contact Deacon Holly Galgano at hgalgano@gmail.com or heartoftheholylnd@gmail.com.



Eleven pilgrims on the Sea of Galilee.

Photo: Nabil of Shepherd's Tours.

The author is a member of Christ's Church, Rye.

Passages to India

By the Rev. Michael Shafer

About 15 years ago, I heard that the India Network of our diocese was organizing a pilgrimage to the Diocese of Madras in South India. Knowing that my wife Johanna might be interested, I suggested that she go. She did, and she loved it. Now, as much as I liked exclusive companionship with our dog Annie (not really! – our parish members were great too), I didn't want to be left out of Johanna's second experience; so I joined the pilgrimage of 2006, and went again in the fall of 2009.

Much of my time was spent wandering through a transition from quiet country life in New York to the frenetic city bustle of Chennai, from small rural congregations to massive ones, from plain to ultra spicy food (I won't mention the reactions) and from our normally quiet rains to monsoon. That was amazing. I read a book about someone who spent a year traveling to where the monsoon was coming just to share the people's excited anticipation. But then, of course, there was the flooding. Everywhere.

I preached to early morning congregations of hundreds and witnessed later ones of thousands. The Church of South India is growing so much because it offers freedom to those who are oppressed by the Hindu caste system. Participation in this worship is quite a blessing when one is used to our own typical attendances of a few faithful Christians.

What turned my travels into a pilgrimage was the joy I found in our shared

love of a magnificent English heritage. I spent time with many colleagues and friends who expressed gratitude for the missionaries who gave their lives to offer education and the freedom it brings. One of these colleagues loves to recite Wordsworth! The Church of South India is a successful experiment in ecumenism: it is Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian and United Church of Christ; and yet the language of the Book of Common Prayer is venerated everywhere. I felt spiritually at home with people who are gentle, loving and gracious. They love our Lord Jesus, and they are determined, as we are, to bring His love and justice to all God's children.

Johanna has considered writing a children's book entitled *Hooves, Heels, and Wheels* about traffic on a road in Chennai. It's amazing. You honk your horn in order to let the driver in front of you know where you are. It's dusty and smelly, and yet beautiful because of the connection I have come to feel with the people. Over the past 15 years, Johanna and I, together with many other members of our diocese, have come to cherish our friendships with Christians who graciously welcomed our pilgrimage and now share with us a common mission: "to proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ, and to strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being."

The author is a retired priest in the diocese.



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A Place for God's Love

By Caroline Yerkes

For several summers, I traveled with Christ Church Bronxville to Cuba for ten days of work, community, and prayer. One of these summers, after a short time touring Havana, we loaded our bags, piled into a rustic 16-seat bus turned “church-mobile,” and headed east along the coast of Cuba towards the small village of Itabo—a name I grew to cherish, as our days there became some of the most memorable of my life. The two-hour scenic drive—with 16 friends, a winding road, and a calling inside of each one of us to do what God needed us to do—had led me to feel more at peace than ever before.

Our task was to convert an orange schoolhouse building in the nearby town of Favorito into an Episcopal church. We were there to help lay a cement foundation for an addition.

We worked for three days in Favorito—mixing, pouring, and spreading cement. On the fourth day, I was passing by the work site when I stopped myself. I stared for a moment at the new church. I felt as if something was missing, and then I realized; the church did not yet have a cross. A cross would show that this building would be more than just a place.

I told one of the men from Itabo, Julio, about our need for a cross, and he agreed. We left the cement and went straight to his workshop, which consisted of four woodcutting tools from the 1930s kept under the shade of a homemade outdoor cabana. Julio knew exactly how to proceed, and we immediately

began measuring and passing the wood beneath the blade of the saw. We examined the wood, cut again, adjusted, cut again. Many came to help, and we all laughed around the workshop table.

Over the following days, we perfected the cross, carving out notches in both pieces of wood so that the two elements fit securely together. We glued and nailed the wood—and by the end, everyone had sanded a piece of it. Finally, we clamped the cross and left it overnight to be certain that everything was set.

The next day, we held a special service to bless the cross and place it on the roof of the new Iglesia Santa Maria Isabel. While the cross itself was simple, its power was great. Although it was made to be a marker of a house of God, for all of us, the cross was a symbol of more than that.

This particular cross represented the heart of our pilgrimage and our love for each other. It held the weight and the growth that our sister church in Itabo and we felt by each other's presence and respect for one another. This cross was a symbol of God's ability to connect any one of his people based on their common love for Him.

Together we made this cross, and together we changed and grew. We had created a place for God's love to flourish.

The author is a member of Christ Church, Bronxville.

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¡Cuba Sí! (And Unanimously)



Cuban Bishop the Rt. Rev. Griselda Delgado (r) and the Rev. Family Bass-Choate (l) on their way July 11 to the floor of General Convention with the flag of the Diocese of Cuba, following the unanimous vote the previous day in the House of Bishops to readmit the Episcopal Church of Cuba as a diocese of the Episcopal Church, and shortly before the House of Deputies followed suit. Bass-Choate, who is liaison for Global Mission for the Diocese of New York, has been working with Bishop Griselda for over 10 years to achieve this result.

Breath of Pentecost in Cuba

By Michael J. Pollack

While recovering from a severe case of Lyme disease—a journey that often seemed more like a journey toward death than toward life—there was much personal growth to be sure, but more than anything I desperately wanted to be able to do something... *anything* other than spend time with doctors and many related treatments. After years of recovery, I could begin to see a life beyond illness, and the opportunity presented itself to chaperone a youth trip to Cuba. Knowing what I had been going through, our senior warden wisely asked, “Are you going to be OK?” I didn’t know.

For the trip from the cathedral in Havana to a rural parish and guesthouse in the farming community of Itabo a few hours to the east, I was given the front passenger seat of the diocese’s bus. Perhaps it showed that I was struggling in the August heat, but Bishop Griselda (the Rt. Rev. Griselda Delgado del Carpio, Bishop of Cuba) wanted to sit next to the Rev. Yamily Bass-Choate (the diocese’s liaison for global mission) in the second row so the two friends could catch up. I immediately appreciated being able to see our endlessly fascinating surroundings, but only later did I realize that sitting in front of Bishop Griselda also allowed me to hear everything she was saying.

We made many stops at Episcopal churches along the way. As we once again boarded the bus, the bishop told us that our next stop would be the Church of St. Philip the Deacon, which had been all but destroyed by a hurricane some years earlier. The community had managed to continue meeting in what had previously been the sacristy—the only part of the building still standing. Bishop Griselda made it a point to say that the community only still existed because of the dedication and hard work of a strong group of women. But then I heard Bishop Griselda say something strange—she dared us to visit this community and not leave without having experienced something very special. In my imagination I sometimes look back on what she said as if it were the Holy Spirit saying, “Hey you! Watch *this!*”

When we arrived, we were greeted by many of the women of the community, whose depth of faith was somehow immediately apparent. In the end, 25 of us were in a room of no more than 250 square feet. Probably some basic information was conveyed to us on the history of the parish, but I don’t remember for sure. The point I start to remember the details of what happened in that room is that at which Mother Yamily started singing— “¡Alabaré, alabaré, alabaré a mi Señor...!” (“I will praise my Lord...!”)

We all joined her, and the song continued. Then, seemingly from nowhere—like a wind, but with the warmth of a fire—it was as if the room was suddenly filled with raw, unfiltered and undiluted love. I was overcome with the intensity of it and with gratitude for it, and at the same time realized that we were all OK, and that we would remain so besides. There was no ambiguity, but I wasn’t in a position ask questions anyway.

My thoughts were still settling into place as we were leaving, when the woman next to the door, as best I could understand her, wished me “salud” (“health”) so I could come back to do something. I wondered if had I heard her correctly—it was loud in that small room with so many voices—and the Cuban accent was still new to me. How could she possibly know the one thing I needed *and* the one thing I wanted? So I left the building and stood alone, hoping quickly to regain my composure.

I wanted to ask others what just happened, but I also didn’t seem to have the right words, so I sat in my seat, looked straight ahead, and wondered. I didn’t speak, but I did look around, and later realized that the others must have experienced something too, because during that next leg of the journey, nobody spoke—this was a bus full of teenagers on summer vacation, mind you. They were all wide awake, and the only sound was from the engine. Some days later,

one teen said, “It felt as if we had a conversation with every person in the room.” There was a language barrier, but also a time barrier—the stop lasted no more than ten minutes—it would have been impossible.

As we pulled out of the town and onto the highway, I saw a road sign that I couldn’t quite believe—it read “VIA A LA VIDA – NO LO OLVIDE” (“THE WAY TO LIFE – DO NOT FORGET IT”). It was a speed-limit sign, as it turns out, but it was the only such sign we passed the entire journey. I had been photographing all day from my perch up front, but being very much in a daze from the experience, I decided to sit the next leg out and just sit quietly. When I saw that sign, I changed my mind and managed to get my camera out quickly. I didn’t want to forget it!

I remember learning about Pentecost as a child and wondering *how*, or even *if* it could possibly be true—tongues of flame? Foreign languages, yet somehow with full understanding? I still do not know *how*, but I no longer wonder *if*.

The author is a member of Christ Church, Bronxville. He has been continually involved in water purification projects in Cuba since his initial visit.



The road sign the author saw as the bus pulled out of town on the journey home. “The Way To Life – Do Not Forget it.” Photo: Michael Pollack .



Inside the Church of St. Philip the Deacon.

Photo: Michael Pollack .

Change of Course in Haiti

By Susie McNiff

In the fall of 1985, when I was 25 years old, I left my job at a securities firm in Boston and boarded a plane for Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Even then, I had the feeling that the Holy Spirit was acting in my life and that this was no ordinary trip. Only later was I able to put this time into context, and understand that this was a pilgrimage, a journey—a life-altering event that would change everything.

A month earlier, my bewildered boss had told me that I was making a terrible mistake. “You are giving up everything because of an impulsive decision. Maybe you should see a psychiatrist,” he said. But this was not an impulsive decision. I had spent the past year completing paperwork, getting immunizations, talking with my rector at Trinity Church and the people at Volunteers for Mission in New York. The staff at St. Vincent’s School for Handicapped Children in Port-au-Prince was awaiting my arrival. So, on a hot, sunny September morning, with the smell of smoke in the air, sounds of horns honking and crowds of people, I stepped off the plane. Joseph, a driver from the school, greeted me with a warm smile. “Bonjour, Welcome to Haiti,” he said.

Behind the metal door on Rue Pavée, in the heart of Port-au-Prince, was St. Vincent’s School. Sister Joan Margaret, the director of the school, welcomed me. Dressed in her grey and white habit with a large brown cross around her neck, she was confined to a wheelchair; but there was an imposing, no-nonsense way about her. Her eyes twinkled, but she was tough and you knew it immediately. She had started the school in 1945, under a mango tree. The school was the first residential center in Haiti to offer treatment, services and education for blind, deaf and physically disabled children. 200

children lived there. From the time the first roosters crowed in the morning until darkness fell and you could hear the voodoo drums in the surrounding hills, the school bustled with activity. There were classrooms filled with children wearing blue and white checked uniforms, learning their lessons in French. There was a medical and dental clinic and a prosthetic shop. My job was to help the teachers in the classrooms. Much of the work depended on an extra set of hands. Wheeling children to and from class, helping escort a blind student, or comforting a crying child. I quickly engaged a young man from town who tutored me in Creole, and I began to learn to communicate with the staff and children.

I worshipped with the nuns during the week in the simple open-air chapel. I made friends with the other volunteers and Haitian staff. I settled into a life where each day brought new experiences and new meaning. But the children would change me the most. Their affection, compassion, and gentleness would enter into my heart and reframe my understanding of the world. In the midst of fragility and scarcity came abundant life and deep love surrounded by the everyday miracles of the Holy Spirit.

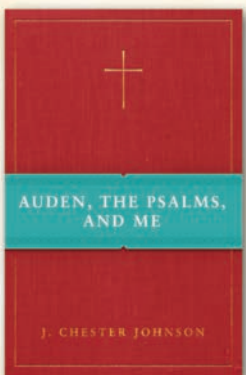
Pure joy could be found in laughing and playing with the children. I found freedom in a life that was unencumbered by possessions and was centered on the needs of others.

In 1985, Haiti was simmering with political unrest. The oppressive power of President Jean-Claude Duvalier, who had followed in his father’s footsteps, began to lose its grip.

That December, we hid under our beds at night, listening to gunfire and the tanks moving through the streets. On February 4th, 1986, days before the government was overthrown, Sister Joan called us into her office to tell us that we would be leaving the next day. We cried as we quickly packed our belongings and left the place that we had come to love. I came back to a cold, snowy New York to my mother, who burst into tears when she saw me.

That fall, I enrolled at Bank Street College of Education and began work on my Master’s degree in Child Development. For the past thirty years, I have been a director of Christian education. St. Vincent’s has moved to a beautiful new campus on 8.6 acres. The amazing work of the doctors, staff, therapists and volunteers, continues to improve the lives of handicapped people throughout Haiti. I still visit Port-au-Prince and cherish the friendships that changed my life, that September and forever after.

The author is director of Christian Education at St. James the Less, Scarsdale.




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Transformation in Tanzania

By Emily Nixon



Dancing Carpenter's Kids.

Photo: Emily Nixon.

My son Oliver and I first heard about the work of Carpenter's Kids about ten years ago from Father Randy Alexander, who was then rector of Christ Church, Pelham. He had already made a pilgrimage to Tanzania to visit the three villages that Christ Church was sponsoring, and by the next summer his wife, Mother Patty, was off on her own trip to Africa. This particularly struck me, because they had three young sons at the time, and pastors get very little vacation—making the choice to spend their scarce free time traveling so far from home (and not always in comfortable circumstances) for me a real-time example of selfless Christian charity.

Then, in 2008, the late Bishop Mdimi Mhogolo of the Diocese of Central Tanganyika, who had been part of the creation of Carpenter's Kids, came to speak at Christ Church—just when the Great Recession was building up steam. The bishop referred to this during his talk by saying “I understand that here in the United States you are experiencing a bad financial cold, but please understand that in Tanzania we have had pneumonia forever.” I will never forget those words, and it was then that I decided that we would take part in the next summer's pilgrimage ourselves.

In my mind, this pilgrimage was a way of supporting the work our church was doing on behalf of the children chosen to be “Carpenter's Kids.” But it would also be a chance for my son, who was studying theology at university, to have a hands-on experience of faith in action. Little did I realize the profound effect this trip would have on me as well.

My strongest memory is of the contrast as we travelled from the most privileged country in the world to one that is not only one of the poorest, but constantly afflicted by fresh bouts of drought and disease. This was so horrific and even surreal (how could one place have such plenty that obesity is an epidemic, and another be rife with starvation?) that it was nearly impossible to process.

Almost equally difficult to believe was the perseverance, kindness and grace of the people with whom we interacted. With no choice but to create a life out of less than nothing, to walk miles every day in search of water, to watch their children (whom they treasure just as we do our own) suffer from hunger and illness, the people we met in Tanzania somehow kept going. And they did this with a positivity that made me ashamed of my own habit of complaining over small nuisances—something that, because of the example of our Tanzanian hosts, I have since endeavored to curb.

On a purely positive note, being part of the pilgrimage allowed us to celebrate, along with the adults, the success of each village's group of Carpenter's Kids. It was instructive to see how much pride each villager took in the success of their lucky children, including the hundreds of other kids looking on, who would dearly have loved to have had the opportunity to wear a smart, blue and white uniform themselves. Perhaps jealousy and rivalry don't grow as easily when all are in a struggle together.

In a way, I frame the whole experience by remembering a story I heard before we left on pilgrimage, when my son and I were wondering if, while grateful to be part of helping the Carpenter's Kids, we'd be able to cope with the visual tsunami of people in need whom we were *not* able to help. I sought an answer to this from a friend who had made over 60 humanitarian trips to Africa, working to bring sources of water to drought-plagued populations. Would we, I asked, feel helpless and as if our efforts were in vain, when the unmet need was so overwhelming, and was staring us in the face at every turn? He answered me with a story:

A man approaches a beach at dawn and sees it is covered with thousands upon thousands of baby star fish. There is another man carefully picking up one at a time, and returning them to the water, hopefully before the sun rises and bakes them into oblivion. The observer asks “Why are you bothering? The sun is nearly up! What difference do you think can you possibly make?!” The first man simply picks up another starfish, throws it into the ocean and says, “Well, I made a difference to that one!”

We should all try never to miss an opportunity to do good; it is important food for the soul, especially in these troubled times. And an organization like Carpenter's Kids, whose mission has so clearly succeeded in making a real difference in the lives of children, and by extension those around them, enables us “do good” secure in the knowledge that our help actually reaches its target.

I urge you, if you have the opportunity to make a pilgrimage with your church, to do so, and take your children if you can—for your life will be enriched beyond measure. My son Oliver returned to Tanzania the summer after we were there, along with two fellow graduates. They taught at the Msalato Theological Seminary in Dodoma, which was then headed by the Rev. Dr. Sandra McCann. Oliver himself is now a Doctor of Historical Theology, teaching at his alma mater in Scotland, and he still speaks of his experiences on pilgrimage with the Carpenter's Kids as a turning point on his own journey of faith.

The author is a member of the parish of Christ the Redeemer, Pelham.

Elmina Castle

By Sarah Tielemans

One does not go on pilgrimage to perpetuate suffering, but discomfort is part of the process. By positioning ourselves in discomfort we are able to shed the burden of the superficial. We lose identification with class, gender, nationality, our physical bodies, until we are overcome by the divine.

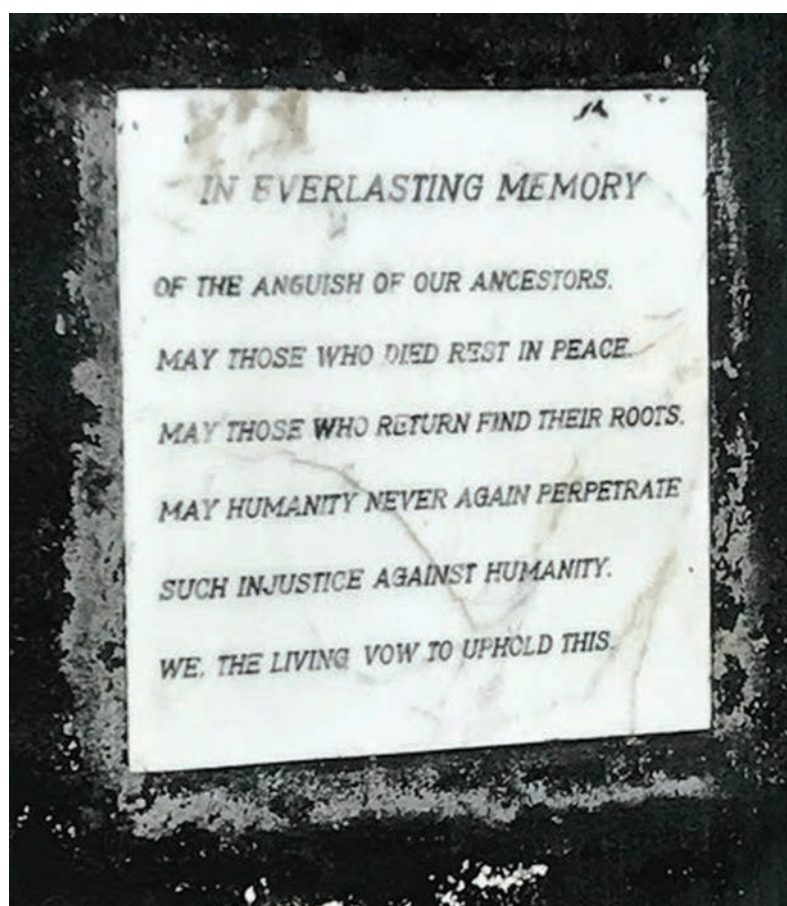
I should provide a bit of context. Although uncommon for someone from my hometown, I have been privileged to travel to countries in every region of the world, including cycling through 20 countries in Africa. On these journeys, I began many treasured and lasting relationships with people whose stories are all unique and powerful. I gained a more complex understanding of the contemporary social and political world I inhabit. I came to understand, in a real sense, that we are a global community. I changed and I grew. But I was not transformed. These were not pilgrimages.

