

Peregrination Primer



A Contemplative Celtic
Pilgrim's Guide 2026



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Soli Deo Gloria!

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About the title —

Ester de Waal writes about Celtic spirituality and the concept of wandering:

“[This] understanding of journeying is in itself so rich and so significant. It is *peregrinatio*, seeking quest, adventure, wandering, exile — it is ultimately a journey . . . to find the place of my resurrection, the resurrected self, the self that I might hope to be, to become the true self in Christ. This journey is possible only because I am finding my roots — that familiar paradox known in all monastic life and a reflection of basic human experience, that only if one is rooted at home in one's self, in the place which one finds oneself, is one able to move forward, to open up new boundaries, both exterior and interior, in other words, to embark on a life of continual and never-ending conversion, transformation.”¹

The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) defines

“peregrination” as:

- “1. A journey through life, especially viewed as a temporary precursor of eternal life in heaven.
- 2a. pilgrimage.

¹ *The Celtic Way of Prayer* pp. ix-x, Ester de Waal.

- 2b. the action or an act of traveling abroad or from place to place; a course of travel, especially abroad, a journey . . . travel.”

The OED indicates that the word “**primer**” derives from another Latin word *primarium* which in modern English has several meanings:

- “1. A prayer book or devotional manual for the laity.
2b. A small introductory book on any subject; something introducing or providing initial instruction in a particular subject practice; *et cetera*.”

This small book is meant to be both an introductory resource on a host of pilgrimage-related subjects, as well as an aid to prayer or devotional manual for pilgrims. In it you will find both basic information for the trip and information about the people and places we are journeying to encounter. Furthermore, you will find within aids for daily disciplines aimed at deepening the impact of our journey with God.

— PHL

CREDITS & PERMISSIONS —



Materials for this resource have been developed for *The Pilgrimage* ministry by Paul H. Lang with assistance from fellow pilgrims Janet Sockwell and Audrey Sausman.



The daily Offices offered through the mobile app were created by Paul H. and Sarah B. Lang and are taken from a larger project to rewrite the daily offices for use in *The Pilgrimage*.



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Our Itinerary in Brief



DEPARTURE: FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25



SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26 – EDINBURGH

It is good for us to spend the portion of the day after arrival exploring Edinburgh and getting a good night's rest. The Royal Mile and other attractions are within walking distance of our accommodations at **Holiday Inn Express — Royal Mile** at 300 Cowgate.



SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27 EDINBURGH

Worship at St. Giles Cathedral and then have the balance of the day to explore this amazing city.

The **9:30 AM** is with choir, sermon, and holy communion

The **11:00 AM** service is with choir and sermon

Opening Dinner is at 5:30 PM at

Howies, 10-14 Victoria Street



MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 28 DEPART TO HOLY ISLAND

Our bus will pick us up early today in order to hit the safe crossing to Holy Island. It is likely this pick-up departure will be between 8-9 AM **but we will give a specific indication as an announcement when we know for sure.** We drive straight to Holy Island to begin our stay at Lindisfarne.



TUESDAY - THURSDAY, SEPT. 28 – OCT. 1 STAYING ON LINDISFARNE.

We will dine together for Breakfast and Dinner at the Manor House each day.

Breakfast — Served between 8:00 — 9:30 AM

Dinner — 5:30 PM



FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2

Today we will travel by bus from Holy Island to Oban. **Again we will announce a specific departure time as soon as we get confirmation from the coach-company, but anticipate that it will be roughly 10:30 - 11:00 AM.** We should arrive early enough in the afternoon to do some exploring of Oban before dinner and bed.



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3 - WE TRAVEL TO IONA

We board the ferry in Oban, then a bus across Mull, then a final ferry to Iona.

We will dine together for Breakfast and Dinner at the Columba Hotel each day.

Breakfast — 8:00 AM (All meet for breakfast at this time)

Dinner — 5:45 PM.



SUNDAY, OCT. 4 — WEDNESDAY OCT. 7 – STAYING ON IONA



THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8 — TRAVEL TO EDINBURGH

Day of departure back to Edinburgh.

8:45 AM. ferry to Fionnphort! This is the first leg of a complex series of ferry and bus rides which are like dominos. If we miss one the whole remaining trip becomes problematic.

9:20 AM. Bus transit across Mull.

11:00 AM. CalMac ferry to Oban.

11:50 Our motor-coach will pick up at Oban Ferry Terminal.

Travel to Edinburgh with comfort stop en route if necessary. (see note below)

N.B. Our coach will need to go directly to Edinburgh that day in order to let the driver escape the city traffic on the way back out. We suggest you have something to eat on the boat or bring snacks as a lunch stop is not easily possible. We'll have some time to relax in Edinburgh before our celebration dinner at 5:30.

**Celebration Dinner — 5:30 PM at
Luckenbooth**



FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9 – DEPARTURE

We fly back home today.

Daily Structure of the Peregrination Primer

Itinerary

Any notes explaining that day's itinerary which need to be conveyed. A place to put some organizational instructions *et cetera* so that the group is "on the same page" when traveling.

Place

Attending to the spirituality of landscape, and of place. A daily tidbit pointing to some aspect of the location which may be fruitful to explore.

Saint of the Day

A Saint's biography/hagiography with special attention to highlighting aspects for prayerful reflection. Journaling and/or prompts relating to the Saint.

Suggested Contemplative Practices

Prayer forms, Journaling ideas, Contemplative Photography prompts, *et cetera*.

Florilegium

A daily piece to encourage devotion and prayer.

Lexicon



ANAM CARA, ANAMCHAIRDE (NOM. PLURAL)

“In the Celtic tradition, there is a beautiful understanding of love and friendship. One of the fascinating ideas here is the idea of soul-love; the old Gaelic term for this is *anam cara*. *Anam* is the Gaelic word for soul and *cara* is the word for friend. So *anam cara* in the Celtic world was the ‘soul friend.’ In the early Celtic church, a person who acted as a teacher, companion, or spiritual guide was called an *anam cara*. It originally referred to someone to whom you confessed, revealing the hidden intimacies of your life. With the *anam cara* you could share your inner-most self, your mind and your heart. This friendship was an act of recognition and belonging. When you had an *anam cara*, your friendship cut across all convention, morality, and category. You were joined in an ancient and eternal way with the ‘friend of your soul.’ The Celtic understanding did not set limitations of space or time on the soul. There is no cage for the soul. The soul is a divine light that flows into you and into your Other. This art of belonging awakened and fostered a deep and special companionship. In his *Conferences*, John Cassian² says this bond between friends is indissoluble: ‘This, I say, is what is broken by no chances, what no interval of time or space can sever or destroy, and what even death itself cannot part.’”³

² John Cassian (c. AD 360 – c. 435), also known as John the Ascetic and John Cassian the Roman, was a Christian monk and theologian celebrated in both the Western and Eastern churches for his mystical writings. Cassian is noted for his role in bringing the ideas and practices of early Christian monasticism to the West.

³ John O'Donohue, *Anam Cara: A Book of Celtic Wisdom* (City: Publisher, Year) p. 13-14

“Soul friendship is distinctive because it is marked by [the kind love formed in Christ] — a love centered in prayer and joy, in sharing the bread of life in its various forms and in mutual disclosure . . . A soul friend is a person who will allow you to tell the whole truth of yourself, and encourage you to seek healing and restoration.”⁴



CARMINA GADELICA

“This work is an anthology of prayers from the Scottish Highlands and islands, gathered toward the end of the 19th-century by a Scotsman Alexander Carmichael. We owe Carmichael a great debt, for he carefully collected these living examples of oral tradition, these prayers that have been handed down from mother to daughter, from father to son for generations.”⁵



CELT / CELTIC

“In some ways the word ‘Celtic’ is misleading. It leads us to assume that the traditions found in Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, Brittany, the Island of Man, and Galicia are uniform. In fact, each country does have its own emphasis. The word ‘Celtic’ is a linguistic term; it signals languages in a particular grouping. For our purposes, ‘Celtic’ signifies both the areas where Celtic languages were and are spoken and the culturally formed spiritualities, historical and contemporary, that are linked to those languages. It is derived from the

⁴ Mary Earle, *Celtic Christian Spirituality: Essential writings annotated and explained* (City: Publisher, Year) p.103

⁵ Earle & Maddox, *Holy Companions - spiritual practices from the Celtic Saints* (City: Publisher, Year) p.4

Greek word *keltoi*, which was used to name the peoples who lived on the fringes of Europe in ancient times.”⁶



CULDEES

“The religious heirs of Columba (known as ‘Culdees’ from the Gaelic Céli Dé, ‘companions of God’).”⁷

There are modern groups which seek to preserve a form of Celtic spirituality which they purport to be connected to the ancient inclinations of the earliest Christians as they integrated Christianity with Druidism. (See the Anam Chara Project in the US, or Céile Dé in the UK: <http://www.ceilede.co.uk>).

However, for our purposes we simply use this term as a synonym for the fellowship of pilgrims. We, who are on pilgrimage together to Iona and Holy Island, might think of one another as fellow companions of God.



HAGIOGRAPHY

The saints rarely left any autobiographical writings and, indeed, the stories about them are often transcribed from the oral tradition into a written form only after several hundred years following their deaths. These written narratives about the lives of the Celtic saints do not function as strict history, but are (in the words of scholar Benedicta Ward): “... above all pragmatic, practical: [they] show one of that great cloud of witnesses and the details of his life on earth as he walked in the footsteps of the Man of Galilee.” When the stories about the saints seem wondrous (even

⁶ Mary C. Earle, *Celtic Christian Spirituality* (Woodstock, VT: Longhill Partners, 2011) p. 3.