In 2017, I joined an Episcopal Relief and Development pilgrimage to Ghana. The trip was thoughtfully planned, including an outstanding selection of preparatory educational materials, visits to several schools and Anglican houses of worship, and stops at significant points along the route of the slave trade. In fact, I had previously cycled over the very terrain that so many kidnapped souls were driven along. You could say that I was prepared intellectually. More importantly, however, was that I came to this pilgrimage with a vulnerable heart.

Part of my “heart work,” as you might call it, was a visit to Haiti in 2015—arguably the country with the most complicated history of all time, but also the most inspiring. Haiti has the distinction of being the only country founded through a successful slave revolt. Every Haitian today bears the proud heritage of hope and resistance in the face of inconceivable oppression. Standing in St. Louis du Nord, among the bustle of Haitians creating a future for themselves, I tried to picture the arrival of a slave ship. After my bike ride, but before my pilgrimage, I could see in my mind the coast of Ghana. I lacked the imaginative capacity, however, to truly evoke what it must have been like. In 2017, though, I found myself at the edge of the ocean once again; and this time, for a moment, the entirety of my being could feel it. Across time. Across geography. Across everything I had perceived as separation.

It was simultaneously horrible and beautiful.

Elmina Castle is haunted. I would not do justice to the heroic stories of those whose suffering in that place was unspeakable, so I won't try. A white American woman, I could hardly be farther away from the pain and desperation of those terrorized there. Yet I felt possessed by their spirits. And the feeling was one of



Plaque at Elmina Castle, Ghana.

Photo: Sarah Tielemans.

yearning, reaching to the depths of my heart. I felt a plea for restitution. Not in any mundane sense of the word—although any hope of realizing the gospel of Christ's love also requires that we address the ongoing trauma of slavery and achieve real equity—but restitution of our shared humanity.

In Tanzania, there is a town (also linked to the slave trade) called Bagamoyo which, translated from Kiswahili, means “Throw Down Your Heart.” In the early morning, the day after visiting Elmina, I sat on the beach outside our lovely hotel and I wept. I cried for all of the cruelty we have committed. I cried for what has been lost in my life—relationships that never were, others that have been damaged by racism. I cried for my own lost humanity because to be complicit in this story, as I am, is an injury to my own divinity.

I cried my heart empty.

In that moment I finally touched the truth that the divine purely and simply is Love. Love is the perfect awareness of our interconnectedness. Across time. Across geography. Across everything we perceive

as separation.

Our expectation as pilgrims is to be transformed. Our intention is to have a spiritual experience so profound that we are forever altered. So much so that when we return to our “normal” lives, and feelings of frustration, anger, disappointment, or even joy and excitement seem more real than our spiritual quest, we can still be present to the resonating, eternal Love that binds us all. The grain of insight in that is this: pilgrimage is not an event. Our entire lives may be thought of as a pilgrimage if we are intentional about the journey. We don't need to go anywhere. For me, my practice has become a continuous reflection on the meaning in every interaction of the profound connection I experienced in Elmina Castle. I must live my life as an offering to the individuals—and their descendants—upon whose dignity and humanity my privilege has been constructed. I must also hold in my heart those whose own pain causes them to perpetuate harm. This demands an active love, not accepting of the way things are, but striving to live by the radical example set by Jesus.

Choosing to love everyone unconditionally as my spiritual practice means I must accept failure as part of the routine. It's a daunting thing. But if I have the courage for it, I can reclaim a piece of our shared humanity.

The author is advancement manager with the National Association of Episcopal Schools.

Lament, Apologize, Repair: A Pilgrimage of Hope for Our Sin-sick Souls

By *Lynnaia Main*

*There is a balm in Gilead to make the wounded whole,
there is a balm in Gilead to heal the sin-sick soul.*

When we think of pilgrimage, we usually think of going places. From point A to point B, we are physically moving through space with intentionality. We have a definite starting and ending point, and perhaps other points in between, in the expectation of engendering some sort of spiritual meaning or transformation.

Since 2006, our diocese has been on a pilgrimage, together with the Reparations Committee on Slavery, and its aftermath, that incorporates space, time and the state of our souls. Through historical geographical space, in voyaging with 10 to 12 million enslaved Africans brought to the Americas during the transatlantic slave trade: from African shores beginning with the 16th century, to the Caribbean, to the Americas and to ports, churches, schools, businesses and homes in our Diocese of New York. Through time, in traversing the period from the transatlantic slave trade, through the abolition of slavery in New York, through the social and psychological distortions of the Jim Crow era, to our present day, when the trauma and damage to our souls, and to our society, are crystal clear for some, muddy and threatening for others, yet ever divisive and pernicious for all.

And it is a pilgrimage through the state of our souls, both our individual psyches and our collective soul as a community: our greed; our disregard for the sanctity and dignity of all human beings, all made in God's image; our refusal to love our neighbor as ourselves; our indifference to others' suffering. We are all too willing to exploit our neighbor for material gain, to satisfy our hunger for lives of ease that banish others to lives of oppression, all the while living in "deep denial," to use the phrase of author David Billings, that there might even be a harm or a threat to acknowledge or to grieve, let alone to attempt to repair. But there is also our compassion and love for each other, our willingness to examine the past and make amends for our complicity and hardened hearts, and to call upon God to heal the wounds we have caused in injuring each other.

Beginning last November, the Reparations Committee has been working with the Diocese of New York to present a three-year pilgrimage of hope and healing, with a Year of Lamentation, a Year of Apology and a Year of Repair. While none pretend that this pilgrimage will fully heal the trauma we have collectively endured, we know that Jesus calls us to journey together towards reconciliation with our neighbor, an expression of loving our neighbor as ourselves.

Since November, we have undertaken this first leg of our pilgrimage,

examining and experiencing a Year of Lamentation¹ through theatrical performances, book studies, film screenings, parish-led examinations of church archives and a worship service commemorating the life of blessed Absalom Jones. In May, we shared in a Liturgy of Lamentation at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine to commemorate the life of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and to honor the Feast of the Honorable Thurgood Marshall, while continuing the work of repentance, reparation and reconciliation to which Christ calls us all, and we offered a sacred walking tour through a historically significant site in central Manhattan.

In the summer and fall, the Reparations Committee will undertake two pilgrimages as part of this larger pilgrimage on Lamentation. In August, we will join the Jonathan Daniels Civil Rights Youth Pilgrimage² and, over three action-packed days, will visit sites related to the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in Atlanta, Georgia and historic Civil Rights sites and museums in Selma, Birmingham, Montgomery and Hayneville, Alabama. On September 21st, we will journey to Brooklyn to attend the annual commemoration of the MAAFA Suite...A Healing Journey³ at St. Paul's Community Baptist Church.

We invite you to journey with us on each of these pilgrimages, physically or via social media by following our Facebook page⁴ or our prayer blog⁵, and to participate in the other events planned for the remainder of our Year of Lamentation. As we journey through liminal space and time, we invite you as well to think about this journey of our individual and collective souls. Share with Jesus your prayers, meditations and dreams for reconciliation and repair. Share with each other by writing to diocesanrepcommittee@gmail.com or contacting us through our social media pages. Pray and listen to each other, fellow pilgrims, for we need each other on this journey of lamentation, healing and hope for our sin-sick souls.

The author is a member of l'Eglise Francaise du Saint-Esprit, in Manhattan, and serves on the diocese's Reparations Committee.

¹<https://www.diocesenyny.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/YoL-Calendar-01252018-002.png>

²<https://www.diocesenyny.org/ednyevent/jonathan-daniels-2018/>

³<https://www.spcbc.com/themaafa>

⁴<https://www.facebook.com/EDNYReparationsCommittee/>

⁵<https://ednyreparationsblog.wordpress.com/>

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Packing List

By Thayer Woodcock

While the “original” pilgrims of the Camino de Santiago set off with only the clothes on their backs, in today’s cyberspace pilgrim subculture there is obsessive interest and opinion about minute details: wool vs. synthetic, shoes vs. boots, with trekking poles or without.

As my own departure drew near, I found myself mulling over the other things I’d be carrying, of a weight less measureable in grams.

Some had physical weight, hardly a measure of their presence: an engraved key fob—a 50th anniversary gift between my late parents; a scarf from Luisa, daughter of the Salvadoran family integral to the adoption of my children; a walking stick carved by someone I once believed I would spend my life with, who took his own life last year. They all walked with me.

Then there were the things with no physical mass, and thus even heavier: doubt about whether I—a self-described couch potato—could make it; guilt about taking time, money, and effort over something so personal, so impractical; prayers and hopes for loved ones who were sick, caring for others, searching for healing or change. These too walked with me.

Finally, blessedly, there was the “negative weight” that would make the load rest easier: the love and confidence of my family, unstinting in their support; generous wishes from those sending prayers and love with me, entrusting to me an array of tiny items to bring back with whatever power they received from the walk; gratitude for the sheer blessedness of my life, of being born lucky enough to have so many choices and opportunities.

As I left, my carry weight was a little under 13 pounds. It was my hope that the “negative weight” would grow, nurtured by the experiences I’d have, the pilgrims I’d come to know, the glories I’d encounter.

THIN PLACES

“Thin places,” where the boundary between the sacred and the everyday feels “thin,” are everywhere along the Camino, and they are glorious and powerful beyond measure. But it is the *albergues*, the pilgrim hostels—thin places of time and circumstance rather than physical grandeur—that remain etched with greater depth and clarity in my mind than many a more recent memory. Sacred moments cocooned in the small personal space of my bunk, surrounded by darkness and the sounds, smells, and sheer human presence of fellow pilgrims—people of so many different ages, languages, and stories; some already friends, others unseen before they climbed into the adjacent bunk. All of us physically exhaust-

ed and in varying degrees of pain, all stripped of our “real world” armor of job, family, and routine, all of us breathing together as we made the journey to sleep, to Santiago, and beyond.

Preacher Barbara Brown Taylor points out that “conspire” means to breathe together, to be filled with the same spirit, and that “the same ancient air just keeps recirculating... every time any of us breathes we breathe star dust left over from the creation of the earth. We breathe brontosaurus breath and pterodactyl breath... we breathe the same air that Plato breathed, and Mozart and Michelangelo...”

And each night in the dormitory, this thin place of conspiracy, I was knit into kinship not just with those who surrounded me, but with pilgrims who made similar journeys centuries before us.

While the realities of sharing this space—alive with the sounds and smells and movements of so many—was not always conducive to actual sleep, the connection felt with fellow *peregrinos* across the centuries wove itself throughout the journey as we walked along remains of roadways built by the Romans, sat in morning silence tending our feet, lingered over *café con leche*, descended to the crypt of St. James, or looked for the sunset at Finisterre, all the while breathing together that same generous ancient air.

¡BUEN CAMINO!

We were an ever-changing configuration of people, converging for a few kilometers, a few cafés, a few days; groups forming and reforming like droplets making their way the length of a lava lamp. We shared bits and pieces of our stories, cajoled and encouraged through the rough spots, sympathized and supported through injuries and pain, celebrated mountaintops and milestones. And through it there were two constants: the cheerful pilgrim greeting of “¡Buen Camino!” and the understanding and comfort of knowing that we were all headed to the same destination.

Around the town of Sarria, the road became more crowded as groups of pilgrims started out at the minimum distance—100 kilometers or four to five days—required to qualify for the official *Compostela* issued by the centuries-old Pilgrim’s Office at Santiago. Like vineyard workers who had worked since dawn only to see latecomers receive the same wages, it could be hard not to resent these freshly pressed and loud novices, not yet familiar with the rhythms and cadence of the Camino. Yet straggling into the pilgrim mass in Santiago, dwarfed within the soaring heights of the cathedral, one amid a vast diversity of pilgrims—from those who had walked for weeks from the borders of France or beyond to those who just stepped off a tourist bus—what I felt was a wonderful sense of benevolence and love for every single one of them, fellow companions on this earthly pilgrimage. It felt like home. It felt like heaven.

Save for a daily walking habit, I came home with no earth-shattering life changes or revelations. But I have come to trust this basic set of rules culled from the journey, which have proven applicable taken both literally and metaphorically.

- Pack light, stuff gets heavy.
- Be a thoughtful fellow traveler. You’re all going the same place. It’s not a race.
- Wrong turns and mountains to climb are inevitable. Music and laughter help.
- Enjoy the view and be grateful.
- Share your band aids.

The author is parish administrator at Grace Church, Nyack.



The final destination: The Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela.

Photo: Trevor Huxham, Flickr.

A Pilgrim's Hope

By Molly Jane Layton

The sun peeked through the clouds as I approached the abandoned buildings. Dropping my backpack by a solitary picnic table, I tried the main door to the church. Locked. Its sturdy construction protected the sacred interior from the homeless wanderer and the curious pilgrim alike. On my right, an open doorway beckoned. I peered around the doorframe into a series of rooms, roofs collapsed but walls intact. Stepping gingerly around piles of debris, I avoided the corners where sections of the ceiling still perched precariously. A fire pit with a folding chair and a frying pan hinted that someone was seeking what little shelter the ruins still offered. I emerged at the back of the outbuildings to see the sunlight glancing off yellow flowers clustered under archways, giving way to a thick, green bramble. My mind filled with images of busy monks singing masses, tending gardens, cooking meals, saying prayers. Pilgrims had walked this route on the Camino de Santiago ever since the 9th century when the bones of St. James were rediscovered, giving purpose and life to places like this where monks cared for the physical and spiritual needs of the sojourners. The emptiness of the rooms now produced an almost painful nostalgia for a myriad of lost opportunities. I wondered what the closure of the community was like, as the monks said the final mass and turned the key in the lock, leaving the buildings to crumble and decay.

The monastery lay abandoned, but the pilgrims pressed on as the years passed, journeying through the Spanish countryside to pray beside the saint's remains. According to tradition, the apostle James was the first to evangelize Spain, and although he was martyred in Jerusalem, his disciples carried his body back to Spain for burial. After the rediscovery of the apostle's remains almost eight centuries later, King Alfonso II took the first pilgrimage from Oviedo to Santiago to pay his respects to the relic. The cathedral was built and hundreds of thousands of pilgrims began peregrinating every year. Although its popularity waxed and waned over time, it has endured into the 21st century, finding me walking its paths and contemplating the haunting vision of the abandoned monastery. What caused its downfall? Those who knew the intimate details were lost to history themselves, but the many possibilities seemed to come back to the faithlessness of humans: internal problems with the monks, perhaps, or loss of external support. But this contrasted starkly with the abiding legacy of the Camino itself, sustained by the constancy of God. The significance of God's faithfulness to this pilgrimage, a faithfulness that had drawn me across the Atlantic to make the journey myself, should have dwarfed the loss of one monastery. But I could not shake the memory of the dilapidated buildings.

In some ways the monastery had experienced its death, so my unsettled feeling might have stemmed from the fear of death which so often grips us mortal humans. But for me there was something more dismaying in its abandonment than in its closure, in watching a place once carefully tended, once dedicated to cultivating the sacred, reduced to piles of broken stone and rotting beams. The flashes of beauty in the sunlight and the greenery made the ache even more poignant: hope was there, but there was no one to nurture it. So as I walked, I contemplated the difference between abandonment and death. God promises



Ruins of the 12th century monastery of Moruela, in Zamora.

Photo: Paula García/ Wikimedia Commons.

repeatedly in Scripture that abandonment is not a fate that his people will experience: that he will never leave us nor forsake us (Deuteronomy 31:8), that he is with us always (Matthew 28:20), and that he is faithful even when we are faithless (2 Timothy 2:13). However, it is different with death: God actually promises it will happen to us. Beyond the fact that all humans die physically, we also experience spiritual death through sin, and baptism is the sacramental rite of our burial with Christ into death (Romans 6:4). The Son of God died on the cross so that we might die with him. But death did not have the final word: God did not abandon Jesus Christ to the grave, nor did he let him see decay (Psalm 16:10). Jesus rose from the dead, and because of his resurrection, we will rise too. God reaches out to us in the midst of our physical and spiritual death, so that we will not be like that old monastery, a ghostly, decaying remembrance of what might have been. He makes us a new creation instead, the apple of his eye, faithfully tended to and cared for.

On the Camino, walking past other churches and monasteries in various states of use and disuse, I felt a strong companionship with a great cloud of witnesses, those millions of people who had journeyed the way before me and those who would continue to come after me, all together running the race marked out for us. Here was the hope I sought: that, despite the vagaries of life and the abandoned buildings along the way, each one of us pushes forward, confident in this divine promise: because Jesus endured the cross and sat down at the right hand of God, we will never be abandoned to the decay of death (Hebrews 12:1-2).

The author is a member of Calvary-St. George's, Manhattan.

A Vow Finally Kept

By the Rev. Howard T. W. Stowe

Okay. I admit it. I have a medieval way of looking at things. I love carefully ritualized liturgies where we are jolted out of a casual way of seeing this world to discover something mystical and sacred.

In Holy Week of 1980, when I was rector of Saint Ignatius of Antioch in Manhattan, I got very sick and was taken to St. Luke's hospital. On Good Friday, I placed the small standing cross from the sick communion set on the hospital bed table and spent the next three hours drawing into my mind every single parishioner I could think of. At the end of the third hour, I just stayed in bed. But—and here's the strange part—I began to feel a soft warmth surrounding me. And for some reason it felt feminine. And it came to me very strongly that this was Mary. I had never had a devotion to Mary and I didn't hear a voice or see a vision. But I felt it was Mary, assuring me that "all will be well," as Julian of Norwich had put it.

It passed. A few hours later, friends from the parish came to visit me. I told them about what happened. "Maybe it was just fever." But I didn't have a fever. I had an encounter. And later that night I made a solemn vow. That's a capital V because to me, it was a biggie. I vowed that within one year I would make a pilgrimage to a shrine dedicated to Mary, to give thanks to her and to God for those few moments that truly comforted and reassured me.

I recovered fully and everything went back to normal. Then I realized that one year was almost up and I still hadn't made my promised visit to a shrine of Mary! I considered visiting Manhattan's Church of St. Mary the Virgin, but that seemed like a cop-out. I thought a pilgrimage should take some effort and involve lots of walking, not just taking the 1 train. So I told my confessor, Canon Edward West, about my vow and how the year was nearly up.

"No," he said, "I cannot dispense you from a solemn vow. You will have to carry through with it."

I'm sure my face went pale.

"But what I can do is to give you more time," he added. "So you must carry out this vow in your lifetime. Understood?"

I have no idea if he was making it up, but he was always so full of authority that I didn't question it. I began to search for my vow-fulfilling shrine and hit upon Walsingham in Norfolk, England. I told my good friend and parishioner, Alison Dodd, of my intention and she immediately agreed to join me.

I got busy. We would need a "Script" to show as a kind of passport so I devised something that sounded medieval-ish. I got a "pilgrim's staff" from a cane store in the city. And adapting the Sarum Rite, I came up with a splendid liturgy for the blessing of pilgrims.