⁷ Deborah & David Douglas, *Pilgrims in the Kingdom - Travels in Christian Britain* (Nashville: Upper Room, 2004) p. 55.

miraculous) we can understand those elements of the story to function like sacraments — that is, to point us to realities which, while eluding simple explanation, are nevertheless “true” in that they disclose something of the work of God in the world.

LINDISFARNE - HOLY ISLAND

Lindisfarne from “*Lindis*” the name of a nearby stream + “*farne*” a place of retreat. From ancient times this island which reconnects to the mainland at low-tide twice daily seems to have been a place of retreat. In the 11th century the monks renamed the island “Holy Island” in honor of the great saints (Aidan & Cuthbert) whose lives had done so much to take Christendom from Lindisfarne throughout Northumbria.

PALMER

A Pilgrim — particularly a pilgrim who, having made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, returns with a palm branch/leaf as a sign of the pilgrimage.

A Brief Celtic History

This section could easily take volumes. What follows is a basic timeline intended to help you locate the people and places we will visit within the broader sweep of Christian history.



TIMELINE

- 8,500 BCE — Earliest recorded evidence of humans in Scotland
- 4,000 BCE — Farming arrives in Scotland. (Much later than in Asia Minor.)
- 3,300 BCE — Arrival of the Beaker peoples from Northern & Central Europe
- 500 BCE — The Celts arrive in Britain. Originally from region of Spain/France
- 43-84 CE — Arrival of first Roman invasions and with them the Christian faith
- 90-145 CE — Age of Expansion of the Roman empire
- 122 CE — Construction of Hadrian's wall begun
- 160 CE — Peak of Roman Empire's ascendancy
- 354 CE — St. Augustine of Hippo & Pelagius born
- 387 CE — Battle of Allia. First invasion of the Gauls (Celts). Defeat of Roman army by river Allia opening the way to the eventual sack of Rome
- 397 CE — Ninian (362-432) builds Candida Casa at Whithorn
- 400 CE — Pelagius arrives in Rome

- 409 CE — Rome losing control of Britain. Britons told to defend themselves
- 410 CE — One might think of this as start of “Celtic Christianity” as the influence of Rome departs with Roman soldiers and Christians in Britain left behind
- 410 CE — Sack of Rome by the Visigoths (Alaric)
- 418 CE — Death of Pelagius
- 430 CE — St. Augustine of Hippo dies
- 432 CE — St. Patrick arrives in Armagh, Ireland
- 449 CE — Anglo-Saxon invasions begin
- 455 CE — Rome sacked by the Vandals (Geiseric)
- 461 CE — Saint Patrick dies
- 563 CE — Columba leaves Ireland and sets sail with 12 companions, landing at Columba’s bay on Iona
- 597 CE — Augustine of Canterbury made the first Archbishop of Canterbury
His arrival marks an effort to establish conformity with larger church
- 614 CE — St. Hilda born
- 635 CE — Aidan arrives in Northumbria - establishes a monastery at Lindisfarne. Birth of Cuthbert
- 651CE — Aidan dies. Cuthbert has vision of angels taking Aidan to heaven.
- 657CE — Whitby Monastery, established in Britain by St. Hilda
- 664 CE — Synod of Whitby held to resolve issues: Tonsure, Easter, *et cetera*
- 680 CE — St. Hilda dies

- 685 CE — Cuthbert made bishop of Lindisfarne at York on Easter day
- 687 CE — Death of Cuthbert
- 800 CE — Book of Kells started at Iona, finished at Kells
- 1045 CE — St. Margaret, Queen of Scots born
- 1054 CE — Great Schism separates Orthodox and Roman churches
- 1093 CE — Durham Cathedral begins construction — completed in 1133
- 1530s CE — English reformation
- 1559 CE — Reformation in Scotland with John Knox's sermon at Perth
- 1561 CE — Mary Queen of Scots returns to Scotland from France
- 1565 CE — Mary Queen of Scots marries Henry, Lord Darnley
- 1567 CE — Henry Darnley murdered. Mary marries Bothwell
- 1568 CE — Mary Queen of Scots flees to England and is imprisoned by Elizabeth I. Her baby son becomes James VI of Scotland
- 1587 CE — Mary Queen of Scots executed at Fotheringay Castle
- 1603 CE — The son of Mary Queen of Scots, James VI of Scotland, becomes James I of England when Queen Elizabeth I dies. This brings about the Union of the Crowns
- 1606 CE — John Smyth holds first Baptist meetings

- 1650 CE — George Fox founds the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
- 1692 CE — The Massacre of Glencoe - The Campbells murder the MacDonald clan
- 1707 CE — The Act of Union is passed and Scotland is formally united with England to form Great Britain
- 1730s CE — John Wesley establishes Methodism
- 1745 CE — Bonnie Prince Charlie - Prince Charles Edward Stuart - returns to Scotland to claim the British throne
- 1746 CE — Battle of Culloden where the Jacobite Scots are defeated and Bonnie Prince Charlie flees to France



ANCIENT HISTORY

Early Scotland

“The earliest recorded evidence of man in Scotland is dated to 8,500 B.C. A few thousand years before the birth of Christ, Neolithic men from Spain and France, makers of fire and herders of sheep and cattle, made their way to Scotland. It has been suggested that their descendants eventually merged with the Beaker people (who probably came from northern Europe), and this ethnic union made up the pre-Celtic stock of the northern lands.

Farming arrived in these islands around 4,000 BC (3-4,000 years after it started in Asia Minor) and as it replaced the nomadic way of life, the Orkneys became an island fortress with its many stone

settlements. By the time Rome became a world empire, the Orcadians were recognized by Rome as a sea power.

The great stone circles such as Sunhoney were probably being built around 3,300 BC, quite possibly around the same time as the arrival of the Beaker people from Northern and Central Europe. These newcomers were of a different ethnic group from the Iberian stock in northern Britain, as their skulls were much broader and round. Evidence of contact between these new people and their continental ancestors has been discovered in several excavations, and seems to indicate a flourishing trade between ancient Scotland and Europe. It is thought by many scholars that the union of these two peoples resulted in the creation of the pre-Celtic stock eventually loosely called Pict by the Roman and Cruithne by the Celts.

The Celts arrived in Britain around 500 B.C. A nomadic people whose culture spread from Eastern Europe to Iberia, they were sometimes described as fair headed, tall, fierce warriors by the Greeks. (since many Celts dyed their hair with lye, some historians believe that this is what the Greeks meant by fair-headed.) The Britannic Celts encountered by the Romans some 500 years later were usually described as dark haired and short. As a warrior culture, it was a Celtic army which nearly destroyed Rome in her early days and thus became an unforgivable enemy of the Latin empire. Because the first historical reference to the Picts appears in 297 C.E., when they are mentioned as enemies of Rome in the same context as the Hiberni (Irish), Scotii (Scots) and

Saxones (Saxons), many historians assume that the Picts were simply another Celtic tribe.

When the Romans came to Scotland, they often defeated the Picts in battle, but they never conquered them or the land on which they lived. By the third century C.E. the Roman general Agricola slaughtered a Pictish army led by the quoted Calgacus, the Swordsman (as many of 10,000 Picts may have been killed and 340 Romans). The Picts who fought Agricola at Mons Grampius were described as tall and fair headed. Agricola's legions halted near Aberargie in Perthshire, where they built a fort. They also met a new tribe of barbarians, whom the Romans described as swarthy and looking like the Iberians they had conquered in southern Spain. It was to retain control of the advances made by Agricola that several forts were built between Callander near Stirling up to Perth. Within thirty years of their establishment, the Picts had destroyed and burned the Roman forts, and according to Victorian legend, Rome's most famous legion, the Ninth, was sent north from Inchtuthil to perhaps relieve Pictish pressure. Legend has it that the Roman legion was massacred and forever lost in some unknown battle against the painted men of the north, although history shows us that the Ninth reappears later on in Judea.

It was Hadrian who decided that northern Scotland was not worth more legions, and so he pulled back the Empire to the Tyne and the Solway. There he built the famous wall which bears his name, seventy miles from sea to sea. Perhaps because of constant warfare and attacks against the wall, Antoninus Pius

advanced the frontier again to the thin Scottish neck between the Forth and Clyde. Thirty nine miles long and boasting twenty forts, it may have separated Pictish tribes on either sides of the wall. The wall was manned by the Second, Sixth and Twentieth Legions during its forty years. The Picts never ceased attacking it, and in fact the Romans lost it and regained it twice before finally giving it up by the end of the second century and retreating to Hadrian's Wall. We learn from the words of Cassius Dio that the northern tribes "crossed the wall, did a great deal of damage and killed a general and his troops."

In 208 C.E., the governor of Britain was forced to appeal to the Emperor for help against the barbarians, and Septimus Severus decided to come to Britain together with his sons. The old soldier took a Roman fleet loaded with 40,000 centurions into the Firth of Forth, landed a vengeful Roman army ashore, and although he defeated every Pictish army he met and beheaded every Pictish chief who failed to surrender, he failed to conquer the land which he called Caledonia, and he too was soon dead. However, the lesson grimly taught by the Roman and the decimation caused in the Pictish countryside must have been of such consequences that for nearly a century peace was kept in the land; the Romans manned Hadrian's Wall and the northern tattooed tribes stayed in their grim, brooding hills north of it.

The fourth century erupted in warfare again and in 305 C.E. the Romans fought against "Caledones and other Picts." The northern tribes were now called "Picts" by their enemies, and in the south,

Scots, Saxons and Franks also added to the woes of Rome by raiding southern Britain. In 343 C.E. Constans started a campaign against the Picts and probably entered into a truce with them. In 360, Ammanius Marcellus stated that the "Picts were now two peoples - the Dicalydones and Verturiones." That same year, the truce was broken and the Picts, allied with the Scots of Ireland, poured through the wall into northern England and were repulsed back. They kept hammering at the wall, and may have in fact joined in a multi-tribal alliance against Rome. In 382-3, allied with the Scots they again invaded England, and this time the damage done to the wall and its forts was never repaired, although the invaders are driven back by Magnus Maximus. The end of the century brought yet another Pictish invasion, this time met by the great Roman general Stilicho himself, who also managed to send the great Irish hero Niall of the Nine Hostages scampering back to Ireland.

By 409 the Roman hold on Britain was slipping away, and Britons were told to defend themselves. About this time the Celtic Gaelic tribe of Scots began settling in the southwest of Scotland, creating the kingdom of Dalriada in Argyll (Oir Ghaedhil or Eastern Gaels). Out of the need to protect themselves from the barbaric Pictish and Scottish hordes, a new kingdom was created by the Britons of Strathclyde, who spoke a Celtic tongue much like their cousins in Wales. By 450 the Picts were pouring into the south again, and the monk Gildas called them the "foul hordes of Scots and Picts, like dark throngs of worms who wriggle out of narrow fissures in the rock when the sun is high and the weather

grows warm." This is the last time we hear of the Picts and Scots fighting as allies, and if we take Gildas literally, the Scots returned to Ireland around this time. In 461, St. Patrick died, but Christianity was well spread in Ireland.”⁸



ARRIVAL OF CHRISTIAN INFLUENCES

“No one knows precisely when and how the Christian faith came to Britain. We do know that when Augustine⁹ arrived at Canterbury in 597, sent from Rome to become the first Bishop of that city, he encountered a well-established and thriving native church. Archaeological evidence indicates that Christians were among the members of the Roman legions and citizenry who made their home in Britain. Those early Christians, who may have come to Britain as early as the second or third century, spread the faith particularly in the small urban centers that had developed with the Romans’ arrival.”¹⁰

⁸ This extended quote (which I have edited) is from an online blog-post by Sandy Stevenson. To see the original post in its entirety as well as other helpful information about visiting and touring Scotland go to <http://www.visitdunkeld.com/early-scotland.htm>

⁹ n.b. This is not Saint Augustine of Hippo who is dead already. Rather this is a benedictine monk selected by Pope Gregory the Great in 595 to take a mission to Britain for the purpose of converting the king. This Augustine is considered “apostle to the English,” and founder of the English church. (PHL)

¹⁰ From: [Holy Companions - spiritual practices from the Celtic saints](#) by Earle & Maddox. p.5

Friday, September 25

The day of departure

Itinerary

Today we begin our travel-pilgrimage which starts the moment we cross over the threshold of our home. See the Florilegium entry below for more about thresholds and sacred travel.

Place

The “place” of



the airport,



or the taxi we take,



or the TSA line,



or the seat mate near us on the plane is where we are invited to begin living out the meaning of pilgrimage. Are our interactions with those we meet radiant with the love of Christ? Are we kind, and patient, and tolerant of the foibles of others? Will we silently pray for the parents of the small child who worry about a tantrum during the flight? It is not *just* the holy-places of Lindisfarne and Iona where we can encounter the thin veil which separates the sacred from the profane — but all along the way of our journey we can discover the sacred in whatever place we find ourselves. Remember Jean Pierre de Caussade’s writings about the holiness of just what is — of receiving the moments of our day as gifts uniquely able to connect us to God if we will receive them.¹¹

¹¹ Jean Pierre de Caussade, *Abandonment to Divine Providence*.

Saint of the Day — St. Christopher (Menas), Patron Saint of travel



According to the legendary account of his life Christopher was initially called Reprobos. He was a Canaanite, 7.5 feet tall and with a fearsome face. While serving the king of Canaan, he took it into his head to go and serve "the greatest king there was". He went to the king who was reputed to be the greatest, but one day he saw the king cross himself at the

mention of the devil. On thus learning that the king feared the devil, he departed to look for the devil. He came across a band of marauders, one of whom declared himself to be the devil, so Christopher decided to serve him. But when he saw his new master avoid a wayside cross and found out that the devil feared Christ, he left him and enquired from people where to find Christ. He met a hermit who instructed him in the Christian faith. Christopher asked him how he could serve Christ. When the hermit suggested fasting and prayer, Christopher replied that he was unable to perform that service. The hermit then suggested that because of his size and strength Christopher could serve Christ by assisting people to cross a dangerous river, where they were perishing in the attempt. The hermit promised that this service would be pleasing to Christ.

After Christopher had performed this service for some time, a little child asked him to take him across the river. During the crossing, the river became swollen and the child seemed as heavy as lead, so much that Christopher could scarcely carry him and found himself in great difficulty. When he finally reached the other side, he said to the child: "You have put me in the greatest danger. I do not think the whole world could have been as heavy on my shoulders as you were." The child replied: "You had on your shoulders not only the whole world but Him who made it. I am Christ your king,

whom you are serving by this work." The child then vanished.¹²

Saint Christopher is patron saint of travel in both the Eastern Church (St. Menas) and Western church (St. Christopher). "Christopher" means Christ-bearer. It was likely a general title given to Saint Menas and then the title became confused in the West as a proper name. As we travel it is good for us to consider that we, too, are Christ-bearers during this pilgrimage.

PRAYER

I give thanks for Saint Christopher whose service to travelers and willingness to bear the weight of the whole world is an inspiration. May I bear Christ-like graces to all I meet today.

Suggested Contemplative Practices

✙ As you arise on the day of departure it is not too early to be especially disciplined in your prayer-life. The daily offices are posted for you in the app and we commend them to you (Vigils, Lauds, Midday, Vespers, Compline).

✙ Keeping a journal during pilgrimage is a good practice. You may write in it your prayers, thoughts, wonderments, and hopes. The list of prompts below is merely suggestive:

☯ What do you hope from this pilgrimage? What change in yourself do you long for?

¹² Information about St. Christopher is taken from the Wikipedia entry on the saint.



What portions of your life do you need to leave behind as you depart? This can be worries about things you cannot change while away, or habits you will suspend for the duration of the pilgrimage.



Read and contemplate one or more of the Psalms of Ascent (traditionally ascribed as Psalms for Pilgrims): Psalms 120-134.

PHOTOGRAPHY PROMPT:

While opportunities won't exist to explore with your camera, think about what attracts you when you are in the natural world. What catches your eye? To what are you drawn? Can you explain why? How do the things that catch your eye make you feel? Can these things be photographed?

JOURNAL PROMPT:

What might be calling you to explore during the next few weeks? Sit quietly, emptying your mind of the thoughts and distractions of travel. Listen to what rises up, seeking your attention for the time of pilgrimage.

Florilegium¹³

We depart on our pilgrimage today. This is a pilgrimage of prayer and fellowship as we visit Edinburgh, Lindisfarne, Oban, and Iona.

We are crossing over the threshold of our home as we leave on pilgrimage. Let us give thought to all we are leaving behind. There will be things we entrust to others while away, there will be things we intentionally leave behind (work, worries, bad habits), and there will be things and people we leave with some measure of regret and sadness. Let us not leave our home to set out on this journey of the Spirit without first honestly making an inventory of what our home means to us and considering what it means to leave it.

✠ After feeling the yearning to become a pilgrim;

✠ after prayerfully exploring the nature and timing of the call to “go;”

✠ after planning and preparing ourselves for the time away with God and one another;

✠ inevitably we arrive at the moment when we must depart.

¹³ Florilegium is the Medieval Latin word for bouquet, or more literally flowers (*flos, flor-*) which are gathered (*legere*). The word florilegium was used to refer to a compilation of writings, often religious or philosophical. These florilegium are literary flowers—beautiful words/prayers I have gathered. — PHL.

With what joy and eager anticipation must the day of departure begin?! The word “departure” has an etymological and figurative connection to death. Think of the phrase “dearly departed,” for example. See below Phil Cousineau’s thoughts on threshold:

“The threshold is more than an architectural detail; it is a mythological image that evokes the spirit of resistance we must pass through on our risky journey from all we've known to all that's unknown. It is the first step toward renewal. The truth of the image is compressed into the word. Threshold comes from threshing, what was done to separate the seed from the chaff right on the entrance to the farmhouses. Since at least Roman times, the threshold is “the slab or bar at the main doorway that prevents water or mud flowing into the house.” The threshold divides the inside from the outside, the sacred from the profane, the past from the future. Crossing over means confronting the guardian at the gate, the personification of the forces trying to keep us in the village, the ordinary world. The sheer ferociousness of those guardians, such as the ones at the Todai-ji Temple in Nara, Japan, are also personifications of our fear as we anticipate leaving on a meaningful journey. A vacation is easy to embark upon; everything has been laid out for us to have a predictable, comfortable, and reassuring holiday. But a pilgrimage is different; we are actually beckoning to the darkness in our lives. The fear is real... So too with powerful and soulful travel. It seizes your imagination, but the way through to the sacred

moment can also be through deep anxiety about the unknown. That possibility produces fear in many travelers, even at the threshold of their own door before leaving home. The lion's roar, the fire of the dragon, the master's hand slap— all are different ways of expressing the same thing: the call to wake up.”¹⁴