When the morning of the "Mass for the Blessing of Two Pilgrims" came, in August, 1988 (August 15 being the Feast of Mary), we lay prostrate before the high altar while prayers were intoned. We were sprinkled with holy water and covered with clouds of incense. Then kissing everyone goodbye, we headed to JFK.

From London we took British Rail to Norwich, rented a car, and eventually arrived at the Slipper Chapel—the formal beginning of the pilgrimage, where pilgrims took off their shoes and prayed before walking barefoot up the Holy Mile to Walsingham village. At one time every pilgrim did this, but not so much now. I walked (with shoes). The unpaved lane follows a gentle brook through unspoiled countryside. I used my walking stick and prayed as I went. I met no one on the way.

Coming into the town there was a sudden flurry of activity. Shop keepers were selling small statues of Our Lady of Walsingham and other souvenirs. This was a big weekend, not only for Anglicans but for Roman Catholics and Orthodox as well, and there was a feeling of expectation. In my imagination we could have been at a medieval fete.

On Saturday in the late afternoon, people began to assemble for the

evening Vigil Procession. There were remarkable icons, wildly differing vestments, and a pallet with Mary's statue carried on shoulders. Every group had censers and processional crosses. It was a wonderful holy chaos. When it was time to set out, a nun with a loudspeaker on top of a car started a hymn that everyone seemed to know. Not exactly medieval chant, but we did each carry a candle pushed inside a cup with "Hail Mary" printed on the outside.

Off we went, hundreds of us, singing the chorus of the hymn. The procession wove through town past a small group who were calling us "idol worshippers" and promising hell as the reward for annoying God with our heathen ways. But soon we were on a one-lane road into the countryside. As we walked and sang, we passed bewildered cows and sheep and finally arrived at the Church of St. Mary and All Saints.

The church was large, but we were still quite packed inside. Each time the refrain "Hail Mary! Hail Mary! Hail Mary full of grace!" came around they would all raise their candles three times, reminding me of drinking songs and lifting beer steins. After many prayers, the rosary began, and Alison and I slipped out to walk back to the village in the quiet darkness.

Was this what I came for? This cheesy disordered crowd? Did I hate it? I would have expected to, but I didn't. Yes, it was so un-Episcopalian. Maybe that's what caught me off-guard. There was a love poured into the singing and an unpolished love for Mary that was so base but so genuine. And to my surprise, that honest lack of pretention had a sneaky way of drawing me in. But into what? I think I was letting go of my spikey "perfect" liturgy ideas and discovering something in my heart. Something was changing in me and I realized that no liturgy, no matter how perfectly executed, could mean anything unless there was a reality, a letting-go of control, a Love drawing us deeper into the Mystery.

The next morning on the Feast of Mary, I was given the honor of saying Mass at the altar inside the Holy House where hundreds of candles flickered, each representing a petition for prayer. It was quiet. And it was warm. And I realized I had finally kept my Vow.

The author is a retired priest in the diocese.



Pilgrims' Procession to Walsingham.

Photo: Lawrence OP, Flickr.

Unintended and Life Changing

By Preston L. Pittman

When I finished college many decades ago, I set out for a summer of traveling around Europe armed with a guide to Gothic architectural styles, a copy of Henry Adam's *Mont Saint Michel and Chartres*, and a Eurail Pass. I expected to do the "chateaux and cathedrals" tour around France and the Benelux countries. However, after a visit to the Tour St. Jacques in Paris, (where the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela began for Parisians), followed by a day trip to Chartres Cathedral, (the first major stop along the Camino), I unintentionally began what would become a life long pilgrimage in body and spirit centered on Chartres and its place on the Camino de Santiago.

On my first visit to Chartres, I was disappointed that the venerable Malcolm Miller, of whom I had heard so much, was on vacation, and would not be giving the English language tour. But the substitute, whose name I don't now recall, was very good, and left me with interest and a lot of questions to investigate. And I would return, not many summers later, to meet Mr. Miller himself.

Malcolm Miller equated Chartres to a great book, with the cathedral's architecture as its spine and the pages of the book reflected in the many sculptures and stained-glass windows, which tell the story of mankind's salvation from the creation, through the ministry of Christ, to the final judgement.

The great west rose window over the main entrance portrays the resurrected Christ in Judgement. Its diameter is the same as that of the labyrinth in the nave. The distance from the center of the west rose window to the floor is exactly the same as the distance from the center of the labyrinth to the cathedral's west portal wall. West and north windows are lined up to the summer and winter solstices and reflect rays of light on those days.

My initial introduction to the New Age theories about Chartres was *Les Mysteres de la Cathedrale de Chartres* (1972) by Louis Charpentier, which I purchased in the book shop on the cathedral square. Louis Charpentier proposed many unorthodox theories, which have vexed and annoyed more conservative historians and theologians over the decades, and delighted those more prone to "New Age" thought.

Charpentier asserted that the Templars financed the construction of Chartres, and theorized that they had found "something" during their excavations into the Temple Mount, possibly the Ark of the Covenant, which they transported to France and hid somewhere—possibly in the crypt of Chartres, itself.

Charpentier also suggested that the site of Chartres was previously a sacred druidic grotto, with a sacred well—still be seen in the crypt. There was a statue



The Chartres Labyrinth.

Photo: Fab5669, Wikimedia Commons.

of a goddess holding a child in this grotto. The original has long since disappeared, but the current "Black Madonna," which sits on a column in the cathedral and is also portrayed in one of its magnificent stained-glass windows, is supposed to be modeled on it.

The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail (1982) by Beigant, Leigh and Lincoln and *The Cult of the Black Virgin* (1985) by Ean Begg, have proposed ideas linking Chartres to a "sacred bloodline descended from children of Jesus and Mary Magdalene" and have suggested that all of the "Black Madonna" figures throughout Europe depict not Mary the Mother of Jesus, but Mary Magdalene, who, they say, was the wife of Jesus, holding their child. (Incidentally, the New Age writers led me to more serious scholars such as

Elaine Pagels and Bart Ehrman.)

Beyond the New Age speculations, there exists an awe-inspiring cathedral—and the physical and spiritual "heart" of Chartres is its labyrinth. The act of pilgrimage—a prayerful and introspective journeying—unfolds and encompasses the meditative walking of the labyrinth.

In *The Source of Miracles* (2009), Kathleen McGowan discusses the recitation of the Lord's Prayer while walking the labyrinth of Chartres. She dwells on the spiritual meaning of each sentence while navigating a corresponding section of the labyrinth, and argues that the Lord's Prayer is the heart of the Gospel, much in the same way that the labyrinth is the heart of Chartres.

The Rev. Dr. Lauren Atrass, canon of Grace Cathedral in San Francisco, has been a key figure in creating a "Labyrinth Movement." She has created a duplicate of the Chartres labyrinth on the grounds of Grace Cathedral, and another inside. Atrass leads pilgrimages to Chartres. Her website is www.laurenatress.com.

My friend, Diana Carulli, inspired by Lauren Atrass, has created labyrinths based on the Chartres model in the New York area, including one currently in the East River Park. She has also designed labyrinths in fabric that can be "rolled" out in sacred spaces. Diana says that walking the labyrinth in a prayerful state frees one from the "chattering mind." Her web site is <http://dmcarulli.com>. Her labyrinth work has appeared on the cover of the New York Times.

In First Thessalonians, Chapter 5, St. Paul exhorts us to "pray without ceasing." Walking the labyrinth while praying provides a vehicle for integrating the exterior, physical world with the inner world of the spirit—and thus, for teaching us how to "pray without ceasing."

The author serves on the vestry of St. Philip's Church in the Highlands, Garrison.



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Sabbatical as Pilgrimage as Labyrinth

By the Rev. Mary Cat Young

This year, I have been privileged to take a sabbatical—a season of rest and respite: three months free of email, programs, planning, preaching, and pastoral care of my community. All my duties were carried out by qualified colleagues so that I might step away from the day-to-day and find rest for my soul.

My goals included deep family time and journeys to home places (Arkansas and Minnesota); incorporating new art forms and creative prayer through painting; and vocational reflection on my role as a priest and teacher.

In this, I have found myself on a labyrinthine journey or pilgrimage.

If you're not familiar with a labyrinth, it may seem like a maze, with concentric circles making their way toward a center destination. Labyrinths differ from mazes, however, in that there are no barriers, no walls, no forced turnabouts.

There is only one path, which leads you in all four directions as you move along the way, always working toward the center. For centuries, labyrinths have been a prayer practice used for reflection on the journey of life, and even, for some, a means of experiencing pilgrimage when travel to far-away places was impossible.

My experience on the journey of sabbatical these past few months has felt like that. I entered the path; I journeyed to several places: sometimes arriving quickly at a turning point or moment of clarity, while at other times it was only after a longer stretch that I came upon a new insight or understanding. Even now, in these final days and hours of this long sabbath, I'm thinking through what I gained in those first days, what I saw and understood in myself, and the direction I chose to take in putting this sabbatical together.

Each step was a movement toward a larger goal, a deeper center; each turn was an opportunity to see something new, or to see a place where I had been before from a different perspective. In this way, I have accepted my sabbatical experience as something of a pilgrimage: a journey to one ultimate sacred place, with twists and turns along the way, but with no barriers to the place I was hoping to find myself, which is closer to the heart of God, more deeply understanding of my relationship with God, and of God's companionship to me along the way.

My visits to home places have brought me into several of the churches that formed me from birth and baptism, through vacation Bible school, to teenage faith formation and young adult leadership. I've seen the places where my own vocation was formed—my own call to follow Christ into new and unknown places. I've seen with mature eyes flashes of childhood memories. I've stood in the places where I first saw myself as part of a faith community, the places where I was first asked to be a leader, the places where I stood and said yes to God's call. I walked this labyrinth as I lived my life, and now I have returned as a pilgrim to these pivotal places, certain that each step was a step toward God, no matter how winding the path sometimes felt, no matter how far the stretches took me from home.

The greatest gift that I have received, as I find myself at the end of this journey, is that there are still steps to take, still a path to follow, still a road that is leading me deeper into the heart of God. Sabbatical has given me a feeling of rest; new eyes with which to view the journey, both looking back and looking forward; new ears to listen for my continued call; and new items in my pack to accompany me on the next stretch of the path before me. Thanks be to God.

The author is the diocese's liaison for campus and young adult ministry, chaplain of Canterbury Downtown, and coordinator of the Manhattan Young Adult Network.



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Make a Rail Trail Pilgrimage

By the Rev. Chuck Kramer



Dutchess Rail Trail in the Fall.

Photo: Sean Dague, Wikimedia Commons.

On a recent flight, I met a woman who had just walked the Camino de Santiago, the Way of St. James. That is a dream of mine—my bucket list pilgrimage, a 500 kilometer walk through France and Spain to the Cathedral of St. James in Santiago de Compostela.

But for now, it's just a bucket list item. Real pilgrimage is too time consuming. And too expensive. And too hard.

Or is it?

Some years ago, discouraged from thinking I could ever manage a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, or walk the Camino, or even visit Rome or Canterbury, I began to wonder if those were the only kinds of pilgrimage available to regular folks like me. Or, for that matter, what defined a pilgrimage in the first place.

A pilgrimage is simply moving from one place to another with spiritual intention. Often people go to see something that is important to their faith - the Temple Mount, Gethsemane, or—for the druids out there—Stonehenge. Sometimes it is to see relics—often part of the remains of a saint.

One hazard with such trips is that they can sometimes become indistinguishable from tourism. We go on once-in-a-lifetime trips and want to see all the sights. Who wouldn't? It's fun and exciting, and it can be easy to forget why we've gone in the first place.

As it turns out, it's not the destination or relic that makes a pilgrimage holy. It's the intent. And the engagement of the body in the movement from one place to another in order to move from the worldly to the divine.

If that's the case, why can't we do pilgrimage closer to home?

We can.

I wanted something bigger than walking the labyrinth (which was developed in part to act as a sort of ersatz pilgrimage for the poor) but not so big that it would take me away from home for weeks at a time or cost an arm and a leg.

This part of the country is rich with walking trails, especially abandoned

railroad tracks that have been repurposed into "rail trails." In the Hudson Valley, they're everywhere. They are also safe and easily accessible. Many of them have restroom facilities along the way.

So, I developed my own Rail Trail Pilgrimage, and along with a few other folks walked it three different times.

The way it worked was simple. We pilgrims gathered at the trail head of the Dutchess Rail Trail in Dutchess County to pray and bless our backpacks. Then we walked—each at our own pace—for ten miles. Every two miles, we stopped for a brief liturgy of scripture reading and prayer.

We stopped for the night at a local church, sleeping on the floor and cooking in the church kitchen. The next day, we did it all over again, concluding the pilgrimage with a eucharist at the opposite trailhead. Altogether, we walked about 20 miles and made 10 prayer stops.

Since then, life has gotten busy, and there haven't been any more. But recently, someone asked me if we might do another, so who knows?

This is not the only way to do pilgrimage, but it is one that's available to pretty much anyone within our diocese. If you have a small group, a rail trail nearby, and a couple of days, you can create your own intentional walk with Jesus.

If you would like some suggestions on how to make a Rail Trail Pilgrimage or would like sample blessings and prayers, you can contact me at revckramer@gmail.com.

The author is rector of St. James' Church, Hyde Park.



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Letting Yourself Go

By the Rev. Nils Chittenden

Around the year A.D. 670, the archbishop of Canterbury, Theodore of Tarsus, brought an elderly monk out of what might have been considered his retirement. He wanted him to exercise the ministry of bishop again, this time for the Diocese of Mercia—the west midlands of England. It was a large diocese, and the monk-bishop, Chad, insisted on covering it on foot. Thinking this was not good for the old man, Theodore bought Chad a horse, which he refused to use. It got to the point, according to the historian, Bede, that Theodore had personally to manhandle Chad into the horse's saddle himself.

Stubbornness aside, Theodore actually admired Chad's humility and simplicity—the main reasons for giving him the see of Mercia. For Chad, these traits were central to his ministry: he felt that being on foot brought him closer into the lives of the ordinary folk he was meeting as he traveled his diocese, and he didn't want to risk losing that sense of connection.

Chad's qualities dovetailed beautifully with his upbringing, too. He was a product of what we now call the "Celtic Church," which had been the dominant expression of ecclesiology in the British Isles up to that point. Throughout the seventh century, however, the type of ecclesiology prevalent in the rest of Western Christendom—the "Roman Church,"—was gaining a foothold in the British Isles. In 664 there was a showdown: a synod was held in Whitby to settle the question of which of these two forms of ecclesial structure was officially to be followed. The "Roman" form won the day. In this watershed moment, the "Celtic" form retreated and the riches of theology unique to it largely faded away.

Notwithstanding his personal wish to engage with everyday folk in an ordinary manner, Chad's desire to always be on the move, from village, to farm, to town, to shore, was in fact a key marker of the Celtic Christian DNA.

There were many things that made the Celtic form different from the Roman, and one of them was in the understanding of pilgrimage. In the Roman form, pilgrimage was largely "episodic," allocating a specific slice of time in order to visit a specific holy site, and acquire specific outcomes from that visit, such as a miracle at a shrine or, at the very least, a medallion.

In contrast, the Celtic form was largely "systemic," in that pilgrimage was understood as intrinsic to the everyday life of the Christian: the whole of life was, in many ways, seen as the authentic expression of pilgrimage. And whereas the Roman form was very organized, very focused on a particular geographic destination and very goal-oriented, the Celtic form, while having in mind its hope of an eschatological destination—the New Jerusalem—was perfectly content to wander as seemed apt in

the moment, without a necessarily fixed itinerary or agenda. The most famous expression of this may have been in the travels of the Irish monk, Brendan, a century or so before Chad. Brendan and his ilk traveled incessantly, navigating the North Atlantic time and again. It is said—with good reason—that he was the first European in North America. Yet he didn't have specific goals in mind. He traveled where the Holy Spirit—and the weather and currents—took him. One account of three Irish monks leaving Ireland had a well-wisher asking them where they were heading. They replied that they had no idea, but that they were just happy to be traveling to other lands for Christ, in order to share his gospel of love. To use the Latin phrase that describes their Celtic expression of Christian pilgrimage, they were *peregrinantes pro Christo* – wanderers for Christ.

What had formed this theology of peregrination, above all, was the life of Abraham. In Genesis, Abraham is called to leave his settled existence in order to go to a foreign land: to live a nomadic life among strangers, yet still be on a bigger journey—the way to a promised land. For the Celtic Church, the analog of the Promised Land was the New Jerusalem—their eventual spiritual hope. But the manner of living life faithfully was analogous to Abraham's journeying. It was an unsettled life, and a life full of unknowns, yet also full of providential gifts. It was a theology that, of necessity, leant upon the assistance of the divine as a guide and helper. It was a life of vulnerability and unpredictability, but it also produced the growth, maturity and wisdom which only risk-taking can bring.

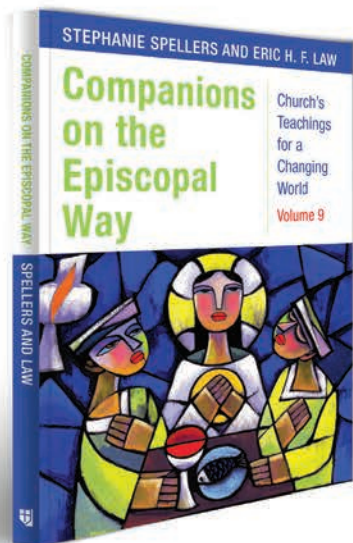
If these diversions into seventh- and eighth-century theology and history seem remote to us, we only need look around us to realize it is anything but. We are a church that has become so utterly steeped in that "Roman" type of organization that we have become fixed, and highly goal-oriented. Although "church without walls" might appear to be the latest post-modern church-growth mantra, Chad, Brendan and any number of other Anglo-Irish monks of the first millennium could have told us that immovable edifices, rigid organizational mentalities and strong desires to control the agenda would be markers of a pride heading for an eventual fall. As we figure out the direction God is calling our church, we can learn a lot not only from the very earliest churches of Paul and his fellow apostles, and from the established and churches of the Roman world, but also from the furthest-flung margins of that Empire, where the Celts were in restless pilgrimage until their hearts were reunited with Christ's.



St. Chad depicted in stained glass at Holy Cross Monastery, West Park. "He felt that being on foot brought him closer into the lives of the ordinary folk he was meeting." Photo: Br. Randy Greve, OHC.

The author is rector of St. Stephen's Church, Armonk.

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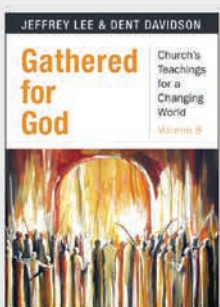
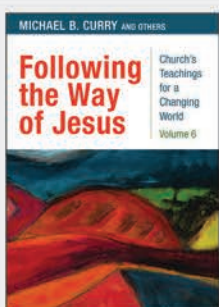
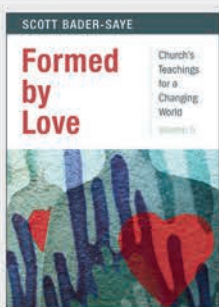
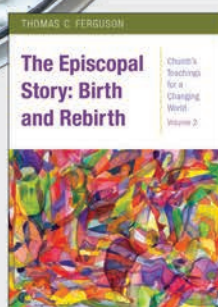
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You Are Trekkers, We Are Pilgrims

By Mark Larrimore



Pilgrims making their way on the kora, or circumambulation, around Mt. Kailash in Tibet.
Photo: Mark Larrimore.

A pilgrimage to Mount Kailash? When a Nepali colleague asked if I wanted to join him for a trip to Mount Kailash, I didn't know what to say. I didn't know that it was a real mountain! In Hindu and Buddhist traditions it is associated with Meru, a cosmic mountain so great that it can't even be seen. In the end, I got to go not just once but twice, in 2013 and 2016, but did I really see it?