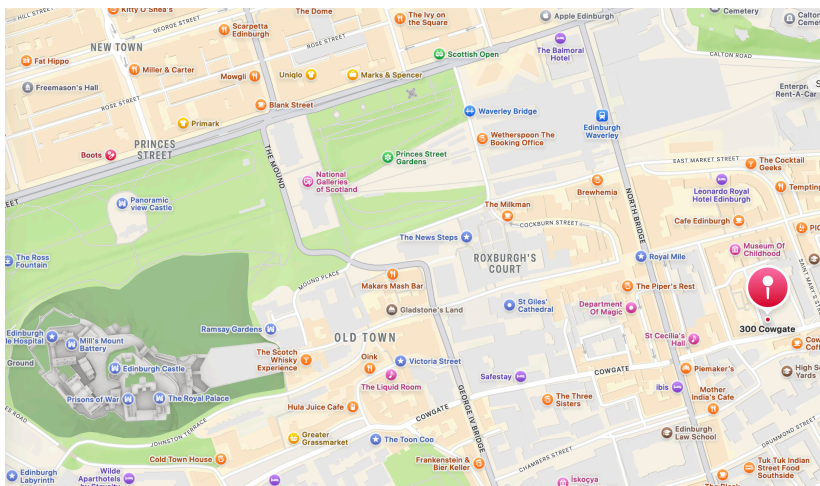
As we cross the threshold and enter into the liminal space which this travel is meant to open up to us, we do well to wonder what in us is meant to die and what in us is meant to come to renewed and reinvigorated life. To depart on the spiritual odyssey which is a pilgrimage is to intentionally leave “your father’s house and your country and your kindred and go to the place I will show you.” Like Abram and Sarai of old, our departure is meant to bring us blessings, but we must never forget that ultimately it is meant to make us a blessing to the whole world - “....and in you all the people of the world will be blessed.”¹⁵

¹⁴ Cousineau, Phil. *The Art of Pilgrimage: The Seeker's Guide to Making Travel Sacred* (pp. 84-85). Red Wheel Weiser.

¹⁵ Genesis 12:1-4

Saturday, September 26

Arrival Day in Edinburgh



Itinerary

The location of the **Holiday Inn Express** at 300 Cowgate is indicated on this close-up of the area around Old Town Edinburgh.

Place

Edinburgh Castle (atop the hill) is shown on the left of the map. St. Margaret's chapel is within the Edinburgh castle complex. St. Giles Cathedral is near the center of the map. We will worship at St. Giles tomorrow. There are lots of shops along the Royal Mile (just a block North of Cowgate).

Suggested Contemplative Practices

It is good to be gentle with ourselves. Feel free to rest today and recover from your travels.

Florilegium

“Technical civilization is man’s [sic] conquest of space. It is a triumph frequently achieved by sacrificing an essential ingredient of existence, namely, Time. In technical civilization, we expend time to gain space. To enhance our power in the world of space is our main objective. Yet to have more does not mean to be more. The Power we attain in the world ends abruptly at the borderline of time. Time is the heart of existence.”

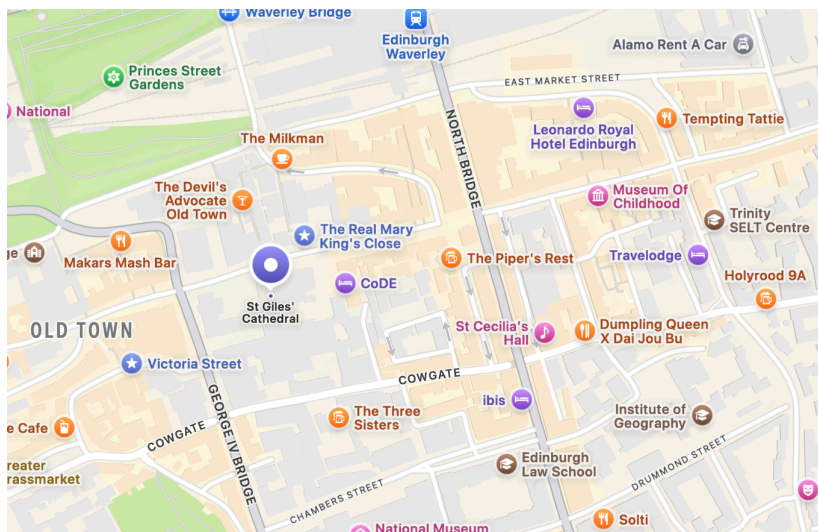
[Heschel, p.3 - prologue to *The Sabbath*.]

He [sic] who wants to enter into the holiness of the day must first lay down the profanity of clattering commerce, of being yoked to toil. He must go away from the screech of dissonant days, from the nervousness and fury of acquisitiveness and the betrayal of embezzling his own life. He must say farewell to (work) and learn to understand that the world has already been created and will survive without the help of man. Six days a week we wrestle with the world, wringing profit from the earth; on the Sabbath we especially care for the seed of eternity planted in the soul.”

[Heschel, p.13 *The Sabbath*.]

Sunday, September 27

FREE DAY IN EDINBURGH



Itinerary / Schedule

We will worship at St. Giles Cathedral and then have the balance of the day to explore this amazing city. *Feel free to choose whichever of these services will best bless you.*

The 9:30 AM is with choir, sermon, and holy communion

The 11:00 AM service is with choir and sermon

Opening Dinner is at **5:30 PM** at
Howies, 10-14 Victoria Street

PLACE



St Giles' Cathedral, also known as the High Kirk of Edinburgh, is the principal place of worship of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh. Its distinctive crown steeple is a prominent feature of the city skyline. The church has been one of Edinburgh's religious focal points for approximately 900 years. The present church dates from the late 14th century, though it was extensively restored in the 19th century. Today it is sometimes regarded as the "Mother Church of Presbyterianism". The cathedral is dedicated to Saint Giles, who is the patron saint of Edinburgh, as well as of cripples and lepers, and was a very popular saint in the Middle Ages. It is the Church of Scotland parish church for part of Edinburgh's Old Town.

The oldest parts of the building are four massive central pillars, often said to date from 1124, although there is very little evidence to this effect. In 1385 the building suffered a fire and was rebuilt in the subsequent years. Much

of the current interior dates from this period. Over the years many chapels, referred to as 'aIslands', were added, greatly enlarging the church and leaving it rather irregular in plan. In 1466 St Giles was established as a collegiate church. In response to this raising of status, the lantern tower was added around 1490, and the chancel ceiling raised, vaulted and a clerestory installed. By the middle of the 16th century, immediately before the Reformation arrived in Scotland, there were about fifty side altars in the church, some of which were paid for by the city's trade incorporations and dedicated to their patron saints.

At the height of the Scottish Reformation the Protestant leader and firebrand John Knox was chosen minister at St Giles by Edinburgh Town Council and installed on 7 July 1559. A 19th-century stained glass window in the south wall of the church shows him delivering the funeral sermon for the Regent Moray in 1570. The reformer was buried in the kirkyard of St Giles on 24 November 1572 in the presence of the Regent Morton who, at his graveside, uttered the words, "There lies one who neither feared nor flattered any flesh". A bronze statue of Knox cast in 1904 stands in the north aIsland.

On the day in 1707 when the Treaty of Union was signed to merge the Parliament of Scotland with the Parliament of England and create the Kingdom of Great Britain, the bells of St Giles were played to the tune *Why should I be so sad on my wedding day?*

Stained glass

In the later 19th century, stained glass began to be put into the windows which had been largely clear or plain since the Reformation. This was a radical move in a Presbyterian church where such decorations were regarded with great suspicion. They were finally allowed on the basis that they illustrated Bible stories and were as such an aid to teaching, and not flippant decoration, or worse still perceived idolatry. Only a small number of windows were completed as part of the 19th-century restoration, but this began a process that resulted in the vast majority of windows containing stained glass by the middle of the 20th century. The windows were planned to form a continuous narrative starting in the north-east corner and finishing on the north-west side. One of the last windows of this plan depicts Saint Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland, holding his cross with, on either side of him, Saint Columba and King David I. Saint Andrew wears a flowing peacock-blue cassock and his features are modeled after prominent Edinburgh physician James Jamieson. Unusually, this window was funded by a grateful patient who insisted that Saint Andrew bear the features of the doctor. Below Saint Andrew are depicted Saint Giles, and Saint Cuthbert.¹⁶

¹⁶ Entry on St. Giles Cathedral is from Wikipedia.

SAINT OF THE DAY — MARGARET



Born: 1047 — Died: 1093

Canonized: 1250

Throughout her life Margaret attended to charitable works, serving orphans and the poor every day before she ate, and washing the feet of the poor in imitation of Christ. She kept Vigil, nightly arising at midnight to pray.

Margaret also instigated the restoration of the monastery at Iona in 1072. She is also known to have been an intercessor for the release of fellow English exiles, forced into serfdom by conquest. In her private

life, Margaret was as devout as she was in her public duties, spending much of her time in prayer and devotional reading.

Turgot: a priest, her guide and confessor, wrote The Life of Saint Margaret.

Psalm 18:2 “The Lord is my rock, my fortress.”

“It seems fitting that here in St. Margaret’s Chapel at the heart of Edinburgh Castle, the stained-glass window depicting Saint Margaret should be right next to the one honoring Saint Columba. A strong tradition links Saint Margaret with Iona: when the Western Isles, for many years in the hands of Norway, came under Malcolm’s protection in 1072, Queen Margaret sent money to restore the monastery there from Viking depredations. I feel sure that Columba and Margaret, although separated by several turbulent centuries and hailing from two different cultures, would have recognized instantly in each other a kindred love of God and the church. In both of them, great personal sanctity was allied with persuasive charm and formidable organizational ability; both are rightly revered as jewels in Scotland’s Christian crown.”¹⁷

CONNECTIONS TO THE PILGRIM’S COMPASS

Saint Margaret had her share of **struggles** and **wounds**. In reading Turgot’s Life of Saint Margaret we

¹⁷ Deborah & David Douglas, *Pilgrims in the Kingdom - Travels in Christian Britain* (Nashville: Upper Room, 2004) p. 55

learn that when the beautiful Margaret was a young princess she was fleeing from The Norman invasion in Saxony (her home) when she was shipwrecked off the coast of Scotland. She and her entourage were “rescued” by the barbarian king Malcolm (think of Shakespeare’s *MacBeth*). Within a year he had taken her as his bride. She bore him eight children, and raised them well. She died at age 46. We have every reason to believe that Margaret’s deep devotion to God and daily acts of piety (she faithfully prayed the Daily Offices) and mercy (she was a well-loved benefactor of the poor), did much to bring Christianity to the court and country controlled by Malcolm. When in 1250 she was canonized as a Saint of the church, it must be noted that she was one of the very few female Saints who was neither a virgin nor a widow. She was a mother.

It leaves us to wonder as pilgrims about the unexpected calamities of this life which leave us “shipwrecked” and forever placed upon a path different from the one we had previously envisioned. I am certain that Margaret did not dream of being wed to an illiterate barbarian King, but her new circumstance, as unexpected as it was, also provided new possibilities for her to live out her vocation as a child of God. She became, in the very best sense of the word, an Apostle to the people of Malcolm’s kingdom and a great benefactor of the companions of God throughout the region. She has a series of **names**, Margaret “pearl”, Saxon princess, Queen, Child of God, Saint.

SUGGESTED CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICES



The discernment part of your pilgrimage will be greatly aided by the discipline of journaling. Walter Brueggemann used to admonish his students when studying scripture, “God is in the details!” The same is true for pilgrimage. God is in the quotidian moments of the day; the little pieces of the journey that are often overlooked and disregarded. A daily discipline of journaling can help you to remain alert, and can also serve as a record of the encounters, struggles, wounds, and newness which are happening as we sojourn together. Keep a journaling discipline. It will not only bless you while you are on pilgrimage — it will bless you years later when you recall what God was doing with you. Ask questions like:

“Where did I encounter God today?”

“Where did I struggle . . . and why do I think I struggled?”

“Was I bewildered? Was I wounded? Did I feel weak?” Spend time in your journal exploring those moments.

“Was I blessed with newness? A new sense of my identity? A new way of seeing myself, my the world, and my fellow pilgrims?”

“When might I have glorified God better by keeping silence than by speaking?”



If it is at all possible for you to do it — spending time in Saint Margaret’s Chapel atop the stony crag upon which you find Edinburgh Castle is a good thing to do. You will need to pay for entry into

the Castle complex and that may be more than you want to do just to spend time in the Chapel, but I (Paul) can tell you from experience, that the very small and simple chapel is beautiful and while the current structure dates from years later than Margaret's life, we have good reason to believe that it is on the same spot where she worshipped and prayed seven times daily. If you happen to catch a moment when there are fewer tourists popping in and out of the small enclosure, that is a blessing, but even if it is a busy time, you can still sense the beauty and holiness of the little chapel. The half-hour I spent there in 2015 was among my favorite times of prayer during the whole pilgrimage that year. You may want to practice *Lectio Divina* on the Psalm passage associated with Saint Margaret: Psalm 18:2 "The Lord is my rock, my fortress."



St. Giles cathedral is one of the most beautiful Reformed worship spaces in the world and it is well-worth an hour or two of your time to visit and to find a quiet spot and sit in prayer. Prayer ideas:



Pray for the tourists and pilgrims you see walking through the cathedral.



Pray that you keep a holy pilgrimage during the coming weeks, by prayer, devotion, kindness to friends and strangers, and attentiveness to the presence of God with you on the journey.



Pray your thanksgiving for the blessing of being able to go on pilgrimage, for the gift of fellow pilgrims, for the faith bequeathed to you down through the ages, for the witness of the

lives of the Saints who show you what your discipleship might be.



Light a candle as a votive of your intentions to keep a holy pilgrimage.

Journal prompt:

As you visited ancient, holy places today (Saint Giles Cathedral, Margaret's Chapel), what stirred in your soul? What moved you?

FLORILEGIUM

The following poem is about pilgrims. They are not named as such, but the Magi were on a journey in search God. A journey which led them to leave the comforts of home in search of what exactly? T.S. Eliot gives us a vivid narrative in the voice of one of the Magi. The Magi wonders about birth and death. Pilgrimage is a discipline meant to bring to birth newness and to put to death portions of our life which are not helpful. The sacrament of baptism holds these same tensions within it, dying with Christ in order that we may be raised with him. What in you needs to die? What is in the process of being born in you?

Journey of the Magi

‘A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey:
The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter.’
And the camels galled, sore-footed, refractory,

Lying down in the melting snow.
There were times we regretted
The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.
Then the camel men cursing and grumbling
And running away, and wanting their liquor
and women,
And the night-fires going out, and the lack of
shelters,
And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly
And the villages dirty and charging high prices:
A hard time we had of it.
At the end we preferred to travel all night,
Sleeping in snatches,
With the voices singing in our ears, saying
That this was all folly.

Then at dawn we came down to a temperate
valley,
Wet, below the snow line, smelling of
vegetation;
With a running stream and a water-mill beating
the darkness,
And three trees on the low sky,
And an old white horse galloped away in the
meadow.
Then we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over
the lintel,

Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of
silver,
And feet kicking the empty wine-skins.
But there was no information, and so we
continued
And arrived at evening, not a moment too soon
Finding the place; it was (you may say)
satisfactory.

All this was a long time ago, I remember,
And I would do it again, but set down
This set down
This: were we led all that way for
Birth or Death? There was a Birth, certainly,
We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth
and death,
But had thought they were different; this Birth
was
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our
death.
We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
But no longer at ease here, in the old
dispensation,
With an alien people clutching their gods.
I should be glad of another death.¹⁸

¹⁸ *Journey of the Magi*, T.S. Eliot.

Monday, September 28

TRAVEL TO HOLY ISLAND



Itinerary

Our breakfast may need to be taken *early* today depending on the arrival of the bus.

Our bus will pick us up at **8:30 AM** at a location TBD near the Holiday Inn. We drive straight to Holy Island to begin our stay at Lindisfarne. While on Holy Island we will have meals at the Manor House on this schedule:

Breakfast — You will need to eat early at bus departs at 8:30.

Dinner — 5:30 PM

Place — Lothian / Northumbria / Holy island

Lothian is a region of the Scottish Lowlands, lying between the southern shore of the Firth of Forth and the Lammermuir Hills. Edinburgh is in the province. This region has been the border between English, Scottish, Pict, and Angle influence over the centuries. As such it has seen the ebb and flow of

earthly dynasties and has been impacted by the conflicts of kings and empires. It remains a border-region of southern Scotland and abuts Northumbria the northern-most part of England in the region. Holy Island is just south of the border with England.

Holy Island itself is daily impacted by the ebb and flow of the tides. It is connected to the mainland twice daily at low-tide — and is an island twice daily at high-tide. What might this region through which we travel, and this island which is our destination teach us if we were to reflect on ebb & flow, connection and isolation? This region has for at least 1400 years been at the edge of nations — a borderline place between one kingdom and another. Our contemplative pilgrimage is meant to provide us times when we are joined together and times when we are allowed the luxury of being apart from community in solitude with God. Each day, each of us will need to discern what is needed. Shall you find an *anam cara/anamchairde* [spiritual friend(s)] and be united in Christian conversation? Or will you seek to spend time alone with God? You may largely do what blesses you. Only give consideration to those who may need something other than what you need.

Each day we will have times of scheduled togetherness as a company of pilgrims. These are typically around small-group activities. Apart from those scheduled times you may seek solitude, or the company of fellow pilgrims as your soul guides you. It is fitting that our pilgrimage — which itself is a journey to the edges of what we know — begins in this geography of transition between Scotland & England; between land and sea.

Marmion

*“The tide now its flood-mark gain,
And girdled in the Saint’s domain:
For, with the flow and ebb its style
Varies from continent to isle;
Dry shod o’er sands, twice every day,
The pilgrims to the shrine find their
way;
Twice every day, the waves efface
of staves and sandall’d feet the trace.”*¹⁹

Saint of the Day — Cormac



Born: Around 590 in Ireland

Died: 31 August 651

Biographer was Venerable Bede (673-735)

¹⁹ Sir Walter Scott — *Marmion* IX

St. Cormac, Abbot, 6th century. St. Cormac was another Irish saint. From his early youth he followed a monastic life, and eventually became a disciple of St. Columba. In after years he became Abbot of Dearthagh, now known as Durrow, in King's County. This charge he resigned in order to give himself to missionary life. He had always been of a brave and enterprising nature, and more than once in his missionary career his zeal led him to venture on the high seas, in quest of some pagan land where he might preach the Faith, or of some desert region where he might live in closer communion with God.

In one of his journeys he visited St. Columba at Iona, and afterwards sailed as far as the Orkneys, where the pagan people were minded to put him to death. But one of the chiefs had long before made a solemn promise to St. Columba, who had seen in vision the coming of Cormac to the islands and his threatened death, that no harm should happen to him in the Orkneys. This intervention was successful. Neither the place nor time of St. Cormac's death is known with any certainty, but an ancient Irish tradition asserts that he returned to Durrow and was buried there. A fragment still exists of the "Crozier of Durrow", which is considered to be the most ancient relic of its kind now extant. It is believed to have belonged to the founder of Durrow, the great Columba, and to have been given by him to his disciple, Cormac.²⁰

²⁰ Barrett, Michael. *A Calendar of Scottish Saints*.