There are in fact several Kailashes, as one should expect given Indologist Diana Eck's "critical rule of thumb" for sacred geography: "Those things that are deeply important are to be widely repeated." The Mount Kailash which has come to rule the roost lies in western Tibet, and is sacred to Hindus, Buddhists, Jains and followers of Tibet's indigenous Bön religion. (For Hindus, the nearby Lake Manasarovar is even holier.) The mountain's great prophet was the German-born Lama Anagarika Govinda, who told the world that it is "regarded to be not only the physical but the metaphysical centre of the world." Transcending traditions, "Meru or Kailas is surmounted by the invisible temple of the highest transcendental powers, which to each devotee appear in the form that symbolizes to him the highest reality."

This Kailash, known in Tibetan as Tise or Gang Rinpoche, is older than the Himalayas, whose sublime fringe can be seen to its south. It's a pyramid of black stone marked with sparkling glaciers. The snow in the seven layers on its south face outlines a sacred swastika. Its 22,000 foot peak has never been scaled. Pilgrims instead circumambulate it on a 32 mile route which starts at about 15,000 feet and whose highest point is a gasp-inducing 18,600. Buddhist and Hindu pilgrims circumambulate in a clockwise direction, while Bönpo proceed counter-clockwise. Going at different speeds—some do thirty circuits in a month, some take a month to go in full body prostration, we took three days—they pass each other on the path like dancers around a maypole.

Getting to Kailash, a place once defined by its inaccessibility, is easier than it's ever been. Sleek Chinese roads permit tour groups to approach by van or bus from Lhasa. Our group approached from the south, starting in Nepal. Permits are hard to get and the actual journey across Tibet highly regulated. Visas are granted to groups rather than individuals, and each party gets an official minder. Our group each time was polyglot, including scholars and artists from several lands. Each time also, someone who fervently wanted to join us couldn't make it. Particularly wrenching was the young *dalit* widow in the 2013 group who couldn't cope with the altitude change and had to turn back. Getting to, or not getting to, Kailash can be understood as a judgment. I didn't know what to do with the fact that I had been granted access without even really trying.

I felt a little less fraudulent in 2016, as this time we walked 9- to 12-hour days along the historic pilgrim route in Humla, a rugged region of far western Nepal not yet penetrated by "motorable roads." Western theories of pilgrimage suggest we should have been experiencing great *communitas* in our group and with other travelers, but irony vied with wonder in our chatter. As our circumambulation ended a colleague, an artist, ingenuously wondered if a certain disappointment wasn't perhaps part of every pilgrim's experience, whether admitted or not. I'm still haunted by a South Indian man, one of a large group in bright red parkas on ponies, who had informed me, without warmth or rancor: "You are trekkers. We are pilgrims."

By the second time, I felt I had some sort of a relationship with Kailash, that it was a presence watching us, choosing when to reveal itself to each of us. Definitely a real mountain, and a place of real power. Was it a real pilgrimage, though? I shifted between trying to see what Buddhists or Hindus, Bönpo or deep green religion types might see, defaulting too often to a scholar's distance. Scholars challenge easy distinctions between pilgrimage and tourism, but that doesn't settle it in the particular case. We called ourselves *yatris*, from the Hindi word for pilgrim, and our circumambulation a *kora*, from the Tibetan. Govinda would have approved of our ecumenism. He describes a "brotherhood of those who have performed the pilgrimage to Kailas" united by an "invisible bond which ... needs no vows, no dogmas, and no rituals. It consists in their common experience, the lasting effect of which is stronger than any man-made rules and distinctions." But this seems a little too easy, too. Most of our fellow travelers were there for more specific, costlier grace.

Returning to Kathmandu after the most recent *yatra*, we met up with another person who would have liked to join us but hadn't been able, a Nepali artist. She had repurposed a famous work of performance art to be a *kora* parallel to ours. As we made our way around the mountain, she and a friend silently pushed a block of ice weighing 50 kilograms—one for each kilometer of the route—through the streets of Kathmandu until it had melted away. It took most of a grueling day. As she described it to us, I felt it was she who had really done the pilgrimage.

The author is a member of the Church of the Holy Apostles in Manhattan.

A Pilgrimage on the “E” Train

By Helen Goodkin

...and gladly wolde [s]he lerne and gladly teche.
Geoffrey Chaucer: The Canterbury Tales

Pilgrimage was the last thing I was thinking about that September day when I shoved my way into an overcrowded “E train” towards Chelsea. I was about to become a student, a first-year student at General Theological Seminary. OK, I was a senior citizen student, but I was a student nonetheless.

At an unmentionable age, I had retired from healthcare to follow my passionate interest in the Bible, enrolling for an MA in Biblical Studies. Throughout the late 90s, Biblical scholarship seemed to be everywhere. The Jesus Seminar was filling the press and our libraries with endless volumes on the historical Jesus, Elaine Pagels was delving into the Nag Hammadi Library, and then there were the Dead Sea Scrolls. I read them all, but without the framework and discipline that serious study would provide, I felt unsure about how to evaluate what I was reading. The question that burned in my mind was: “What really happened in the first century that so totally changed the world.” Just as Erasmus in the 16th century felt he had to learn to Greek to understand the New Testament, so in the 21st century did I.

That first morning I met the other new students. Happily, many had as much gray hair as I, but all were enrolled in the MDiv degree, leading to ordination, not my MA program. This led to some interesting conversations. When I explained that I had no interest in ordination, just the Bible, most looked at me in surprise. But I made many good friends among my fellow students who are today, I am sure, outstanding priests.

Thus began two glorious years of chapel services with David Hurd’s wonderful music, excellent teaching, and access to what was then an extraordinary theological library. Beyond General, I was able also to study with Phyllis Tribble of Union Seminary as well as with Rabbi Martin Cohen at Hebrew Union. And, yes, I did eventually study Hebrew, though the results of that are more mixed than the Greek.

When I graduated, I couldn’t be weaned from GTS, so I worked there part-time for several years to encourage other lay people to pursue theological education. Eventually, I found my niche as a “roving” Bible teacher in parishes and with other groups around the northeast. My trips on the “E train” had resulted in the discovery that I was pretty good at sharing my passion for the Bible with interested folks, a new and unexpected vocation rather late in life.

When the email from the *Episcopal New Yorker* asking for articles on the theme of pilgrimage appeared in my inbox, I began to think of the great European pilgrimage churches. I had majored in Medieval Civilization in college and had visited many of them and had studied the extensive iconographic programs, designed to teach the Bible: the colorful Byzantine mosaic

walls, the beautifully carved sculptures that line the walls and entrances of Romanesque and Gothic churches, and the even more wonderful effect of ancient stained glass on a sunny day. All of these Biblical images were part of the total experience of a pilgrim going to Rome, Jerusalem, Canterbury, or Santiago, an experience designed to teach the Bible long before printed books became available and to foster transformation as pilgrims traveled along THE WAY.

Suddenly I realized that the “E train” had been my WAY. My book bag replaced the pilgrims’ staff, the professors and the library became my iconographic key to unlocking the secrets of the Bible, or at least trying to unlock them, the Chapel of the Good Shepherd with its music, its prayer, and its preaching, became my spiritual home. My fellow students were my fellow pilgrims as we trod our similar, but different paths, in search of transformation which occurred sometimes in tiny ways, sometimes in major epiphanies, but mostly through the hard work of scholarship, of reading, digesting, and making the words and ideas part of our very being.

I can’t image why it took so many years to see this time as a pilgrimage because surely it was—a time when I gleaned an understanding of what transpired in the first century, of the person of Jesus of Nazareth, of Peter, Paul, and the other men as well as the women: Sarah, Hagar, Rebecca, Rachel, Leah, and Miriam, of the Samaritan woman at the well and Mary Magdalene, of Priscilla and the other early women Christians. It was a sacred journey that led me to transformation and new life in the spirit.

The author is a member of the Church of the Epiphany in Manhattan and a regular presenter in churches on biblical topics.



An early 21st century E Train, which could certainly offer some of the rigors associated with pilgrimage.

Photo: Error46146, Wikimedia Commons.

The Spiritual Life as Pilgrimage

By the Rev. Sandy Blaine

Happy are the people whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on the pilgrim's way. Those who go through the desolate valley will find it a place of springs. For the early rains have covered it with pools of water. They will climb from height to height, and the God of Gods will reveal himself in Zion. Psalm 84:5-7 (BCP)

Where does the pilgrim's way start? Does it start with the first step, at the first thought of it, earlier, before the thought enters your mind, or afterwards, when you've returned? I have been a "seeker" all my life, perhaps even a pilgrim. Seeking spirituality through books, programs, retreats, spiritual direction; seeking guidance and answers, trying to find the direction of where my life was supposed to go, what my calling was, or just what God wanted me to do when I grew up. Part of that seeking has been close to home, but also through pilgrimages to far away "holy" destinations.

My first was to the Holy Land to follow the footsteps of Jesus, starting in Nazareth, through the Galilee and into Jerusalem. What a truly profound experience it was to walk the land that Jesus walked, to walk the Gospel stories, where Jesus courageously stood up against all odds to carry out his call. Next I traveled to Turkey and Greece to follow the footsteps of St. Paul, and I was able to imagine the forces and obstacles that he faced and through which he traveled to carry out his call.

Then I went to the Isle of Iona. I wasn't following anyone's footsteps, so maybe the pilgrimage was in the traveling 16 hours—by plane, train, automobile

and two ferries—to arrive at a very small island known for its Celtic Christianity and for being a "thin place"; that is, a space where it is said that the distance between heaven and earth is very thin, making it possible to encounter the sacred. The idea of the thin place appealed to me, because I was contemplating making a decision and I was looking for a sign.

I walked all over Iona looking for the thin place; I so wanted to experience something really sacred so that I would know that I had a sign from God. But the only real experience I had was a panic attack on Dun I, the island's highest point: on the way down, I was faced with hiking down a wet, slippery hill. When we reached a steep point, I stood frozen in fear and tears, unable to take one more step, no matter how much my husband assured me. The group had already reached the bottom when our pilgrim leader, seeing that I was in distress, sprinted up the hill and came to my aid, showing me another path down the hill. I crawled on my hands and knees to get to that path until I felt confident enough that I could stand and walk the rest of the way.

Six months later I started to attend One Spirit Interspiritual Seminary. I didn't quite know what I was walking into, I didn't yet understand the idea of "interspirituality" or "interfaith," but I knew that it was part of my search, perhaps another stop along the pilgrim's way. I found there an amazing group of spiritually enlightened people; with them I studied the world's religions and their practices, and delved further into spiritual self-exploration, further deepening my spirituality. After two years of study, and having been ordained, I realize that I had entered into a very sacred space at One Spirit, a thin place full of the love of the Divine Spirit and the world's sacred traditions.

Today, I notice how my pilgrimages have made me ready to encounter the sacred in my every day journey into the ordinary, in opportunities and in new beginnings. I can see the thin place all around me. I've learned to welcome and embrace those scary intimidating times in my life, not be afraid to walk the road less traveled, to see the divine spiritual source in all people and situations. I've come to believe in the spiritual life as pilgrimage. I understand more deeply that God, however we choose to understand God, is always alongside us, guiding us, leading us, challenging us and strengthening us for the work that we have been chosen to do. I no longer need to search the four corners of the world to encounter the sacred, the sacred is right here among the ordinary.

It's been two years since my pilgrimage to Iona and I have reflected a lot about that day up on Dun I, and thought of how it changed me when I stood at that turning point. I believe that I was stopped in my tracks so that I could face my fears, ask for a new way, and my crawling was my crossing the thin place to learn to walk on my new path. Seeing God in all people, places and situations, I can worship God not only as an Episcopalian in the mystery of the Trinity, but also as an interfaith minister, experiencing the Divine source of the universe welcoming us all on the pilgrim's way.



The View to the Isle of Mull from the top of Dun I, Iona. "When we reached a steep point, I stood frozen..."

Photo: © Steve Houldsworth (cc-by-sa/2.0).

The author is a member of Trinity Church Wall Street and an ordained interfaith minister.

Lessons from the Holy Land

By the Rev. Pamela Cooper-White and Macrina Cooper-White

After 60 years of never having the chance to visit the Holy Land, we (diocesan priest Pamela, husband and ELCA pastor Michael, and daughter Macrina) were blessed with an extraordinary opportunity to travel twice in six months to Jerusalem, the West Bank, and a good deal of the countryside in Israel-Palestine. The first trip was a non-sectarian five-day tour of Jerusalem and the West Bank, designed by the peace dialogue organization ADAShA (The Jerusalem Center for Interreligious Encounter), as a pre-conference tour for the International Association for Spiritual Care (on whose board Pamela serves). The second trip was a pilgrimage organized by the Palestinian Christian tour group, “Good Shepherd Travel,” which we shared with colleagues from United Lutheran Seminary in Gettysburg, PA, from which Michael just retired as president.

During the first trip, our guide, Ophir, ensured that we would experience multiple perspectives from the three major faiths—Jewish, Christian (including a variety of traditions with ancient historic roots), and Muslim—and also visit sites of historic and sacred significance to both Israelis and Palestinians. We visited the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where Jesus was crucified and buried, the Lutheran Church of the Holy Redeemer in the Old City of Jerusalem, and the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. We traveled to Holocaust museum Yad Vashem and the Mount Herzl Memorial—as well as to the Western Wall, the Aida Palestinian refugee camp, and the Holy Land Trust peace organizing group; and we received an inside tour of the Al Aqsa mosque and Dome of the Rock. We shared a synagogue service and Shabbat dinner with a host family in Jerusalem, and stayed overnight with a Christian Palestinian family in Beit Sahour whose “immediate family” of 100(!) was planning an engagement party. We added a day on our own to meet Episcopal colleagues at St. George’s Cathedral and College in East Jerusalem, which made us proud of all that the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion are doing to support Palestinians in need.

This trip was immersive and multifaceted, yet it felt like we were only dipping our toes into understanding the situation in Israel and Palestine. After hearing the personal stories of people who daily live and breathe the conflict, we realized that one cannot fully grasp the situation by reading books alone. We heard stories from both sides of survival, strength, trauma, injustice, and fear. We saw visible signs of conflict: checkpoints, walls, blocked-off roads, warning signs, and refugee camps. We learned how conflict leaves invisible, often more insidious, marks; how everyday hardships wear away at people on both sides, cut by cut. But for all the conflict, we saw many examples of co-existence, too. The old city of Jerusalem blurs seamlessly between its four quarters: Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and Armenian; and within faiths, various groups have learned to compromise and share their most sacred spaces. This is not to say that everyone holds hands in “Kumbayah” fashion—there is much more work to be done. Still, these examples of co-existence serve as a reminder that peace is possible. For more reflections on this trip, we invite you to our travel blog: <https://cooper-whiteisraeltripjuly2017.wordpress.com/>.

Our second trip (Pamela and Michael) was a faith-based devotional tour designed to allow us to walk where Jesus walked, and to deepen our understanding of the biblical texts—especially the four Gospel narratives—by immersing ourselves in a context that in many ways has changed, but still retains more than glimpses of the places and vistas described in the Bible. At each location, we read



Jerusalem from the Lutheran Church of the Holy Redeemer.

Photo: Pamela Cooper-White.

a passage of scripture that related to the place where we stood, we joined in prayer and occasionally in song, and we felt deep reverence that often hushed our voices and brought tears to our eyes. The Sea of Galilee when we visited was a large, silver body of water with a layer of mist that made the replica first-century fishing boats seem to have traveled to us across time. We viewed Peter’s house in Capernaum that served as Jesus’ home base during his years of teaching, and the remains of the synagogue where he often taught. We were awed by the sense of the Sacred Feminine in the cave that is reputedly the site of the Annunciation. We (re-)visited the Shepherds’ Field and the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Garden of Gethsemane in Jerusalem. We also witnessed important ministries, including the impressive Augusta Victoria Lutheran charitable Hospital on the Mount of Olives, and a Lutheran-sponsored school for disabled children. We ended our pilgrimage with day trips to the Judean Hills and the Dead Sea. Our guide Rami told us “The Sea of Galilee is alive because it takes in water from the Golan Heights and gives water back through the river Jordan. The Dead Sea is dead because it only takes, but it has no outlet – it does not give back.” That will preach!

Both trips helped us to grow by taking us beyond our comfort zones and pushing us to re-examine previously held assumptions and biases about the people and the region. We encourage others to go to the Holy Land and experience the diverse viewpoints, faiths, sites and tastes for yourself! No one voice (here or there) owns the entire truth about the region, its ancient traditions, or the cycle of animosity, violence, and retaliation. You will leave with more questions than answers, but with a certain sense that *God is present*—as well as contested—in this richly-layered sacred land. With warm memories of all our hosts, both Israelis and Palestinians, who work for peace and long so deeply for an end to the violence, and we daily take up the psalmist’s cry: “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: May those who love you be secure!” (Ps. 122:6, NIV).

The author is a priest in the diocese and professor of psychology and religion at Union Theological Seminary. Macrina Cooper-White is a doctoral student in social and affective neuroscience at UCLA.

Turns of Fate

By Jean Marie Angelo

There have been more than two full years of church seasons since I went on pilgrimage to the Holy Land, each of which has been richer for the experience of having been where Jesus taught, preached, and healed.

I was one of a group of 30 on the first official pilgrimage organized by the Diocese of New York. Among my fellow pilgrims was Bishop Dietsche, who, like us, was experiencing the Holy Land for the first time, and many other clergy. While we all came from different points in our faith journey, we shared the experience with humbling awe and gratitude.

I see this pilgrimage as a set of life-changing turns of fate. A group of us in the New Rochelle Education for Ministry class started planning for it in 2012, after we went to the Discovery Center in New York City to see the Dead Sea Scrolls. It was a cold, snowy January day, and we were there writing our prayers and placing them in a gigantic replica of the Western Wall, when someone asked “How about we travel to the real Jerusalem?” Several of us vowed then to make the journey a graduation gift to ourselves, and we each gathered information about various tours and costs. But when it came time to put down a deposit, turmoil in the Middle East and the price of travel deterred us. So we dropped the idea.

Graduation came in 2014, but we remained in touch and kept sharing information about the Holy Land. Then the diocese announced its own pilgrimage plans. I could see the wisdom in the way this was unfolding. Our guide for the pilgrimage would be Canon Iyad Qumri, a Palestinian Christian with credentials to travel in Israeli and Palestinian territories. It was clear from the minute we boarded the bus in Tel Aviv and made our way to St. George’s Cathedral guesthouse in Jerusalem that this was going to be unlike any other travel experience.

During the pilgrimage I was keenly aware of other turns of fate. When we visited the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Iyad told us that it was unlikely we would be able to enter the Sepulchre itself. Yet after a morning of visiting the many chapels, praying at the anointing stone, and touching Calvary, we descended to the lowest point in the church to arrive outside the Holy Sepulchre at just the right moment on just the right day, and a priest indicated to Iyad that it would be all right to go in. A few minutes earlier or later, and we would likely have had to walk past it. Later, the Bishop blessed our



The tomb of Jesus in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem.

Photo: Israeltourism.

candles and we each held the holy fire outside its entrance.

We each had particular experiences that moved us the most. I will never forget placing the prayers I took from friends and family between the stones of the Western Wall. I was awestruck by the Gardens of Gethsemane: this place where Jesus poured out his heart—a place of betrayal—is now a place of great peace. It was equally moving to be inside the city walls of Jerusalem, by the Pools of Bethesda, where Jesus told the paralyzed man to pick up his mat and walk. We walked the paths at Emmaus and I imagined the resurrected Jesus walking along the road and speaking to his fellow travelers, who only knew him later, at dinner, when he broke the bread and shared it with them. Sharing Eucharist at the ruins of Emmaus was especially meaningful.

For another in our party, our visit to the palace of Caiaphas, known today as the Church of St. Peter in Gallicantu, was specially moving. Here we saw the old path on which, it is believed, Jesus was led from Gethsemane to the high priest.

For another pilgrim, however, the moment everything came alive was the trip to the Judean desert and the area that overlooks the Wadi Qelt on the West Bank. The previous night we were asked to gather in silence in the courtyard of the guesthouse hours before sunrise.

We were told to ride the bus in silence and only to start speaking during the morning’s Eucharist when we shared the sign of peace. Adding that layer of silence was a stroke of brilliance. Dawn was just breaking as our bus climbed the road to the mountain top. We left the bus and walked on the mountain trails. Some of us sat quietly; some said silent prayers; some took photographs. After our scripture readings, Iyad asked us to look at the horizon. He noted the direction of Egypt and asked us to imagine Moses leading his people through this vast land. “This is the wilderness.” How did the Israelites survive? They did so by the hand of God. They were provided manna from heaven and water from the rock. The Wadi Qelt below is believed to be the Valley of Death that David writes about in the Psalm. It is also the site of the road in the story of the Good Samaritan.

This land instructed Moses, and Jesus’ disciplines, and it is still teaching us today.

The author is a member at St. John’s, Wilmot, New Rochelle.

Magnetic East

by Juanita Dugdale

A full moon hovered over St. George's Cathedral in Jerusalem, greeting our travel-weary but enthusiastic group from St. James' Church. The event seemed an auspicious beginning for our pilgrimage, a cosmic reminder that countless worshippers had witnessed this scene over the centuries.

For many Christians, the appeal of Jerusalem as a pilgrimage destination can be overshadowed by constant news of political and military strife. Conflict or violence seems endemic in the region, from Old Testament rivalries and medieval crusades, to the founding of Israel and even the recent relocation of the American embassy. Episcopalians in particular may feel more closely connected to Canterbury than Palestine, even though the latter has one of the oldest populations of Christians in the world (wonderfully known as "living stones"). But glowing testimonials from our rector, Brenda Husson, and other parishioners had convinced me that there is no substitute for visiting the Holy Land in person to more fully understand Jesus's life on earth. As a cartography enthusiast, I was also intrigued by early mapmakers' depictions of Jerusalem as the locus of sacred geography around which the world orbited, with East supplanting North for orientation purposes. It wasn't long before I, too, felt the pull of "magnetic east."

At dawn on our first morning, during an unseasonable cold spell, we traversed a ridge overlooking the Judean Desert. On impulse I volunteered to read aloud Psalm 23 to hear King David's familiar verses against the backdrop of an actual vast, forbidding wilderness. My voice sounded small and insignificant even while shouting. I felt alone, in spite of being in a group, until the psalm's promise of protection along "right pathways" rang true.

Throughout the journey, our Palestinian Christian guide Iyad Qumri navigated to places often overlooked by conventional tours. His skill at circumventing hot spots ensured our safety and comfort, with minimal digression from the itinerary's intended flow. Brenda and St. James' vicar Ryan Fleenor excelled at presenting historical and biblical context, as well as leading us in prayer and song wherever Iyad led us.

During our time together, we were reminded that Jerusalem remains sacred to all the Abrahamic religions. In *Jerusalem: One City, Three Faiths*, Karen Armstrong writes that "In religion, experience always comes before the theological explanation... Jerusalem turned out to be one of those locations that 'worked' for Jews, Christians and Muslims because it did seem to introduce them to the divine." To this day, the city still draws people back again and again to rekindle the feeling of standing on sacred turf.

We were fortunate to linger at uncrowded places for private prayer, including a quiet bank of the Jordan River. As James Martin explains in *Jesus: A Pilgrimage*, visiting the Holy Land can be startling because the reality is so often different from our mental images formed by reading books or watching movies. After slogging through rushes and mud, the Jordan seemed more like a stream than the mighty river of my imagination. But soon the water's calm flow—against a gentle background of bird and insect noises—became transportive. Renewing baptismal vows knowing that Jesus had received blessings in these very waters was unforgettable. When everyone collected final samples in bottles, I was reminded of my childhood practice of trapping air in Kodak film canisters as keepsakes of special places.

Later, at the Sea of Galilee, a boat ride that began as a fun excursion suddenly turned sinister when an unex-

pected squall unnerved us, conjuring up the fear Jesus's disciples must have felt when exposed on open, choppy waters. Upon our return to Jerusalem, the group's high spirits gradually changed to dread as we visited the sites of Jesus' last days. Empathy for him grew while following his path: praying in the garden, enduring the pit, and walking the Via Dolorosa before entering the Church of the Holy Sepulchre just after dawn.

Even so early, the church's labyrinthine interior is cacophonous and disorienting. Shadows amplify the claustrophobic crush of worshippers moving en masse through ornate spaces. At St. Helena's chapel, where walls are inscribed with cruciform graffiti, my finger traced another pilgrim's mark, made in the distant past. Among these is a crude scratching of the Jerusalem Cross, still a ubiquitous symbol throughout the city. Its design, featuring a central cross with a smaller one in each quadrant, has inspired multiple interpretations: a map of the old city, the five wounds of Christ, and even Jerusalem as fifth evangelist. My favorite is of the cross as a compass pointing out in all cardinal directions. "Their sound has gone out into all lands, and their message to the ends of the earth." (Psalm 19:4)

I had joined the journey, in part, to fathom the difference between pilgrim and tourist. What I learned is that while a tourist is primarily a curious interloper seeking experiences along a route, the pilgrim craves a sense of returning home to a known and yet unfamiliar destination. Arrival is key, but sharing the journey and meandering along the way are equally special.

Our pilgrimage culminated at Emmaus, where the first encounter with Jesus after his resurrection is said to have occurred. The exact location is still in doubt, but by now geographic accuracy seemed immaterial. What mattered was that the place provided a calm setting for our final eucharist, set in a meadow with wildflowers. Afterward, in a nearby chapel, I noticed a seated figure huddled against a back wall facing the altar. Hidden under a hood, it could have been an apparition, a despondent soul, a monk, or a pilgrim deep in prayer. Or all of the above. Whoever that person was, she or he was drawn eastward and I realized we had that, at least, in common.

The author is a member of St. James' Church in Manhattan.



A wadi in the Judean desert

Photo: Mboesch/Wikimedia Commons.

Connecticut Mecca

By Susan Ridgeway

When I think of places of pilgrimage, Mecca, Jerusalem and the Vatican come to mind, or Lourdes in France, or Fatima in Portugal, where people claim to have seen visions of the Virgin Mary or witnessed other miracles.

I have never been to Jerusalem, Mecca, the Vatican, or any site that draws large masses of people seeking miracles or spiritual renewal. But there is a place much closer to home, which has become a place of pilgrimage for me. That place is Incarnation Camp and Conference Center in Ivoryton, Connecticut.

My first trip to Incarnation Center was around 1995. I went as part my parish retreat with the Church of the Incarnation. It was a family affair, with my sister and my three-year-old nephew in tow.

My nephew, now 25, is off pursuing other interests, but I have continued to return to Incarnation Center regularly. I love it so much that I was delighted to join its board of directors a few years ago.

In September, I will be back as part of another parish retreat. As soon as I arrive from my trip on Metro-North and Shoreline East, I will deposit my things in my room in either Brooks or Bell Cottage, go outside, breath in the fresh air, and say “Ahhhhh, I’m here!”

The weekend will include great meals, cozy and comfortable lodging, spiritual formation exercises led by the Church of the Incarnation’s clergy, and plenty of free time to walk, hike, swim in Bushy Hill Lake, visit the animal farm, do a few circuits in the labyrinth, canoe, row, paddle, sail, read, take a trip into the village of Essex, or just be contemplative while communing with nature and its Creator. At night there will be s’mores-making and lighthearted fellowship for all ages by the fire pit outside the lodge, before lights go out. There will be worship at the indoor chapel in the evenings, and in the open-air lakeside chapel on Sunday morning.

But there is another significant type of experience at Incarnation Center—the summer camp experience. Each summer, hundreds of kids, ages 7-15, from all races, cultures, geographies, and religions, come for two to eight weeks, for a one-of-a-kind camp experience.

Many of Incarnation’s current board members are former campers (some turned counselors). They are passionate about Incarnation Camp and how their experiences shaped their faith, their character, or both.

Board member Duo Dickinson attended camp in 1963 and ‘64. “The combination of hard-charging fun and gentle spirituality was unbeatable then, and now.”

Marcus O.P. DeFlorimonte started camp in 1970. “I am forever grateful to the Rev. Robert Morisseau for recommending

Incarnation Camp to my mother after my father passed away. To say that my attending Incarnation was transformative is an understatement. Everything I needed to know in life, every success I have achieved, to date, is based upon the foundation created by attending Incarnation. It is the one place where the Gospel is not only preached, but lived everyday. I consider myself truly blessed.” Amen!

Norm Nelson is a former president of the board. Norm’s son Matt now serves on the board as well. Matt has been coming back every year since 1981. “There must be a super magnet under Bushy Hill Lake. Hundreds of camp alumni keep coming back, year after year. But I believe the real draw is that Incarnation offers something hard to find in our ordinary lives: inclusivity, love and fellowship, plus a healthy dose of humor, irreverence and fun. It’s much bigger than preaching the Gospel, it’s about living it. Experiencing that is powerful. It pulls us back again and again.”

Board member and former camper Tom Secor recalls, “Incarnation defined my childhood. I was very shy and awkward and over time became more extroverted and socially engaged. It was only by being separated from the presence of my family, and their unquestionable love, that I learned the need to build new relationships. I learned that the gifts of friendship, respect and love, require a purposefulness, and, often, some effort.” He also underwent physical changes. “I learned to canoe and I enjoy doing that to this day.

I learned to make a fire and how to set up a tent, swim and many other sports. It’s where I grew as a human being and where I learned to think more abstractly. For me, problem solving skills became more tangible and I use those skills in my professional life.”

New York Times columnist and former camper David Brooks is also on the board. David returns year after year for the annual alumni reunion weekend each June. In October, David, as he has many times before, will be the featured speaker at an Incarnation Center fundraiser at New York’s Princeton Club.

Incarnation Camp was founded in 1886 by Church of the Incarnation, as a place where city children could have the opportunity to play in the fresh air of the great outdoors. Today, it thrives as the oldest operating co-ed camp in the nation.

There are so many other things to know about this holy place—my personal Mecca. Any reader who wants to learn more about all that it has to offer, can visit its website at www.incarnationcenter.org.

In the meantime, I can’t wait to make my September pilgrimage to Ivoryton!

The author is a member of the Church of the Incarnation and executive director of the Church Club of New York.



The Rev. Adrian Dannhauser leading Sunday worship at Incarnation Center's outdoor lakeside chapel.

Photo: Susan Ridgeway.

The Pilgrims' Pavement

By Susan Chute, Ruth Mueller-Maerki and John Rumely
with excerpts from a 2013 essay, *On Pilgrimage*, by the Rev. Canon Thomas P. Miller.

Any usher at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine will tell you that virtually every visitor does the same thing upon entering the nave—look up! Whether you're a pilgrim visiting for the first time, or you worship there often, the tendency to take in the soaring heights is irresistible. But those who stop and look around will be rewarded with more than the beautiful light and magnificent heights. Here and there, on the cathedral's floor, are remarkable round dark discs, set in a regular course along the side and center aisles. They are the Pilgrims' Pavement, a series of imposing medallions reminding visitors and worshippers alike of what it means to be a pilgrim.

The medallions are approximately five feet in diameter and are composed of a rich mix of materials: black granite with a border of black Belgian marbles. Within these black circles are shields, symbols and inscriptions of bronze, burnished to a golden glow by the footsteps of thousands of visitors. The medallions were designed by Chester Godfrey and Alexander Hoyle of Cram & Ferguson, the architectural firm that designed the cathedral's nave; the bronze work was cast at the Superb Bronze Foundry and Iron Company in Brooklyn.

The medallions in the center aisle represent places identified with the earthly life of Jesus: Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Jordan; those closely associated with His early miracles: Cana, Samaria, Capernaum, and Mount Tabor, where Jesus was seen in conversation with Moses and Elijah; Bethany, where Lazarus was raised from the dead; and Bethsaida, the site of the miracle of the loaves and the fishes.

The medallions along the side aisles feature major shrines, saints, and ecclesiastical landmarks of Great Britain, mainland Europe, and the Episcopal Church in the United States. They include St. Andrew's in Scotland; the Great English cathedral cities of Winchester, York, Durham, St. Alban's, and Canterbury; and the Spanish site of Compostela. The North American sites include: Drake's Bay near San Francisco and Monhegan Island, Maine (sites of the first use of the English Prayer Book in the Western Hemisphere and New England, respectively); Jamestown (site of the first permanent English settlement); and Woodbury, Connecticut (where Samuel Seabury was elected the first Episcopal bishop in America in 1783). To date, 35 medallions have been installed in the floor of the nave. Yet to be installed are the pavement slabs and three medallions in the crossing, with the center reserved for Jerusalem, a holy place for all Abrahamic religions.

The original source of funds for the Pilgrims' Pavement was, most appropriately, offerings from the visitors, many of them probably on what they considered a pilgrimage. The financing was completed by the Laymen's Club of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. The Laymen's Club still operates today and is committed to extending the Pilgrims' Pavement through the Crossing.

The Pavement—in its current state of completion—was dedicated by the Rt. Rev. William Thomas Manning, 10th Bishop of New York, on March 11, 1934. British composer Ralph Vaughan Williams was commissioned to create a choral setting of Mrs. William Ordway Partridge's poem, "The Pilgrim Pavement," for the occasion.

The Pilgrims' Pavement reminds us that pilgrimages are part of most religious traditions. Those seeking spiritual enlightenment or devotional intensity travel to holy places, where the divine is believed to be revealed through teachers, saints, or significant events that took place there; to sacred sites and impressive shrines; and to locations where the presence of God is particularly palpable.

The Pavement's medallions are pilgrimage destinations, but pilgrimages are rarely one-way. We return home again, coming full circle, though, as T.S. Eliot (who is inducted into the cathedral's American Poets Corner) famously put it, "We shall not cease from exploration / And the end of all our exploring / Will be to arrive where we started / And know the place for the first time." Our journeys transform us and we return home with new vision and insight.

In so many ways, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine is itself a pilgrimage destination.

No one builds a cathedral so large without that thought in mind. And the Pilgrims' Pavement underscores the cathedral's association with sacred sites and holy places around the world. We are grateful to our ancestors who bequeathed it to us for the breadth of their vision and the depth of their commitment to our continuing pilgrimage.

The completion of the Pilgrims' Pavement is one of many projects undertaken by the Laymen's Club. Since 1908, its members have been dedicated to works within the cathedral and on its grounds, and to bringing the cathedral's mission and work to the awareness of the many communities it serves. Founded as an organization exclusively for male Episcopalians, the club expanded its membership in 1975 to include men and women not only from the cathedral community, but from the diocese and beyond, including non-Episcopalians. Significant projects undertaken by the Club included the cathedral shop in the north transept (destroyed by fire in 2001), and guidebooks for the cathedral. The club sponsors a series of annual lectures on the various arts involved in building the cathedral, as well as on general church related topics. For more information on the Laymen's Club, visit its website www.thelaymensclub.org.

The authors are members of the Laymen's Club and of the Congregation of St. Saviour.

The Rev. Canon Thomas P. Miller served as the cathedral's canon for liturgy & the arts from 2003 – 2014.



Photos: Whitney Cox.

Rocks of Ages: My Visit to Stonehenge

By Pamela A. Lewis

From the time I had first seen images of its massive boulders and timeless silhouettes against the English sky, I wanted to go to Stonehenge. So when my cousin asked me, “What do you want to see this time?” as we began putting together my itinerary during a visit with her in England a few years ago, I answered “Stonehenge” without hesitation. My choice was met with laughter and not a little disbelief. “But they’re just a bunch of rocks!” she pointed out. “They are,” I acknowledged; “but they’re meaningful rocks.”

On a postcard-perfect day, my still-bemused cousin and I set out on our journey. After buying our tickets at the tourist office in Greenwich (where my cousin lives), we boarded a mini-van, where John, our guide, greeted us and our fellow riders. A deeply-tanned and spirited South African, and sporting khaki pants and rolled-up shirt sleeves, John looked every inch the tour guide who had seen it all and knew very well what he had seen.

The hubbub of London soon yielded to the countryside as our van wended its way into what John told us was the county of Wiltshire. “Look out the left side and you’ll see Wales in the distance,” John commanded us as the van stopped briefly. All heads turned and necks craned for a glimpse. My eyes were searching for Stonehenge.

Finally, we arrived at Salisbury Plain, the sprawling chalk plateau on which Stonehenge has sat for millennia. Looking from the van’s windows into the distance I could make out the majestic stones, standing like the defiant remnants of a long-vanished kingdom.

The megaliths were cordoned off, allowing just enough proximity to permit the visitors’ gaze as they walked around the structure, yet prohibiting their touch. Although I was slightly disappointed that the lintels and posts were somewhat shorter than I had expected, they still exuded a powerful aura.

Out of respect for Stonehenge’s mystery and grandeur, I kept silent as I beheld the extraordinary monument, reflecting on all of the deafening din of human history that has occurred while its stones have stood, also silent and little changed.

Stonehenge had begun as an item on my “must see” list, but became the place where I experienced awe, a state that no ordinary sightseeing tour can produce. Time and the boundaries of civilization evaporated. In pilgrimage we go to a place apart from and unlike “normal” life. Although “pagan,” Stonehenge was (and, for some, still is) about worship and praise, aspects congruent with my own faith. So to the extent that I returned inwardly different

than when I had left, I made a pilgrimage to very meaningful rocks.

The author is a member of St. Thomas Church, Fifth Avenue.

The Journey

By the Rev. James Lee Burns

Presence
Absence
Presence
Absence
Intimations
Hints
Breadcrumbs on the path
Epiphany
Abandonment
Lost
Found
Lost
Found
Again and Again
Serendipity
Confusion
Clarity
Labor
Gift
Love the thread

Into God

The author is a retired priest in the diocese.

Making a Way

By the Rev. Bowie A. Snodgrass

Frozen labyrinth overlooking a monastery and the mighty Hudson.
Enter, step, crunch on snow, focus on each foot not to slip on ice below.
Sunlight spotlights a set of footsteps that have gone in and out ahead of me.
Rabbit tracks transept the winding path lined with rocks, quartz, and lichen.
I enter the center, and crouch to see coins, a cross, chains, a fishing lure.
I pull out my iPhone to write. Turn around. Walk back out the way I came.
Stoop to clear a bit of snow blanket off a cluster of glistening green growth,
come to part of the path I had not walked before and discover I had entered
through the back. Arrive at the entrance shivering and clear-headed.

The author is a priest in the diocese and serves as curate of Christ Church, Short Hills, NJ.

Little Miracles

Leading teenagers on pilgrimage

By Lisa Rhoades

I woke up June 26, 2017 to several texts and calls from France... “Where are you? Your drivers are at the gate.” But we were still in New York, due to travel later that day and arrive at Charles De Gaulle the following morning. Somehow, I had managed to book our airport car service for the day before our arrival. The trip was broken before we had even left! I called the company and was politely reminded of their no refund policy. The drivers had been dispatched. The drivers were at the airport as we spoke. I cried. I begged. I spoke to supervisors. I got disconnected. I called again. I said *we are pilgrims*. And the conversation changed. And though I can’t be certain, I do believe that phrase, *we are pilgrims*, is the reason the service got rescheduled and we weren’t charged a re-booking fee. As miracles go, I suppose one could argue about whether this counts, but I suggest that before you lead a group of teenagers on pilgrimage, you expand your definition of the word miracle to include blessings both large and small.