Suggested Contemplative Practices

Photography prompt:

This is another travel day, this time on a bus through beautiful countryside. You will have an opportunity to take a short walk around the village or toward the water once we settle in.

Journal prompt:

During the journey to the holy island of Lindisfarne, capture your thoughts on anticipation. What does your first glimpse of Holy Island stir within you as you embark on this pilgrimage?

Florilegium — God's Grandeur

THE WORLD is charged with the grandeur of
God.

It will flame out, like shining from shook foil,

It gathers to a greatness like the ooze of oil

Crushed. Why do men then now not reck His
rod?

Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;

And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared
with toil;

And wears man's smudge, and shares man's
smell; the soil

Is bare now, nor can foot feel being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;

There lives the dearest freshness deep down
things;

And though the last lights from the black west
went,

Oh, morning at the brown brink eastwards
springs

Because the Holy Ghost over the bent

World broods with warm breast, and with, ah,
bright wings.²¹

²¹ *God's Grandeur* By Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844–1889).

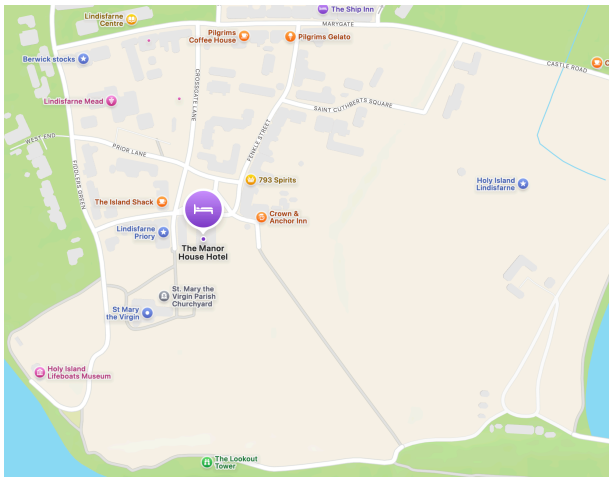
Tuesday, September 29

HOLY ISLAND



Itinerary

We are staying at the Manor house.



Place — Saint Cuthbert's Island



The little island which is reachable at low tide (near the main town of Lindisfarne) and which has a cross affixed is “Cuthbert’s Island.” There you can find the foundation stones of a small building. This island is a place where, when Cuthbert was Prior of Holy Island, he would go for solitude.

Busyness and distraction are impediments to a life of prayer, and Cuthbert adopted the very simple, but needful, discipline of fleeing from his many duties to regularly spend time with God and with God alone.

In 2024 when I completed the pilgrimage walking pilgrimage of Saint Cuthbert’s Way (from Melrose to Lindisfarne) I arose and went to worship the next morning. The rector of St. Mary’s church

offered a homily which I am sure was full of wisdom, but early on she said, **“We are called to respond to God, not just in words and deeds, but in prayer and in silence.”** Those words struck me with such force that I wrote them on my bulletin and spent the remainder of the service contemplating how they might change my own discipleship.

Even when we are on pilgrimage it is easy for us to remain busy and distracted. How will you find a place to be with God and with God alone? *How will you balance your life of words and deeds with a life of prayer and of silence?*

Saint of the Day — Aidan



King Oswald of Northumbria requested that a bishop be sent to help convert his pagan subjects. Cormac [a monk selected to lead from among the brothers at Iona] and a select group of monks were sent to Northumbria to “conquer” the pagan warriors for Christ. It seemed wise to send strong-willed and hard men to attempt this work of conversion among a strong-willed and warrior-clan. But within the year Cormac and his compatriots had returned to Iona in defeat - complaining that the Northumbrians were too coarse and too violent a culture to accept the tenants of

the faith. Aidan, on hearing the many complaints of Cormac and his fellow monks, suggested that they had been too hard - too dogmatic in their approach. The pagans needed to be fed the “milk” of a simple faith until they were ready for more substantive theology.

Though Aidan was known for his gentleness and mild disposition, the abbot Segene perceived that it might be the right choice to send the meek and mild, as replacements for the strong and bold. He instructed Aidan to gather a group of fellow monks, made Aidan bishop of Northumbria, and sent him back to attempt a second time to win the region for Christ.

“Aidan chose men who were skilled at teaching and able to set up a new monastery. They needed practical skills as well as intellectual ones. But above all he chose men of prayer. If they were going to win over a kingdom to God, the foundations had to be strong, and there was no foundation to build on but God alone. If they were to talk about God to others they had to know God personally themselves. It was no use knowing the words if they did not have a living relationship with the Master.”²²

- ✚ Aidan arrived in Northumbria in 635
- ✚ Aidan made his headquarters on Lindisfarne
- ✚ First bishop and abbot of Lindisfarne
- ✚ True apostle to England whose missionary outreach in Northumbria had a lasting effect on the conversion of the Saxons

²² *Aidan, Bede, Cuthbert: three inspirational saints* by David Adam p.29.

✚ Statue of Aidan at Lindisfarne shows Aidan with the torch of faith he brought to that part of England

Aidan showed a passionate love of God. He was good tempered — with humility, warmth, and gentleness. He was known for his grace, discretion, and love of the poor:

“[King Oswin] had given Bishop Aiden a very fine horse, in order that he could ride whenever he had to cross a river or undertake any difficult or urgent journey, although the bishop ordinarily traveled on foot. Not long afterwards, when a poor man met the bishop and asked for alms, the bishop immediately dismounted and ordered the horse with all its royal trappings to be given to the beggar; for he was most compassionate, a protector of the poor and a father of the wretched. When this action came to the King’s ears, he asked the bishop as they were going into dine: ‘My Lord Bishop, why did you give away the royal horse which was necessary for your own use? Have we not many less valuable horses or other belongings which would have been good enough for beggars, without giving away a horse that I had specially selected for your personal use?’ The bishop at once answered, ‘What are you saying, Your Majesty? Is this child of a mare more valuable to you than this child of God?’ At this they went into dinner, and the bishop sat down in his place; But the king, who had come in from hunting, stood warming himself by the fire with his attendants. As he stood by the fire, the king

turned over in his mind what the bishop had said; then suddenly unbuckling his sword and handing it to a servant, he impulsively knelt at the bishop's feet and begged his forgiveness saying: 'I will not refer to this matter agin, nor will I inquire how much of our bounty you give away to God's children.' The bishop was deeply moved, and immediately stood up and raised him to his feet, assuring him of his high regard and begging him to sit down to his food without regrets."²³



Leave me alone with God

as much as may be.

As the tide draws the waters close in upon the shore,

Make me an island, set apart,

alone with you, God, holy to you.

Then with the turning of the tide

*prepare me to carry your presence to the busy world
beyond,*

the world that rushes in on me

till the waters come again and fold me back to you.

— St. Aidan of Lindisfarne²⁴

²³ *The Venerable Bede, Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (London: Penguin Classics, 1955) p. 166.

²⁴ Paintner, Christine Valters. *Water, Wind, Earth, and Fire: The Christian Practice of Praying with the Elements* (pp. 79-80).

Suggested Contemplative Practices

✠ “Among other evidences of holy life [Aidan] gave his clergy an inspiring example . . . and the highest recommendation of his teaching to all was that he and his followers lived as they taught. He never sought or cared for any world possessions, and loved to give away to the poor who chanced to meet him whatever he received from kings or wealthy folk.”²⁵

Journal about Aidan’s generosity — his ability to freely and joyfully give away what had been given to him. Are there parsimonious inclinations in you which cripple your efforts to be generous and joyful in giving of yourself, your time, and/or your wealth? What worldly possessions hinder you from the path of joyful and obedient discipleship? Where have you been successful in showing gracious generosity?



5P EXERCISE ²⁶

Pray

Pray slowly and attentively:

*Lord, open my ears to your call,
make me attentive to you.*

*Open my eyes to your presence,
make me aware of you. Open my heart to your love*

²⁵ The Venerable Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (London: Penguin Classics, 1955) p. 150.

²⁶ David Adam from *A Desert in the Ocean* pp.21-23.

The 5P Exercise

A favorite exercise of mine is the 5P exercise. I use this as a way of creating space and waiting upon my God. It is called 5P because each part of the exercise begins with an action starting with the letter P:

Pause, Presence, Picture, Ponder, Promise

PAUSE

It is important to stop and let go of what you are doing. Give yourself a break from activity and justification by works. Let go and let God have a chance to speak. Remember God speaks most to those who can keep silent. Let the stopping be not only of words and actions; let it be a stilling of your heart, mind and body. Do a check over your body, is it relaxed? Let go of all tension out of your hands, feet, neck, be still and at ease. Let you mind relax; you may need a word or a sentence to help you do this.

Say quietly, 'Come, Lord God, I am open to you', and repeat it with each breath.

Breathe deeply...slowly...comfortably.

'Come, Lord, I am open to you.'

Be still...

PRESENCE

Know that God is with you and speaks to you

This is the reason for creating this space, not for knowledge, not even for peace, or for love, but for God himself who comes to you. (No doubt you will then receive his gifts also.) God is with you. Open yourself to the presence. Seek to be aware of the great mystery of

God that is about you. God will not force himself upon you, you need to open to him. You cannot imagine the Presence or create him. You cannot imagine the Presence or create it, for it is there, but you can open your life to him.

Try and relax in the Presence as you would in the sun on a nice day. You can say quietly: ‘You Lord are... You Lord are here... You Lord are with me... You Lord are seeking me... You Lord are... You Lord... You. I open myself to you.