My advice to those considering leading a pilgrimage for young people is over-plan, and then go with God (and a laid-back co-leader). Take the Z-pak and Epi-pen, the Tylenol and Motrin. Make every parent sign every form, and carry them with you even though it will take up space in your bag. Let your co-leader tease you and offer a spontaneous “interpretive dance” of you fumbling with all the crazy things you’re carrying. Laugh at yourself. Three days into the trip, everything, and everyone, will fall apart. How the group reintegrates matters deeply. Be unflinching with your love. Nothing makes a teenager lose faith faster than an inconstant adult. Model forgiveness, charity and unconditional love.

You will make mistakes. Your honesty and willingness to be present even when tired and lost gives those around you the opportunity to be God-full. Don’t hide this from your group. Especially, don’t deny teenagers the chance to see you working things out. Praying. Trusting God. The night you leave the city center later than you should, you’ll manage to catch the last commuter train out, only to have it stop three stations before your suburb. You’ll make your way with your high school French and your 9 teenage girls to the night bus, and the immigrants on the bus, hard-working souls coming from or heading to long shifts at work, will make sure you don’t miss your stop or leave packages behind. Little miracles happen. Your group will talk about this moment together for the rest of their lives. *We are pilgrims* they will say to themselves and the people they meet.

CLAIRE

I have seen how God can influence all his people no matter where you are. Our pilgrimage made us want to see our parish share God far from home *and* close to home. We hope our pilgrimage helps us to be closer to our community and to Christians in other places. We don’t have to cross an ocean to feel closer to God.

BRIANNA

Pain—bumps, bruises, scratches...you name it, I got it in France. My pain represented the hardship pilgrims endure on their journey. The stress of a new location, the emotional pain of being away from home, and the ache from long hours of travel. If the church is the body of Christ, pilgrims are the feet...walking long distances day in and day out.

MARIGOLD

I realized the closeness that people who share faith can have despite barriers. In the Basilica of the Bois-Chenu a woman attempted to explain the murals to us, and even when she realized we didn’t speak French, she still tried to communicate with us. This showed me how faith can bring people together, and ultimately has brought me closer to my own church.

BONNIE

This pilgrimage brought up questions—could I lead an army at age 14 like Joan? Would I persist in declaring my belief to an unjust system promising release for



Christ Church pilgrims at the birthplace of Joan of Arc in Domrémy-la-Pucelle, France.

Photo: Mr Can (Best of France Tours).

a lie? Our youth group walked into her church and into her house and we realized how close we are to her. She lived right next to her church. When the bell rang (which it does every hour) it was the only sound you could hear. I’m 14, I’m testing my faith and I’m closer to Joan of Arc than I let on.

AMY

On buses and trains, through conversations and sleep deprived mornings, by seeing basilicas that within their beautiful architecture hold love, devotion, and stories, the group had, I think, a shift in perspective and a greater connection to spirituality. The loudest among us had moments of quiet and the quietest among us had moments of fearless expression.

KIKI

Anyone who takes for granted the comfort their church offers should attend a pilgrimage. It helps you see how fortunate you are to have people who care around you. Because of this experience I see myself going on pilgrimages on my own in the future.

ALEXANDRIA

What pilgrimage did for me was increase my faith in God by being closer to Joan of Arc. I had heard her story but it was different to be where she was martyred. When the bells in Domremy rang, I felt the power of God that she felt. This brought the power of her faith in God into my heart and mind.

The author is a member of Christ Church, New Brighton, Staten Island.

General Convention

In Brief

Drawn from Episcopal News Service reporting.

SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Convention agreed to give all Episcopalians the ability to be married by their priests in their home churches (as has already been the case in the Diocese of New York for a number of years). *For more on this from ENS please visit episnyd.io/ensgc-marriage.*

LITURGICAL AND PRAYER BOOK REVISION

A proposed plan for working towards a fully revised prayer book in 2030 was replaced by one for the creation of new liturgical texts to respond to the needs of Episcopalians across the church while continuing to use the 1979 Book of Common Prayer.

The adopted plan also says that liturgical revision will utilize inclusive and expansive language and imagery for humanity and divinity, and will incorporate understanding, appreciation and care of God's creation.

General Convention also adopted a resolution that allows all congregations in the Episcopal Church to use optional, expansive-language versions of three Rite II Eucharistic prayers in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. *For comprehensive ENS coverage, please visit episcopalnewsservice.org/tag/prayer-book-revision/.*

RESPONDING TO THE VOICES AND STORIES OF WOMEN

The voices and stories of women played a significant role in the workings of the 79th General Convention, from a liturgy where bishops offered laments and confession for the church's role in sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse, to Resolution D087 that allows deputies to bring infant children on the floor of the House of Deputies to feed them. *Full ENS coverage of gender justice issues is available at episcopalnewsservice.org/tag/gender-justice.*

IMMIGRATION

Episcopalians at General Convention presented a unified front in support of families who have been separated, those facing deportation and immigrants in general—through prayer, testimony, action and the unobstructed passage of legislation.

Convention passed three resolutions on immigration issues.

Resolution C033 puts the church on record as respecting the dignity of immigrants and outlines how public policy should reflect that belief, A178 takes a forceful stand against family separations and treatment of immigrant parents and children, and C009, titled "Becoming a Sanctuary Church," encourages Episcopalians and congregations to reach out to and support immigrants facing deportation, including by providing physical sanctuary if they choose.

One of the defining moments of this General Convention was the prayer vigil held July 8 outside the T. Don Hutto Residential Center, an immigrant detention



Diocesan bishops and deputies during a General Convention joint session on evangelism.

Photo: The Rev. Nora Smith.

facility outside Austin. More than a thousand Episcopalians prayed and sang in support of immigrant parents and children who had been separated. *ENS coverage of immigration issues is available at episcopalnewsservice.org/tag/refugees-and-migration/.*

ISRAEL/PALESTINE

Six of 15 resolutions submitted on Israel-Palestine passed both houses, touching on the plight of Palestinian children, the status of Jerusalem, the disproportionate use of lethal force on both sides and ways the Episcopal Church can press for peace through its investment decisions. *Full ENS coverage of Israel-Palestine issues is available at episcopalnewsservice.org/tag/israel-palestine.*

CUBA'S BACK!

Convention voted to admit, or re-admit, the Episcopal Church of Cuba as a diocese by passing Resolution A238. The Diocese of Cuba is set to join Province II, which includes dioceses from New York and New Jersey in the United States, Haiti and the Virgin Islands. *Full ENS coverage of Cuba is available [here](#) and [here](#).*

\$134 MILLION BUDGET ADOPTED

Convention adopted a \$133.8 million 2019-2021 budget that reflects the presiding bishop's priorities of evangelism, racial reconciliation and justice, and creation care. The priorities have been referred to as the "three pillars" of the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement. *For full Episcopal News Service coverage of the budget process, please go to episcopalnewsservice.org/tag/budget.*

COMPENSATION FOR DEPUTIES' PRESIDENT

Convention agreed to a plan to pay the president of the House of Deputies for the work of the office. *Full ENS coverage at episcopalnewsservice.org/2018/07/06/general-convention-approves-compensation-for-deputies-president/.*

Last Post by a Deputy

By the Rev. Nora Smith

The Rev. Nora Smith was a diocesan deputy at General Convention, and a regular contributor to the diocesan General Convention website, which is still open for viewing at gc18.episcopalny.org, and includes essential reading for anyone seeking to understand how General Convention actually works. Here is her final post, submitted on July 15 – a couple of days after the Convention closed.

With the exception of our Bishop Diocesan and Deputy [the Rev. Winnie] Varghese, both of whom have family in Texas and are remaining for a few days, we are all back home from Austin now. I regret that I don't have a regular congregation this time around because I would dearly love to have a forum today. That will have to wait until a larger gathering for the whole diocese later in the summer/early fall. I think we ought to do a video, but that idea just came to me, so I'll need to see about that. In any event, we will hold an informational session for the Diocesan Council and a presentation at Diocesan Convention to let you all know how General Convention legislation will impact the church; from parochially to internationally.

Incidentally, your deputation had representation in Legislative Committees which covered the same range (Smith: Churchwide Leadership and the '#metoo Committee', Brooks: U.S. and International Policy, Mead: Prayer Book revision, Varghese: Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations and the '#metoo Committee', Forde: Stewardship and Socially Responsible Investing). We look forward to presenting outcomes from the Convention to you in detail.

In the meanwhile, I commend the long-read 'primer' that Deputy [the Rev. Matthew H.] Mead has posted here (see <https://episnyd.io/mead713>). While I was at GC twice as an Alternate, the legislative process was not completely clear sitting on the sidelines. It is complex—as it should be—as many voices are allowed to testify and offer amendments to original resolutions. This primer is comprehensive and instructive and aids in understanding that nothing happens by fiat, many voices are heard, many resolutions are amended into completely different forms, and any one voice can be influential but never speaks for the whole; that's why we vote.

Looking forward to a diocese-wide conversation in the near future, but I am sure that individual deputies would be happy to answer specific questions, should you have them. You may direct them to me at: nsmith@dioceseny.org.

Thank you for electing me to represent you. It has been an honor.

The author is director of strategic programs for the diocese.

An Interview with Episcopal Charities' Outgoing Board President, John Talty

John Talty recently concluded his service on the board of directors of Episcopal Charities, including the last five years as its president. He is succeeded by Peter Keller who joined the board on 2013, serving most recently as a vice president.

John recently sat with Episcopal Charities' staff members, who asked him to reflect upon his time on the board.

How did you first become involved with EC?

I was retiring from my first career in financial management and thought that I wanted to start a foundation, but wanted to learn more first. I'm a member of St. Matthew's, Bedford, so I spoke with the rector, Terry Elsberry, about those working in grantmaking and he introduced me to David Shover, then-executive director of Episcopal Charities. I hadn't known much about the organization, but I liked what I heard and the tie-in with the Episcopal Church also resonated.

Do you still think about starting your own foundation?

No. Episcopal Charities helped me to learn that there are better ways for me to "give back."

What about Episcopal Charities met your expectations? And what surprised you?

One surprise was its full spectrum of program types. Other organizations I'd looked at were very focused on one particular issue.

The other real surprise was the grass-roots nature of the programs and seeing how, literally, some of them are run by one person out of a church basement. I remember my first site visit. It was an after-school program in Yonkers, but they were also running a food pantry. The food was delivered that day, and the people they were serving were actually helping to unload the food. All this was happening in a former storefront garage because the church had burned down. So, I'm looking at this environment that is foreign to me, and just seeing the incredible optimism and energy of those involved. It was inspirational.

What are the most notable changes you've seen with Episcopal Charities during your years on the board?

One is the increased involvement of parishes. It's wonderful to see.

The second notable change is the enhanced quality of the funds-allocation process. The board sets the direction but the advisory committee's really discerning where every dollar has the most impact. It looks at programs closely and compassionately, truly seeing what a difference even a thousand dollars can make. I think it's very different and much more refined than it was 11 years ago.

In the true spirit of outreach, every program that Episcopal Charities supports is free of religious content yet we do what we do for a reason. How does that match up with your own beliefs?

You don't need to be particularly churchy or religious to see God's love at work in Episcopal Charities and the programs it supports. The people in the programs, how much they care. The advisory committee, the time they spend. The volunteers and so many caring donors. And the Bboard... very busy people, but



John Talty.

Photo: Episcopal Charities.

their commitment and their willingness is awesome. And it's just the spark of compassion everywhere. It kind of reaffirms your faith in human beings that can sometimes get shaken a bit. To me, that's God.

I haven't run into anybody, on the board, staff or advisory committee, who I just thought was there for some other reason. They care.

Do you think that those involved start off that way, or is that transformation?

Some start off that way, but I think for many their involvement is transformational. There's just a whole host of people whose lives, I think, have totally changed by being on the giving side, rather than the receiving side of Episcopal Charities.

Our mission statement at Episcopal Charities is about transforming lives and you talked about how Episcopal Charities has trans-

formed your life. Can you say a little bit more about that?

During my time on the board and as president, I was struck with the fact that people would gladly do things you asked of them... people would go out of their way to help. I don't know how to explain it, but that goodness, that willingness and compassion, made me look at the world differently. And it made me look at people differently. It made me realize there's much more good out there than you think.

What was the hardest thing in your role as Board President?

I'm a worrier by nature, so I worried about Episcopal Charities. All the ideas that everybody had... what were we really going to be able to do? Were we going to be able to expand our reach in the diocese? Were we going to raise more money? But it was more personal worry for me, not organizational worry.

So, given your own transformation, what comes next?

Well, one, I'm on the vestry of Trinity Wall Street. Which is a new and exciting challenge. But I'm approaching it, and life, with a sense of contentedness. I feel more spiritual and more sure that there is a God. I'm just more at peace after my time at Episcopal Charities.

Do you want to share any final thoughts?

I think about the importance of good governance. Episcopal Charities' first president, Cecil Wray, set the organization up well, and his successor, Doug Mercer carried it forward. The board runs so amazingly efficiently. It makes such a huge difference. You don't realize how much this means until you're on a board that isn't efficient, you just want to pull your hair out. Anybody that attends an Episcopal Charities board meeting and deals with the board and staff knows that their time won't be wasted.

Secondly, I think Bishop Dietsche has had a huge impact. He's visionary, very outreach-oriented and was willing to consider everything we ever requested. His work in helping Episcopal Charities to deepen its relationships with parishes... it's really, it's incredible.

Finally, just thinking about all those that received help, and knowing that you had something to do with it... it's one of the most meaningful and rewarding things I have done in my life.

Episcopal Charities Awards \$343,740 in Youth Opportunity Grants

Episcopal Charities' Board of Directors is pleased to announce 37 Youth Opportunity Grants, totaling \$343,740. The total represents a 2% increase over last year.

Youth Opportunity Grants support parish-based outreach efforts to create opportunities for the next generation. Programs include children's arts, academic enrichment, summer recreation, and health and wellness projects.

Parishes and programs awarded funding through the 2018-19 Youth Opportunity Grants cycle are listed below. For more information, visit episcopalcharities-newyork.org/who-we-are/our-programs/.



Students at Christ Church, New Brighton's Community Youth Program pose with instruments after a rehearsal. Photo: Christ Church, New Brighton.



Students at EPIC, a youth leadership program at Grace Church, Millbrook, gather to share a meal. Photo: EPIC.

Christ Church, Bronxville	Young at Arts – Academic Year Program
Christ Church, Bronxville	Young at Arts – Summer Program
Christ Church, Poughkeepsie	Summer Camp
Christ Church, Staten Island	Community After School Programs
Christ Church, Warwick	Jubilate Community Youth Choir
Church of St. Luke in the Fields, Manhattan	Art and Acceptance at St. Luke's
Church of St. Matthew & St. Timothy, Manhattan	Angels Basketball Program
Church of the Incarnation, Manhattan	Incarnation Camp - Pioneer Village
Grace Church, Manhattan	The GO Project
Grace Church, Millbrook	EPIC Regional Youth Leadership Program
Grace Church, Nyack	Amazing Grace Circus! Summer Camp
Grace Church, White Plains	Brighter Futures Summer Camp at Lifting Up Westchester
Grace Church, White Plains	Brighter Futures Mentoring Program at Lifting Up Westchester
Holy Trinity, Inwood	The Pied Piper Children's Theatre
Holy Trinity, Inwood	The Pied Piper Children's Theatre Summer Program
Holyrood Church, Manhattan	Washington Heights Choir School
Iglesia Memorial de San Andres, Yonkers	Summer Program
Iglesia Memorial de San Andres, Yonkers	After School Program
Manhattan North Inter-Parish Council	Summer Educational Project
Sts. John, Paul & Clement, Mt. Vernon	Summer Vacation School
St. Andrew's Church, Bronx	Summer Camp
St. Andrew's Church, Bronx	After School Program
St. Ann's Church, Bronx	Freedom School Summer Program
St. Ann's Church, Bronx	After School Program
St. Edmund's Church, Bronx	Summer Camp
St. Edmund's Church, Bronx	After School Program
St. George's Church, Newburgh	Voices of Hope Children's Choir
St. George's Church, Newburgh	Girl Power Program
St. John's Church, Monticello	Nesin Cultural Arts Academic Year Program
St. John's Church, Monticello	Nesin Cultural Arts Summer Music Academy
St. Margaret's Church, Bronx	Summer Day Camp
St. Margaret's Church, Bronx	After School Program
St. Mary's Church, Harlem	Summer Program
St. Paul's on-the-Hill, Ossining	After School Music Program
St. Peter's Church, Bronx	Cephas Arts Program
St. Peter's Church, Port Chester	Summer Program
St. Peter's Church, Port Chester	Learning Center



A camper at Christ Church, Poughkeepsie's Summer Camp makes a new friend. Photo: EPIC.



A student at St. Andrew's, Bronx After School displays her latest artwork. Photo: St. Andrew's Church, Bronx.

Views and Reviews

ARTS AND LITERATURE

HEAVENLY BODIES: FASHION AND THE CATHOLIC IMAGINATION

THE COSTUME INSTITUTE AT THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART; THE MET CLOISTERS THROUGH OCTOBER 8, 2018

Reviewed by Pamela A. Lewis

“Catholics live in an enchanted world, a world of statues and holy water, stained glass and votive candles, saints and religious medals, rosary beads and holy pictures. But these Catholic paraphernalia are mere hints of a deeper and more pervasive religious sensibility that inclines Catholics to see the Holy lurking in creation.”

— Andrew Greeley, *The Catholic Imagination* (2000)

We know that the devil wears Prada. And so have two popes. Back in 2005, an article in *Newsweek* designated Pope Benedict XVI as “nothing short of a religious-fashion icon” for wearing red Prada loafers (designed by Adriano Stefaneli, a Novara, Italy cobbler who had also created versions for John Paul II). The pontiff also sported Gucci sunglasses, injecting a dash of Joe Cool swagger to his otherwise staid and serious demeanor. A centuries-old papal tradition, the shoes’ red color signifies the blood of Christ’s Passion, as well as that of Catholic martyrs, and also connotes the fire of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. While the job of Benedict, John Paul, and the popes who preceded them was to lead the faithful, they did it in magnificent style.

Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination, currently on view at the Metropolitan Museum, features the work of 55 renowned and predominantly European designers. Inspired by the Roman Catholic Church’s sumptuous vestments and ecclesiastical accessories, they have created imaginative high-fashion regalia displayed in more than 150 ensembles. Included in the show are exceptional loans of vestments from the Vatican’s sacristy, some of which have never before left Rome. The largest exhibit in the history of the museum’s Costume Institute, “Heavenly Bodies” is on view in various galleries, as well as at the Met Cloisters, the museum’s branch devoted to medieval art.

Spread over the main museum’s lower hall up to the Byzantine and medieval galleries and into the varied art of the Lehman Wing, and culminating at the Cloisters, the exhibition sets out to show how deeply the “Catholic imagination,” as the late Andrew Greeley, journalist, popular novelist, sociologist (and Roman Catholic priest, by the way) called it, is embedded in ecclesiastical and secular dress. The majority of the featured designers (such as Versace, Balenciaga, and Dolce & Gabbana) are—or were—Roman Catholic. Yet while their relationship to Catholicism changed, they made extensive use of the Church’s sartorial vocabulary, as well as of explicit Christian symbolism. The deliberate placements of the couture pieces amidst artwork in the galleries

establish conversations between the ensembles and the iconography, crossing boundaries of era and style.

Visitors may explore the show from any area they wish; but insofar as this exhibition is to be experienced, like faith itself, as a pilgrimage, the Anna Wintour Costume Center in the Met’s lower hall is the most logical point of departure. Here, displayed simply and unobstructed under plexiglass cases, are opulent pontifical vestments and accessories from the sacristy of the Sistine Chapel. As music by Palestrina plays in the background, visitors may gaze upon dazzling dalmatics (including a suite of 12 vestments, embroidered by 15 women over the course of nearly 16 years), copes, and mantles made of white silk *gros de Tours* (a ribbed fabric) embroidered with gold and silver metal thread. Majestic miters (including one given as a gift to Pius XI by Benito Mussolini) studded with precious jewels are displayed above eye-level, as they would appear upon the head of the wearer. There are clasps and rings so magnificent that each one seems to be competing with the other for attention; and there are tiaras—tiered ceremonial headdresses worn for the most solemn occasions, including the papal coronation. Worn by Pius IX, the most breathtaking among these includes 19,000 precious stones, the majority of which are believed to be diamonds. And yes, the red Prada loafers are there, too.

Whereas the bejeweled and splendidly embroidered Vatican objects point to the transcendent and the eternal, the rest of the exhibit (located in the Byzantine, Medieval, and Lehman Collection galleries), is all about style and fantasy. John Galliano’s silk and crystal *Evening Ensemble* (miter included) evokes a bishop’s grandeur. A lineup of solemn-faced mannequins sport elegant designs based on the soutane, or cassock. The glittering surfaces of Byzantine mosaics are interpreted in a series of shining evening dresses by Dolce & Gabbana and by Versace, incorporating gold metal mesh, crystals, and other materials.

The *Heavenly Bodies* “pilgrimage” continues (or concludes, depending on where the visitor has begun) at the Cloisters, arguably the exhibition’s stronger section, as the designs on display relate more closely to the austere art and architecture of their pseudo-ecclesiastical space. For example, a set



Gallery View, Medieval Sculpture Hall (*Evening Ensemble* by John Galliano for Christian Dior).

Photo: © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

of ensembles by French designer Madame Grès (Alix Barton, 1903-1993) suggests, with its limited palette of brown, beige, black, and ivory, the religious works of Spanish painter Francisco de Zurbarán, as well as the pared-down silhouette of monastic attire. Balenciaga’s glorious ivory silk and organza wedding dress, worn by a mannequin facing an altar, is an implicit assent to the sacred. At the same time, however, Briton Alexander McQueen and American Rick Owens offer more subversive creations that push against conventional attitudes toward religious symbols and notions of appropriate monastic behavior.

Heavenly Bodies raises many questions about the pairing of fashion and faith. In the case of the Vatican objects, for example, do we need magnificent vestments and accessories to worship God? Are the designers honoring or parodying Catholicism? Nearly all of the designer clothes are for women: What statements are made about the status of women, both as creators and as the destined wearers? The best way to arrive at answers—and to ask questions of your own—is to make the pilgrimage yourself.

The author is a member of St. Thomas Church, Fifth Avenue.

Correction: On page 46 of the spring issue of the Episcopal New Yorker, a photograph of Betsy Ashton was incorrectly attributed to Pamela Lewis. It was in fact taken by Steven Speliotis.

Five New Deacons Ordained May 12 at the Cathedral



BACK ROW LEFT TO RIGHT: The Rev. Canon Charles W. Simmons, The Rev. Deacon Kenton J. Curtis, The Rev. Deacon Chisara R. Alimole, The Rev. Winnie Varghese, and The Rev. Deacon Denise LaVetty. FRONT ROW LEFT TO RIGHT: The Rev. Deacon Kenneth Christopher Citarella, The Rev. Deacon David Forrest McDonald, The Rt. Rev. Dr. J. George Stephen (Bishop of Madras in the Church of South India), The Rt. Rev. Andrew ML Dietsche, The Rev. Deacon Ann Guastella Conti, The Rev. Deacon Adeline Smith, and The Rev. Deacon Pedro Luis Rodriguez, Jr.

Photo: Allto Orsini.

Daniel Appointed Cathedral's 10th Dean

On June 20, Bishop Dietsche and the president of the Cathedral Board of Trustees, Bruce Macleod, announced the appointment of the Rt. Rev. Clifton "Dan" Daniel III as the 10th dean of the cathedral, effective immediately. Dean Daniel had been serving as the cathedral's interim dean since March of 2017. He previously served as provisional bishop of the Diocese of Pennsylvania. He is currently the chairman of the board of trustees of the General Theological Seminary, and also serves on the board of trustees of the Church Pension Group. "The months since Dan first joined us have been simply transformational in the life and mission of our Cathedral," Bishop Dietsche said. "I am pleased that the dean has also found a church family in our cathedral community, and grateful for the blessings he has received in this city, diocese and ministry."



The Rt. Rev. Clifton "Dan" Daniel III.
Photo: Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

New Canon to the Ordinary for Bishop Dietsche

The Rev. Canon John D. Perris joined the diocesan staff as Canon to the Ordinary on June 16, having previously served as rector of the Episcopal Church of Christ the King in Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Perris was

born in 1960 and received his Juris Doctor from Yale University in 1986. He then practiced law until graduation from the General Theological Seminary in 1998 and his ordination the same year. He served parishes in the dioceses of Newark, Virginia and Massachusetts until assuming his cure in Frankfurt in 2014. In writing to the diocese with news of his appointment, Bishop Dietsche highlighted the new Canon to the Ordinary's pastoral and legal abilities, and added that "He is also a gentle soul and true Christian. He is a genuinely nice guy, and I look forward to working with him."



The Rev. Br. Aidan William Owen Ordained to the Priesthood June 5, at the Monastery Church of St. Augustine, Holy Cross Monastery



FRONT ROW LEFT TO RIGHT: The Rev. Br. Joseph Anthony Wallace-Williams, O.H.C., Br. Robert Sevensky, O.H.C., The Rev. Br. Robert James, O.H.C., The Rt. Rev. Andrew ML Dietsche, The Rev. Br. Aidan William Owen, O.H.C., Sister Elizabeth Broyles, C.M.A., and The Rev. Canon Charles W. Simmons. Photo: The Rev. Br. Randy Greve, O.H.C.

Church Club Hosts Dean of Westminster and Closes the Season with Annual Meeting *By Susan Ridgeway*

More than 150 members and guests attended the Church Club of New York's 131st Annual Dinner Gala May 1 at the Yale Club, at which the honored guest and speaker was the Very Rev. Dr. John Hall, Dean of Westminster.

Dean Hall offered a bit of history on the abbey, as well as an overview of plans to expand its visitor and educational facilities, crediting the American Fund for Westminster Abbey for helping make many of those changes possible. At the same time, he emphasized that the abbey's main function is to be a place of worship, with "28 services a week," and that in addition to the nearly 1.3 million paying visitors last year, "we have prayers every hour and vast numbers of



The Very Rev. Dr. John Hall, dean of Westminster, at the Church Club Annual Dinner. Photo: Church Club of New York.

people come to worship." Dean Hall also noted that "there are signs... of a new seriousness amongst a younger generation, and of people giving further thought... to questions of spirituality," but cautioned that "we need to move beyond just working with spirituality to finding engagement with matters of faith in a fresh way." Concluding the evening, the Rt. Rev. Geralyn Wolf, assistant bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Long Island, offered the benediction, which was followed by the traditional singing of "The Church's One Foundation." Wrapping up Church Club spring programming, nearly 60 members and guests attended its June 13 Annual Meeting and Barbecue at the Church of the Transfiguration. Vice president Muriel Kneeshaw mentioned a number of the well-attended programs hosted by the Church Club in recent months, while the Church Club's executive director, Susan Ridgeway, gave a preview of the upcoming year's programming, including a demonstration of Saint Thomas Church's new organ followed by a reception on October 23, the Annual Bishop's Forum in November with Bishop Dietsche, and a program on Human Sex Trafficking.

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The author is a member of Church of the Incarnation in Manhattan and serves as executive director of the Church Club of New York.

Five Women, Five Seminars: 2018 Grants by the Global Women's Fund



The Global Women's Fund's 2018 Catherine S. Roskam Scholarship winner, Jennelyn.

Jennelyn, a recent college graduate in the field of agricultural business, has won the 2018 Catherine S. Roskam Scholarship for her seminary studies, one of ten awards made in the current grant cycle of the Global Women's Fund of New York (due to security concerns in some countries, the Global Women's Fund publishes only the first names of scholarship recipients). Jennelyn, 22, is seeking ordination in the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Philippines, where few clergy are women. "Jennelyn shows

steadfastness and courage, and theologically she expresses her sense of vocation well, with an orientation towards God and the people she will serve, educate and transform by her ministry," explained Judi Counts, board chair. "We also believe her college degree in agricultural business will contribute to her ability to lead in her local community."

Established in 2004, the Global Women's Fund, an outreach of the Diocese of New York, offers grants for the higher education of Anglican women in the developing world, in response to a global need to empower women and promote gender equality, and recognition that education is key to achieving this. To date, the fund has supported the higher education of more than 60 Anglican women. It also provides grants for educational seminars that have reached thousands of Anglican women and girls.

In 2018, the Global Women's Fund has awarded full scholarships to five women who have demonstrated that, by pursuing their chosen fields of study, they will enrich the communities in which they live. In addition to Jennelyn, the women who have been granted 2018 scholarships are:

Louise, Democratic Republic of Congo – Social Work/Administration

Shiny, India – Mathematics

Betnas, Tanzania — Applied Theology

Lily, Democratic Republic of Congo — Finance and Accounting.

Each year, the Global Women's Fund also offers the Kathi Watts Grossman Award for a seminar outstanding in vision and design. In 2018, the Grossman Award is supporting a seminar in Kenya entitled "Justice." The other seminars to receive 2018 grants are:

Capacity Building Leadership & Women's Empowerment in Savings with Education and Community Sanitation and Hygiene — Angola

Economic Self Reliance — Democratic Republic of Congo

Economic Empowerment & Legal Literacy for Widows — Tanzania

Women Who Speak Up — India.

The Global Women's Fund relies entirely on the charitable gifts of donors who believe in its mission: *We seek to effect positive change by educating Anglican women for transformation of themselves, their families, communities, and the world.*

For further information on the Global Women's Fund and to make a donation, visit episcopaldioceseny.org/gwf.

Update on Social and Environmental Investing

In the fall of 2015, the Task Force on Socially and Environmentally Responsible Investing issued its final report and submitted four resolutions to the 2015 Diocesan Convention. Among the resolutions, two urged the trustees of the diocese to take actions as necessary and appropriate to cause the diocese to adopt sustainable investing as an investment policy goal and become a signatory to United Nations Principles for Responsible Investing, and to establish a community development investment program. In addition, Convention resolved that diocesan funds not be invested in companies that derive 10% or more of their revenues from the extraction or distribution of coal.

Since that time, the following actions have been taken to comply with the Resolutions at Convention and the task force's recommendations, all with regard to the funds managed by Church Investment Group.

1) The trustees of the diocese directed that coal companies be eliminated from the investment portfolio; this was accomplished in 2015 / 2016.

2) The trustees of the diocese adopted a program of Environmental, Social and Governance Investing, and approved implementation of such a program in late 2016. The Diocese of New York is now employing ESG strategies in its U.S., International Developed, Emerging market equities and core and opportunistic fixed income investments.

3) The trustees of the diocese decided to minimize the diocesan portfolio's exposure to tobacco, firearms, and fossil fuel companies. The fossil fuel divestiture occurred in January 2017.

4) The Investment Committee of the diocese of implemented proxy voting on directly held investments in accordance with the proxy guidelines of the Executive Council's Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility in 2018.

With regard to the other resolutions:

1) The diocese continues to study becoming a signatory to the UN Principles of Responsible Investment (UNPRI) and notes that more than 80% of the managers for the funds managed by Church Investment Group are signatories.

2) The diocese is actively engaged in developing a community investment program, and, consistent with the task force report, has been meeting with community development financial institutions ("CDFIs") in the New York area.

In summary, the trustees of the diocese have responded (and will continue to respond) to the 2015 Convention resolutions that call for guidelines reflecting "...the challenge of responsible stewardship and to the Church's ethical teachings, the diocese makes investment decisions taking into consideration both economic and financial factors on social justice and environmental justice factors. The diocese is a steward of the financial gifts it has received. The diocese has the responsibility to cultivate these gifts in order to promote the Gospel and to support, further and increase the diocesan mission and its impact on others."

Ecclesia Ministries: A Welcoming and Loving Environment for All

By the Rev. Deacon Denise LaVetty



Top row - left-right Fr. Seamus Campbell, Deacon Gene Bourquin, Billy, Bp. Glasspool, Philip, Betty Costa (Marble Collegiate), Jeffrey Penn (Holy Apostles), bottom row - Paul Argenzio (Ecclesia assistant and congregant), Deacon Denise LaVetty.

On the Feast of the Ascension on May 10, Bishop Mary Glasspool visited the Church of the Transfiguration, where among the parishioners being presented for baptism, confirmation, and reception, were Philip and Billy, congregants of Ecclesia Ministries of Madison Square Park. This inclusion set apart this particular bishop's visit as an embrace extended to the Ecclesia ministry and, yes, the very streets of New York.

Ecclesia Ministries of Madison Square Park has been a presence serving homeless and needy in and around Madison Square Park for 11 years, faithfully led by Fr. Seamus Campbell of the Old Catholic Church, with myself and Gene Bourquin serving as deacons. Our congregation is much like a housed congregation—we have our “regulars,” our “sometimes,” and frequently a one-time “drop in.” We are a close-knit, faithful community. We offer a Eucharist each week in the park (in bad weather we are at Transfiguration). As many people on the outskirts of our society feel uncomfortable and even at times unwelcome in a housed church, Ecclesia provides a venue and environment that is welcoming, accepting, and loving.

Our host parishes, which provided a brown bag lunch for our people each Sunday, include Transfiguration, St. Paul and St. Andrew Methodist Church, Marble Collegiate Church, Holy Apostles, Madison Avenue Baptist Church, and St. Peter's, Chelsea. Clergy from these churches serve as guest celebrants and preachers, and we often have guest priests from other churches as well.

Billy, who has been seriously ill, expressed a desire to be confirmed. As we considered how to get this done, the opportunity of joining in with the congregation at Transfiguration arose, thanks to the welcoming generosity of Fr. John David van Dooren, rector. Billy was thrilled—and once we announced Billy's upcoming confirmation to the congregation, Philip came forward and asked if he could be baptized. The Holy Spirit circled above.

The blessed day came and it was glorious!

Fr. Seamus, Deacon Gene, and I are so grateful for the holy hospitality provided by Fr. van Dooren.

Any priests who would consider serving as celebrant and preacher occasionally (our services is at 2:00pm) please let us know!

Check us out on FaceBook www.facebook.com/eccliaMSP.

The author is Deacon on staff at St. Peter's, Chelsea and human resource consultant to the diocese.

Disney Purchases Development Rights to 4 Hudson Square from Trinity Wall Street

Trinity Church Wall Street announced July 9 the sale of development rights for its 4 Hudson Square property to the Disney Company in a transaction valued at \$650M for a 99-year lease. Disney will construct an environmentally-responsible and efficient LEED-certified building on the site, which will serve as a new centralized location for its New York operations.

The 4 Hudson Square site, which covers a full city block bordered by Hudson, Varick, Van Dam and Spring streets, is part of Trinity's real estate portfolio, which dates back to a land grant given by Queen Anne to the church in 1705.

Black Presence Project – An Update from The Organizers

In our initial email communication to the diocese to collect data for the Black Presence Project (BPP), the use of the word “slaves” was rightly questioned. Particularly when considering the institution of slavery in the US, which denied the humanity of the captured Africans and their offspring, the use of “enslaved person” is to be preferred over “slave,” since “enslaved person” identifies an individual's position in society without denying their status as a person.

While we are fully committed to the mindful use of terminology around slavery, we do acknowledge nevertheless that the customary use of “slave” and “slaves” is an indication neither of a user's belief that enslaved people were less than fully human, nor of an intent to be hurtful to people of African descent. Consider, for example, this section of Presiding Bishop Curry's royal wedding sermon on the power of love: “...there were some old slaves in America's Antebellum South who explained the dynamic power of love and why it has the power to transform. They explained it this way. They sang a spiritual, even in the midst of their captivity. It's one that says ‘There is a balm in Gilead...’ a healing balm, something that can make things right...”

Some further reading on this topic:

Slaves vs Enslaved People – The Subtle, Strong Power of Words

<https://andilit.com/2011/10/12/slaves-vs-enslaved-people-the-subtle-strong-power-of-words/>

Brief Glossary of Political Terms, Movements, Organizations, and Slang Relating to Slavery and Racism in the United States from Colonial Days to the Present

<http://trans-video.net/~rwillisa/Glossary.htm>

“Slaves” Versus “Enslaved Africans”

<https://aalbc.com/tc/topic/1587-slaves-versus-enslaved-africans/>

CivilWarTalk

<https://civilwartalk.com/threads/enslaved-vs-slaves.134730/>

For the Black Presence Project online survey form, please go to dioceseny.org/bpp-form.

THE INSTALLATION OF THE RIGHT REVEREND CLIFTON DANIEL III AS THE TENTH DEAN OF THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF SAINT JOHN THE DIVINE

Saturday, October 20

The Rt. Rev. Clifton Daniel III will be installed by Bishop Dietsche as the tenth dean of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine on the afternoon of Saturday, October 20.

All congregations in the diocese are encouraged to send representatives to this special service. More information will be posted on the Cathedral's website, stjohndivine.org.