PICTURE

Read Genesis 12.1-9. Picture the calling of this old man. Abram and his wife Sarai were elderly. Abram was at the stage when most people would think their time of adventure was well over; he was 75. He was well settled, comfortable, prosperous. He had reasonable security and safety in his home surroundings. From all this God called Abram, to leave his safety and comfort and to move into the unknown. No doubt Sarai had something to say. Try and picture this old couple setting out into the unknown with hearts of faith.

PONDER

Think how you would have reacted to such a call. Do you in fact hear God’s call today? By faith Abraham when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going (Hebrews 11.8).

Sometimes the call is not clear. It is expressed only in a discontent with the present, with the awareness that life and our surroundings, if not the world, could be better

than they are. There is always an immediacy about the call; once heard it should not be put off. We are asked to respond like Isaiah and say, ‘Here am I, Lord, send me.’ There is a need to know that the call comes from beyond us; it is God’s call and God’s will, not just a whim or a desire of our own. Seek to discover what Jesus meant when he said, ‘You did not choose me, no, I chose you’ (John 15.16). This can be the wonderful beginning of an exciting adventure.

PROMISE

Those whom God calls he sends. The call to move out and adventure is of its nature exciting. Too often after the call nothing happens. Promise to keep at least a little of each day open to God and say each day, ‘Here I am, Lord, send me.’

Prayer of abandonment²⁷

*Father, I abandon myself into your hands;
do with me what you will.*

*Whatever you may do, I thank you;
I am ready for all, I accept all.*

*Let only your will be done in me,
and in all your creatures.*

I wish for no more than this, O Lord.

*Into your hands I commend my soul;
I offer it to you with all the love of my heart,
for I love you, Lord,*

²⁷ Charles De Foucault — a French priest, hermit, and missionary beatified by Pope Francis in 2022.

*and so need to give myself,
to surrender myself into your hands,
without reserve and with boundless confidence.
For you are my Father.*

Photography Prompt: What image might your camera capture that illustrates the places of transition: earth to sky, water to earth, sacred to profane, light to darkness, Earth to galaxy?

Journal prompt:

Aidan was able to freely and joyfully give away what had been given to him. Journal about what might cripple your efforts to be generous and joyful in giving of yourself, your time, and/or your wealth. Where have you been successful in showing gracious generosity of time, talent, and resources?

Florilegium — Islands — Holy Island and St. Cuthbert's Island

Thinking about islands on our pilgrimage brings to mind the things Merton writes in the prologue to his book *No Man Is An Island*. Merton is talking about the human drive to find and hold meaning. He uses exclusive language but I hope you can forgive him that habit of his time.

“No Man Is an Island

No matter how ruined man and his
world may seem to be, and no matter how

terrible man's despair may become, as long as he continues to be a man his very humanity continues to tell him that life has a meaning. That, indeed, is one reason why man tends to rebel against himself. If he could without effort see what the meaning of life is, and if he could fulfill his ultimate purpose without trouble, he would never question the fact that life is well worth living. Or if he saw at once that life had no purpose and no meaning, the question would never arise. In either case, man would not be capable of finding himself so much of a problem.

Our life, as individual persons and as members of a perplexed and struggling race, provokes us with the evidence that it must have meaning. Part of the meaning still escapes us. Yet our purpose in life is to discover this meaning, and live according to it. We have, therefore, something to live for. The process of living, of growing up, and becoming a person, is precisely the gradually increasing awareness of what that something is. This is a difficult task, for many reasons. First of all, although men have a common destiny, each individual also has to work out his own personal salvation for himself in fear and trembling. We can help one another to find out the meaning of life, no doubt. But in the last analysis the individual person is responsible for living his own life and for "finding himself." If he persists in shifting this responsibility to somebody else, he fails to find out the meaning of his own existence. You cannot tell me who I am, and I cannot tell you

who you are. If you do not know your own identity, who is going to identify you? Others can give you a name or a number, but they can never tell you who you really are. That is something you yourself can only discover from within.

That brings us to a second problem. Although in the end we alone are capable of experiencing who we are, we are instinctively gifted in watching how others experience themselves. We learn to live by living together with others, and by living like them—a process which has disadvantages as well as blessings. The greatest of disadvantages is that we are too prone to welcome everybody else's wrong solution to the problems of life. There is a natural laziness that moves us to accept the easiest solutions—the ones that have common currency among our friends. That is why an optimistic view of life is not necessarily always a virtuous thing. In a time like ours, only the coarse grained still have enough resistance to preserve their fair-weather principles unclouded by anxiety. Such optimism may be comfortable: but is it safe? In a world where every lie has currency, is not anxiety the more real and the more human reaction?

Now anxiety is the mark of spiritual insecurity. It is the fruit of unanswered questions. But questions cannot go unanswered unless they first be asked. And there is a far worse anxiety, a far worse insecurity, which comes from being afraid to ask the right questions—because they might turn out to have

no answer. One of the moral diseases we communicate to one another in society comes from huddling together in the pale light of an insufficient answer to a question we are afraid to ask.”²⁸

Many of us have portions of our life when we have suffered from an unwillingness to ask the questions which most needed to be pondered. Pilgrimage is a time for us to recognize that we are not alone as individual islands, but are in a company of others who are also trying to figure things out. Let us not “[huddle] together in the pale light of an insufficient answer to a question we are afraid to ask.” Rather let us find courage to ponder the things which really do matter and which lead to a hallowed discipleship. We are meant to be: “... journeying together with friends on the path to a Spirit-led and joyful life.”²⁹

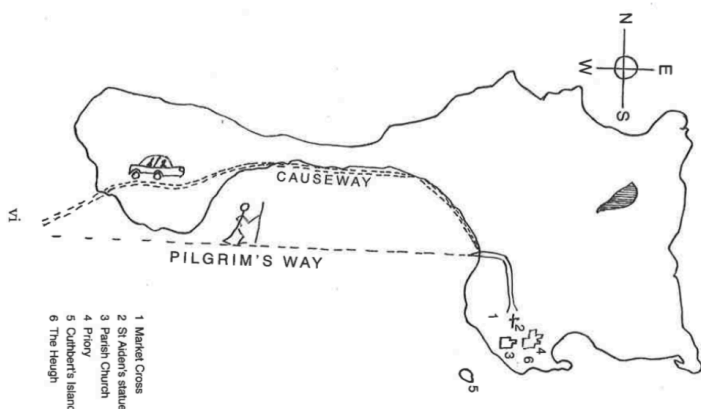
²⁸ *No Man Is An Island* by Thomas Merton (Shambhala Press: Boston, 2005) pp. xi-xiii.

²⁹ from the Mission Statement of *The Pilgrimage*.

Wednesday, September 30

HOLY ISLAND

Place — The Sea



30

The Celtic saints like Aidan and Cuthbert lived in the traditions and ways of the early desert monastics. It is clear that they were familiar with St. Anthony and others among the desert mothers and fathers. And yet — they had no desert into which they might go for solitude. Instead they saw the ocean as a form of desert. How ironic that their “desert” was made of water which is so hard to find in desert

³⁰ map taken from Pilgrim Guide — Holy Island by David Adam.

landscapes. And yet, as salt-water, they were surrounded everywhere with water that they could not drink.

The Psalmist reminds us that in the seas are “swarms without number” [Psalm 104:25] and thus the sea is a place of abundance. Abundant life, abundant water. God’s life-creating word formed creatures innumerable to fill the sea.

The psalmist also reminds us that the sea is also a place of great danger:

Psa. 107:23 Some went down to the sea in ships,

 doing business on the mighty waters;

24 they saw the deeds of the LORD,

 his wondrous works in the deep.

25 For he commanded and raised the stormy wind,

 which lifted up the waves of the sea.

26 They mounted up to heaven, they went down to the depths;

 their courage melted away in their calamity;

27 they reeled and staggered like drunkards, and were at their wits’ end.

28 Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,

 and he brought them out from their distress;

29 he made the storm be still,

 and the waves of the sea were hushed.

- 30 Then they were glad because they had
quiet,
 and he brought them to their desired haven.
- 31 Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast
love,
 for his wonderful works to humankind.
- 32 Let them extol him in the congregation of
the people,
 and praise him in the assembly of the elders.

Thus the sea is both a place of abundant goodness, and abundant risk. The place of bewilderment and great risk is also the place where the God of abundance is met! Notice that when the sailors were at “their wits’ end” they cried out to the Lord in their trouble and God delivered them from their distress. Then the sailors are admonished to “give thanks!” How often are we rescued by God’s love and yet fail to give thanks?

Saint of the Day — Hilda of Whitby

Born: 614 (Anglo-Saxon). Died: 17 November 680.



Hilda was of noble birth and a protégée of Saint Aidan of Lindisfarne. Aidan as bishop promoted her as founder of her first monastery. In 664 Hilda hosted the Synod of Whitby.

Hilda founded several monasteries in Northern England and a double monastery at Whitby. She was a talented abbess and much sought after spiritual guide. The monastery school at Whitby was known for its fine education of students. Hilda helped the English poet Caedmon discover his vocation of writing. On the day she died another nun had a vision in which she saw Hilda's soul ascend to heaven in the company of angels.

She was an *Anam Cara* of Bishop Aidan. A capable leader, wise, kind, and accessible. People

called her Mother because of her outstanding devotion and grace.

Bede associated the following virtues with her leadership:

- ✠ Justice,
- ✠ Fortitude,
- ✠ Devotion,
- ✠ Chastity,
- ✠ Peace,
- ✠ Love.