BISHOPS' VISITATION SCHEDULE

AUGUST: NO VISITATIONS

SEPT 2 (15 PENTECOST)

Bishop Dietsche:

Stone Church, Craigs Moor

SEPT 9 (16 PENTECOST)

Bishop Dietsche:

St. Andrew's, Hartsdale

Bishop Shin:

Holy Cross/Santa Cruz, Kingston

Bishop Glasspool:

St. Ann's for the Deaf, Manhattan

SEPT 16 (17 PENTECOST)

Bishop Dietsche: St. John's, Tuckahoe

Bishop Shin: St. Luke's, Somers

Bishop Glasspool:

St. Peter's, Millbrook

SEPT 23 (18 PENTECOST)

Bishop Dietsche: Trinity, Garnerville

Bishop Shin: Christ Church, Sparkill

Bishop Glasspool:

St. John's, Getty Square

SEPT 30 (19 PENTECOST)

Bishop Dietsche: Messiah, Rhinebeck

Bishop Glasspool:

St. John's, Larchmont

OCT 14 (21 PENTECOST)

Bishop Dietsche:

St. Philip's, Manhattan

Bishop Shin:

Ascension, Mount Vernon

Bishop Glasspool:

St. Mary's, Tuxedo Park

OCT 21 (22 PENTECOST)

Bishop Dietsche:

Christ Church, Red Hook

Bishop Shin:

St. Luke's in the Fields, Manhattan

Bishop Glasspool: St. Luke's, Bronx

OCT 27 (SATURDAY)

Bishop Glasspool:

Our Savior, Manhattan

OCT 28 (23 PENTECOST)

Bishop Dietsche:

Grace/La Gracia, White Plains

Bishop Shin: St. Ann's, Bronx

Bishop Glasspool: Sts. John, Paul and

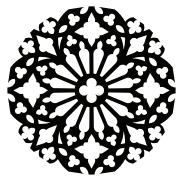
Clement, Mount Vernon

CLERGY CHANGES

	FROM	TO	DATE
The Rev. J.K. (James Kay) Melton	Priest-in-Charge, All Saints', Harrison	PhD Program	End of February, 2018
The Rev. Gwyneth M. Murphy	Interim Pastor, St. John's in the Village	Interim Pastor, St. John's (Fountain Square), Larchmont	February 21, 2018
The Rev. Steven Y. Lee	Ordained Transitional Deacon March 10 (Diocese of NY)	Vicar and Pastor, St. Saviour at the Cathedral of SJTD, NYC	April 15, 2018
The Rev. Br. Robert M. Pierson, O.H.C.	Supply, Diocese of NY	Priest-in-Charge, Ascension / Holy Trinity, West Park	April 15, 2018
The Rev. Gina L. Gore	Associate for CYF, St. Wilfrid of York, Huntington Beach, CA	Assoc. for Children & Family, St. Luke-in-the-Fields, Manhattan	May 1, 2018
The Rev. J. Gregory Morgan	Interim Rector, All Saints', Hoboken, NJ	Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. Alban's, Staten Island	May 1, 2018
The Rev. Kathleen H. Berkowe	Supply, Diocese of Connecticut	Priest-in-Charge, Holy Communion, Mahopac	May 15, 2018
The Rev. Graeme Napier	Associate Priest, Cowley St. John, Oxford, England	Rector, St. John's in the Village, Manhattan	May 16, 2018
The Rev. Canon Suzanne M. Culhane	Assistant for Stewardship, Christ Church, Greenwich, CT	Canon for Stewardship, Diocese of Long Island and Priest-in-Charge, St. Philip's (Dyker Heights), Brooklyn	May 19, 2018
The Rev. Francis H. Geer	Rector, St. Philp's in the Highlands, Garrison	Retirement	May 20, 2018
The Rev. Robert Flanagan	Long Term Supply, St. Mark's, Mount Kisco	Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. Mark's, Mount Kisco	June 1, 2018
The Rev. Margaret E. McGhee	Ordained Transitional Deacon March 10 (Diocese of NY)	Curate, Bethesda-by-the-Sea, Palm Beach, FL	June 1, 2018
The Rev. Victor Sarrazin	Supply, Diocese of NY	Rector, Grace, Middletown	June 4, 2018
The Rev. William Baker	Ordained Transitional Deacon March 10 (Diocese of NY)	Curate, Richmond Episcopal Ministry, Staten Island	June 11, 2018
The Rt. Rev. Clifton "Dan" Daniel III	Interim/Acting Dean, Cathedral of SJTD, Manhattan	Dean, Cathedral of SJTD, Manhattan	June 12, 2018
The Rev. Canon John D. Perris	Rector, Christ the King, Frankfurt, Germany	Canon to the Ordinary, Diocese of NY	June 16, 2018
The Rev. Susan Anderson-Smith	Supply, Diocese of NY	Assoc. Rector for Justice & Reconciliation, St. Bart's, Manhattan	July 1, 2018
The Rev. Deacon Eugene A. Bourquin	Deacon, All Saints, Chiang Mai, Thailand	Deacon, Cathedral of SJTD, Manhattan	July 1, 2018
The Rev. Michael Kurth	Ordained Transitional Deacon March 10 (Diocese of NY)	Curate, Christ's Church, Rye	July 1, 2018
The Rev. San Ninan	Diocese of East Kerala, Church of South India	Priest-in-Charge, All Saints', Valley Cottage	July 1, 2018
The Rev. Canon Terence A. Lee	Priest-in-Charge, St. Gabriel's, Hollis, NY	Rector, St. Philips's, Manhattan	July 8, 2018
The Rev. Pierce W. Klemmt	Interim Pastor, St. Matthew's, Bedford	Retirement	July 29, 2018
The Rev. Eleanor N. Prior	Ordained Transitional Deacon March 10 (Diocese of NY)	Canon Pastor, Cathedral of St. Luke in Portland, Maine	September 2, 2018
The Rev. John A. Zahl	Canon Missioner & Chaplain, Grace Cathedral, Charleston, SC	Rector, St. Matthew's, Bedford	September 4, 2018
The Rev. Susan Harriss	Retired / Supply	Priest Associate, Christ the Redeemer, Pelham	September 9, 2018
The Rev. Betsy Fisher	Vicar, St. Thomas', Amenia Union	Retirement	November 30, 2018
The Rev. Michael T. Watson	Ordained Transitional Deacon March 10 (Diocese of NY)	Priest-in-Charge, St. Luke's Church, Somers	December 1, 2018

Cathedral Calendar

AUGUST-OCTOBER 2018



The Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine

1047 Amsterdam Avenue at 112th Street
New York, NY 10025 (212) 316-7540

For details of ongoing programs, tours and workshops at
the Cathedral please visit www.stjohndivine.org.

TICKETS AND RESERVATIONS

Unless otherwise noted events do not require tickets or reservations. Tickets for all performances other than free or "suggested contribution" events may be purchased directly from the Cathedral's website, stjohndivine.org, or by calling (866) 811-4111.

Please visit the Cathedral's website, stjohndivine.org, or call the Visitor Center (212) 316-7540 for updates and additional event and tour information.

ONGOING PROGRAMS, TOURS, WORKSHOPS

The Great Organ: Midday Monday

Cathedral organists provide a 30-minute break for mind, body and spirit at 1:00 p.m. with an entertaining and informative demonstration of the Cathedral's unparalleled Great Organ.

The Great Organ: It's Sunday

The Great Organ: It's Sunday invites established and emerging organists from across the U.S. and around the world to take their turn at the Great Organ and present a free 5 p.m. concert.

PUBLIC EDUCATION & VISITOR SERVICES

ONGOING TOURS & EVENTS

HIGHLIGHTS TOURS

Mondays, 11 a.m. – Noon & 2 – 3 p.m.

Tuesdays – Saturdays, 11 a.m. – Noon & 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.

Explore the many highlights of the Cathedral's history, architecture, and artwork, from the Great Bronze Doors to the seven Chapels of the Tongues. Learn about the Cathedral's services, events, and programs that welcome and inspire visitors from around the world. \$14 per person, \$12 per student/senior. No prior reservation necessary. Meet at Visitor Center.

VERTICAL TOURS

Mondays, 10 – 11 a.m.; Wednesdays & Fridays, Noon – 1 p.m.; Saturdays,

Noon – 1 p.m. & 2 p.m. – 3 p.m.

On this adventurous, "behind-the-scenes" tour, climb more than 124 feet through spiral staircases to the top of the world's largest cathedral. Learn stories through stained glass windows and sculpture and study the grand architecture of the Cathedral while standing on a buttress. The tour culminates on the roof with a wonderful view of Manhattan. \$20 per person, \$18 per student/senior. All participants must be 12 years of age and older and reservations are recommended. For reservations visit the Cathedral website or call (866) 811-4111. Bring a flashlight and bottle of water. Meet at Visitor Center.

NIGHTWATCH

The Nightwatch series offers two exciting and innovative programs: Nightwatch

Crossroads Christian and Nightwatch Crossroads Interspiritual. For more information visit stjohndivine.org or contact: (212) 316-7518 / nightwatch@stjohndivine.org.

ADULTS AND CHILDREN IN TRUST (A.C.T.)

To learn about the many nurturing year-round programs for young people offered by A.C.T., please call (212) 316-7530 or visit www.actprograms.org.

CHILDREN'S QUEST FUND

Help us to invite children from many countries, religions and economic levels under the shadow of the beloved Cathedral. While any amount will help, \$1,000 enables a child from a low-income family to participate in a premiere summer camp experience. Please send donations to the Cathedral, designated "A.C.T.'s Children's Quest Fund."

DIVINE SATURDAY CELEBRATIONS

Celebrate good times with ACT's new and improved Divine Saturday Celebrations, with a variety of birthday activities for kids to enjoy! It's a great time for parents and children alike. Speak to a party manager for details at (212) 316-7530.

CATHEDRAL COMMUNITY CARES (CCC)

All programs meet in the CCC office, the Sunday Soup Kitchen or the Cathedral A.C.T gym unless otherwise specified. Please visit stjohndivine.org for more information on CCC programs.

SELECTED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

AUGUST

3RD ANNUAL HARLEM HAVANA MUSIC & CULTURAL FESTIVAL CELEBRATION

Saturday, August 4, 2 p.m.

Featuring Oyu Oro, an Afro-Cuban experimental dance ensemble from Santiago de Cuba. Oyu Oro is the brainchild of Danys "La Mora" Perez — international Afro-Cuban folklore performer, choreographer, teacher and dance ethnologist from Santiago de Cuba.

THE CATHEDRAL IN CONTEXT:

SPOTLIGHT ON MORNINGSIDE HEIGHTS

Sunday, August 12, 1 p.m.

The Cathedral spurred the growth of Morningside Heights into becoming one of Manhattan's most unique neighborhoods. Go back in time on an illustrated walking tour of the neighborhood and its historic architecture and institutions, and learn about its development into the "Acropolis of Manhattan." The tour begins at the Cathedral and ends at Riverside Church. Led by Cathedral Guide Bill Schneberger. All participants must be 12 years of age or older and reservations

SUNDAY SERVICES

8 a.m. Morning Prayer & Holy Eucharist

9 a.m. Holy Eucharist

11 a.m. Choral Eucharist

4 p.m. Choral Evensong

DAILY SERVICES

Monday–Saturday

8 a.m. Morning Prayer

8:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist (Tuesday & Thursday only)

12:15 p.m. Holy Eucharist

5 p.m. Evening Prayer

are recommended. This tour requires extensive outdoor walking and use of stairs. Tickets are \$25 per person, \$20 per student/senior.

WITHIN THE WALLS: EXPLORING HIDDEN SPACES

Saturday, August 18, 10 a.m. & 12 p.m.

This extended vertical tour features "behind-the-scenes" climbs in both the eastern and western ends of St. John the Divine. In the east, descend into the unfinished crypt and then ascend Rafael Guastavino's beautiful spiral staircase to incredible views high above the altar. The western climb presents an amazing view down the entire length of the world's largest cathedral. Led by Senior Cathedral Guide John Simko. Tickets are \$25 per person, \$20 per student/senior. Must be 12 years of age or older. Flashlight and bottle of water recommended. Participants are responsible for carrying all belongings throughout the tour. Photography is welcome, though tripod use during the tour is prohibited. If you have concerns regarding claustrophobia, vertigo, or a medical condition, please call (212) 932-7347 before purchasing tickets.

GATEWAY TO THE NEW JERUSALEM: SPOTLIGHT ON THE ICONOGRAPHY OF THE WEST FRONT

Saturday, August 18, 10:30 a.m.

The Cathedral's western façade provokes much comment and curiosity as well as the occasional conspiracy theory. This stimulating one-hour tour decodes the thematic programs underlying its art and architecture. Led by Senior Cathedral Guide Tom Fedorek. Tickets are \$18 per adult and \$15 for students and seniors.

CATHEDRAL THROUGH TIME: CELEBRATING 125 YEARS!

Saturday, August 25, 10:30 a.m.

For over 125 years, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine has been a part of New York City history. From sacred to secular, prayers to performances - it is an architectural wonder driven by a mission to be a house of prayer for all people. Walk through time, recalling the early days of construction (and its history), to discover how its mission of welcome has guided the structure, programming and future of this great cathedral. This tour concludes with a climb up a spiral staircase for a behind-the-scenes view of select architectural features. Led by Cathedral Guide Gene Carlucci. Tickets are \$18 per adult and \$15 for students and seniors.

THE CATHEDRAL IN CONTEXT: SPOTLIGHT ON MORNINGSIDE HEIGHTS

Sunday, August 26, 1 p.m.

Please see details for August 12.

SEPTEMBER

A CELEBRATION OF MADELEINE L'ENGLE

Thursday, September 13, 7:30 p.m.

Join us as we celebrate the publication of the Library of America's two-volume set of works by beloved author Madeleine L'Engle, who was a member of the Cathedral community for decades. Please visit stjohndivine.org for more information.

PRIESTHOOD ORDINATIONS

Saturday, September 15, 10:30 a.m.

Please visit dioceseny.org for more information.

CLOSE CONVERSATION: JOSE

QUINONEZ,

IMMIGRANTS OUT OF THE SHADOWS

Wednesday, September 26, 6:30 p.m.

José Quiñonez is the founding CEO of Mission Asset Fund (MAF), an award-winning nonprofit with innovative nationwide models for integrating financially excluded, low-income communities into the financial mainstream. For his work, he was awarded the MacArthur Fellowship, the Ashoka Fellowship, and the Aspen Institute Fellowship. He also received the James Irvine Leadership Award and Princeton University's WWS Distinguished Alumni Award, among others. Sponsored by the Cathedral's Congregation of Saint Saviour

CENTER STAGE: DINA EL WEDIDI

Saturday, September 29

Please visit stjohndivine.org for more information.

OCTOBER

34TH FEAST OF ST. FRANCIS AND BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

Sunday, October 7, 10:30 a.m.

This service features the *Missa Gaia* (or Earth Mass), composed by Paul Winter and Paul Halley, bringing together the Paul Winter Consort and a mass choir of hundreds of voices, as well as modern and traditional West African dance by Forces of Nature—all in celebration of the beauty of the animal kingdom. The service concludes with the Procession of the Animals, a silent parade of creatures great and small down the Nave of the Cathedral. Following the service, join us for the St. Francis Day fair, with pet blessings, activities, refreshments, and performances on the Pulpit Green. For information about sponsorship opportunities and advance and day-of passes, please visit stjohndivine.org.

GREAT ORGAN: RAYMOND NAGEM

Tuesday, October 16, 7:30 p.m.

The Cathedral's 2018-19 season of Great Music in a Great Space kicks off with a recital by Associate Director of Music Raymond Nagem on the magnificent Great Organ. Visit stjohndivine.org for tickets and program information.

CLOSE CONVERSATION: WALLACE BEST ON LANGSTON HUGHES, HARLEM, AND THE SACRED

Wednesday, October 17, 6:30 p.m.

Close Conversations, sponsored by the Cathedral's Congregation of Saint Saviour, invite you to join a series of discussions on contemporary society, culture and spirituality. Wallace Best is Professor of Religion and African American Studies at Princeton University. He is the author of *Langston's Salvation: American Religion and the Bard of Harlem*, New York University Press and *Passionately Human, No Less Divine: Religion and Culture in Black Chicago, 1915-1952*, Princeton University Press. He is currently at work on an anthology entitled *Elder Lucy Smith: Documents from the Life of a Pentecostal Woman Preacher*.

When “Pilgrims” Are Not on Pilgrimage

By the Rev. Michael A. Phillips

need not explain the importance of narrative to a Christian community. We all know that the stories in our Bible shape us and guide us in our actions. Groups have always told stories, or “myths,” that provide three important functions: 1) they tell us who we are (identity) 2) they tell us what is important to us (values) and 3) they tell us how to behave (action). Faith traditions, nations, tribes, clubs all have stories at the heart of their common life.

Deeply embedded in the American narrative is a story about “pilgrims” who sailed across the Atlantic on the *Mayflower*, establishing a colony from which our nation grew. This story is usually told once a year on Thanksgiving Day, when we remember a harvest dinner between the *Mayflower* passengers and the native people of the Wampanoag tribe.

It is typically told like this:

After surviving a difficult winter and learning how to cultivate local crops from the Indians, the pilgrims sat down with the natives in the fall to share a celebratory feast. The centerpiece on the table was a fowl native to North America and unknown in Europe, the turkey.

Maybe a few other details are added, but this serves as a general outline of the story. The trouble with telling it this way is that we call the passengers on the *Mayflower* “pilgrims”—but they were not on pilgrimage. They called themselves “separatists,” not pilgrims.

A pilgrimage is characterized by someone journeying to a place that is meaningful to them and then returning home, transformed or affected in some way. But the passengers on the *Mayflower* had no intention of returning to England. In fact, they had hoped that others of their group would eventually join them in the colony. Not only that, but Cape Cod held no significance to them either politically or spiritually. Their intended destination was the mouth of the Hudson River. They ended up in Massachusetts because November storms blew them off course. They certainly did not sail 3,000 miles on the cold north Atlantic just to share turkey and gravy with the natives.

This is not only a “national” story, but also a story of faith. In 1559, the British Parliament passed the “Act of Uniformity,” which not only mandated that all worship be taken from the *Book of Common Prayer*, but also that everyone attend public worship in an Anglican church on Sunday or pay a fine. However, the Protestant freedoms could not be checked, and certain British citizens chose to defy the law, separating themselves from the established Church. Many of these individuals were apprehended, fined, and after repeated offenses, imprisoned. Some were even executed.

In 1608, a group of these separatists escaped under the cover of night to the Netherlands, where they were able to practice their faith as they wished. But worried that their children were growing up Dutch, they returned to England, and soon after signed up for passage on the *Mayflower*, contracting to work off the price of their passage over time. Half of the *Mayflower* passengers were these “separatists,” and half were hired by the investors to work the plantation in North America.

By calling this group “pilgrims,” we have sugar-coated the story and done a disservice to our national identity. By all accounts, they were political and reli-

gious refugees.

The Bible contains many stories of refugees: Terah (father of Abraham) is forced to leave Ur because of his monotheistic spirituality (religious persecution), Joseph’s brothers leave Palestine due to severe drought (natural disaster), Moses leads Hebrew refugees out of Egypt because of oppressive and unjust working conditions (injustices), and the Jewish diaspora occurs because of the approaching Babylonian army with its designs to conquer Jerusalem and the southern kingdom (warfare). Throughout history, people have moved from their homelands when conditions threaten their safety and life. They do so not as “pilgrims,” but as refugees.

No one leaves their homeland lightly. No one turns their back on heritage, culture, landscape, family, and community unless they fear for their life and the life of their family. Today millions seek refuge in various locations around the globe. Decades of Middle East warfare have caused thousands to flee in hopes of being welcomed in European countries. Latin American drug cartels that service the US cocaine markets have made life unsafe and unbearable in places like Honduras, Guatemala, and Mexico. Refugees fleeing that terror are coming to our southern border, hoping to find compassion and safety.

When the *Mayflower*’s passengers stepped onto Plymouth Rock, Massasoit and his Wampanoag community welcomed them. Historians estimate that Massasoit could have rallied 20,000 warriors who could have easily wiped out the 102 English “pilgrims.” Instead, they showed compassion. It was only through their aid that the members of the Plymouth Plantation survived the winter of 1620-1621 and could establish a sustainable colony. The reality of our national story is that we began our life here as refugees, not pilgrims.

Stories matter. They shape our identity. If the national story is not told truthfully, then the nation develops with a false identity. The writers of our Constitution did not want to repeat the atrocities they saw in a tax-supported, state-sanctioned church, so they provided for a separation between the two institutions. That does not mean that the two have nothing to do with each other, only that the one will not dominate the other. The passengers on the *Mayflower* were both political and religious refugees. And that is our national story.

Leviticus 19:33-34 tells its hearers that when aliens reside among them, they will treat the aliens as “citizens” and will love them as themselves. Why are they told to do so? “Because you were [once] aliens in the land of Egypt.” This is a form of the golden rule: treat others as you would like to be treated. In this case, however, it is adapted to: “treat others as you have been treated.”

Many nations today face the challenge of refugees seeking safety and protection within their borders. I don’t know what will guide other countries as they struggle to respond, but for us, a nation founded by refugees and faithful to a God who demands that we behave by the Golden Rule, our choice is clear: love the alien as we love ourselves.



Plimoth Plantation Living Museum in Massachusetts ~ The “pilgrims” who ended up here were actually refugees.
Photo: Nancy, Wikimedia Commons.

The author is vicar of Trinity Church, Saugerties.