Suggested Contemplative Practices

✠ Ask yourself if God is truly among your priorities. Are you in danger of talking about God far more than you speak with him? Do you set aside time each day to give God glory? Have you learned to praise God in your daily occupations?

An interesting exercise is to break your whole day down into quarters of an hour. See how many quarters you give to work, to sleep, to leisure, to prayer, and so on. This often shows if God is given much space or thought at all. God is often treated like an optional leisure pursuit and one that is by no means a priority.

✠ Hilda is often remembered for her gift of encouragement to an uneducated herdsman by the name of Caedmon who lived near her monastery . . . One night while he was with the animals, he fell asleep and began to dream. In his dream someone called his name saying, ‘Caedmon, sing something to me.’ Caedmon confessed that he did not know how to sing . . . The voice replied, ‘sing of the creation.’ Suddenly Caedmon began to sing beautiful poetry praising God’s gift of creation. . . . Hilda recognized God’s grace in his gift and encouraged him to take monastic vows and learn the great stories of the faith . . . pause and reflect on the encouragement you have received and the encouragement you need in order to offer yourself and your gifts wholly to God.

✠ Humility is central to the Christian life; it is fundamental. . . . It is a virtue not only for monastic life, but for all Christian life.

...Humility in another is a beautiful thing to see; but the attempt to become humble is painful indeed. It hurts. It hurts to be criticized, to be misunderstood, to be misjudged, to be snubbed, to be written off; but such things are the high road to humility. None of us enjoys walking that way. Oddly enough, I believe that for some of us *it is when we realize how little we are regarded by others that we begin to recognize how highly we are esteemed by God.* We have ceased to wonder what others think about us; we have discovered our worth in the eyes of our Father.

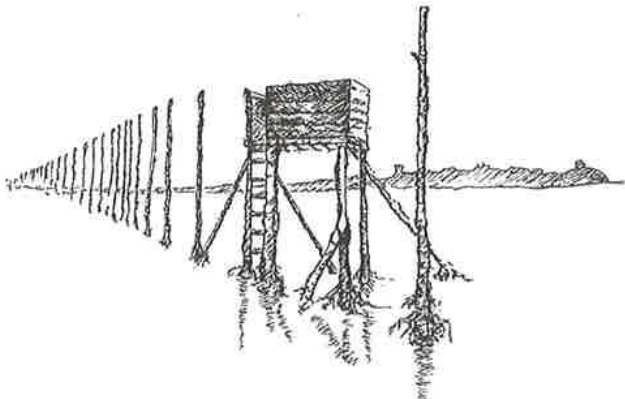
How might you inhabit the virtue of humility today? What are the obstacles to your arriving at a place where you have ceased to wonder what others think about you; and you have discovered your worth in the eyes of the God who loves you?



Practice *Lectio Divina* on the following passage of scripture:

1Th. 5:12 (NRSV) But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labor among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; 13 esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. 14 And we urge you, beloved, to admonish the idlers, encourage the faint hearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them. 15 See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. 16 Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 19 Do not quench the Spirit. 20 Do not despise the words of prophets, 21 but test everything; hold fast to what is good; 22 abstain from every form of evil. 23 May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

✚ Perhaps you would like to walk across the causeway / Pilgrim’s Way between the mainland and Lindisfarne. Below is the tide-table for the days we are on Holy island. *Be sure to check these and time your walk so that you can return to Lindisfarne before the tide turns again.* Timing your departure at the start of the safe window of time ensures you time to return safely. While much of the way is a sandy flat — there are sections which are muddy so be aware that shoes will be immersed in mud sometimes. I have walked barefooted the last several times, carrying my shoes [PHL].



31

		SAFE	UNSAFE
Mon	28th	08:15 until 14:20	14:20 until 20:35
Tue	29th	08:55 until 14:55	14:55 until 21:10
Wed	30th	09:30 until 15:40	15:40 until 21:35
Thu	1st	10:00 until 16:30	16:30 until 22:00

³¹ From p.6 of David Adam’s *Pilgrim Guide — Holy Island*.

Photography prompt:

Imagine that you have the chance to communicate something important about who you are to someone of great significance, but you can only do this through your photographs. If you had to select twenty images that would say what you wanted to say about who you are, what images would you see?³²

What can you photograph today that begins to tell the story of who you are?

Journal prompt:

Sit quietly. Breathe slowly and listen deep within. Slowly ask yourself “Who am I, a child of God?” Sit silently and let the response come to you.

³² *God is at Eye Level: Photography as Healing Art*; page 99; Jan Phillips; Quest Books; Wheaton, Illinois; 2000.

Florilegium — St. John of the Cross ?³³

There is a dawn where stillness lies with fading
stars and waning moon.

I know not what the day will bring,
encompassed by the love of the One who holds
my “Yes” for years to come.

It is newness and timeless, a journey of love,
ever deeper, ever gentler into the thicket of
God.

It is darkness and time-bound, a journey of
love, ever deeper ever gentler, into the thicket of
God.

He is dark-light and day-star, the Christ of my
life, leading me deeper, leading me further, into
the thicket of God.

There is a time for dreams to die with folded
wings and muted heart.

And yet my hope eternal springs because of
Him, the One I love, who holds my “Yes” for
years to come.

³³ Though this was attributed to St. John of the Cross when it was given to me I have been unable to find it (or anything nearly like it) in St. John's writings. Nor have I found it anywhere else - but its message is beautiful.

There is a moment between dark and dawn,
when winds are still and faith is numb.

It is a still-point for God and me.

I know the gift He offers: the Breath of life. I
will grope through night until the dawn.

A Prayer of St. Columba

Let me bless Almighty God, whose power
extends over sea and land,

whose angels watch over all.

Let me study sacred books to calm my soul;

I pray for peace, kneeling at heaven's
gates.

Let me do my daily work, gathering seaweed,

catching fish, giving food to the poor.

Let me say my daily prayers, sometimes
chanting,

sometimes quiet, always thanking God.

Delightful it is to live on a peaceful Island, in a
quiet cell,

serving the King of kings.³⁴



³⁴ Quoted from Van de Weyer, ed. p.64 *Celtic Fire: the Passionate Religious Vision of Ancient Britain and Ireland*.

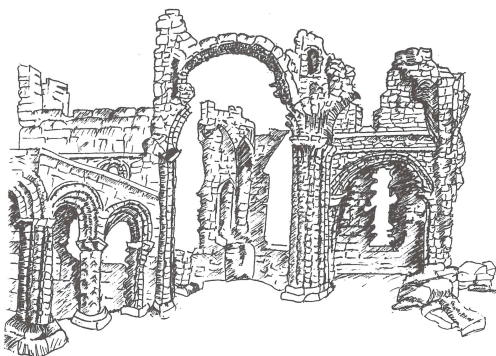
Thursday, October 1

HOLY ISLAND

Itinerary

Our final full-day on Holy Island. If you have not already walked to the dunes and beaches of the North coast of Lindisfarne, they offer a glorious landscape. The crashing of waves on both sand and stone, the flight of the sea-birds, the way the wind sweeps across the water and over the dunes . . . all are invitations to consider the wonder of God's creation.

Place — The Priory



35

In order to go into the priory you will need to secure a ticket from the English Heritage Museum. The priory is the place where (in an earlier time) the remains of both Aidan and Cuthbert would have been resting. By 1070 the relics were relocated to Durham Cathedral. The remnants of the Benedictine priory show the influence of the Norman style and, in many

³⁵ Image taken from *Pilgrim Guide: Holy Island* by David Adam. p. 48.

ways, reflect a similar architecture to the Durham Cathedral.

This is the site of worship of the early Christian communities on Lindisfarne. Aidan and Cuthbert would have known this site (though in the previous church of Oak and thatched roof which no longer exists). Many thousands of pilgrims came to this place to worship near the relics of Aidan and Cuthbert, and many thousands of worship services have bathed the stones of this place with the petitions of the faithful. Will you add your prayers to the long chorus of praise which has gone up from this place and upon which the Lord is enthroned?³⁶

³⁶ See Psalm 22:3.

Saint of the Day — Saint Cuthbert

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- 634 — Born to a fairly well-to-do family in Southern Scotland
- 635 — Foundation of monastery at Lindisfarne. Aidan with support of King Oswald.
- 635 — Death of Oswald.
- 642 — Cuthbert given into the care of his foster mother, Kenswith. He also serves in the military.
- 651 — Death of Aidan.
- 651 — Cuthbert enters the monastery at Melrose Abbey (17 years old).
- 657 — Cuthbert serves as Guest-Master at the monastery at Ripon.
- 660 — Cuthbert returns to Melrose.
- 664 — Both the abbot Boisil, and Cuthbert contract the plague.
Cuthbert survives, Boisil does not.
- 664 — Council of Whitby. Cuthbert is made Prior of Melrose.
- 666 — Cuthbert moves to Lindisfarne and serves as Prior under the Abbot Eata.
Cuthbert removes to Farne as a hermit.
- 685 — Cuthbert is consecrated Bishop and exchanges his See of Hexham for the See of Lindisfarne.
- 687 — Died at Inner Farne Island. Buried at Lindisfarne.

- 689 — Body removed to hide it from raiders. In 1104 buried behind the high altar in Durham Cathedral
- 698 — Cuthbert is made a Saint of the Church.
- 699 — Composition of the anonymous *Life of Cuthbert*.
- 700 — *Lindisfarne Gospels* produced in honor of God and Saint Cuthbert.
- 705 — Bede writes his metrical *Life of Saint Cuthbert*.
- 721 — Bede's Prose *Life of St. Cuthbert*.
- 731 — Completion of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* which contains a summary of the life of Cuthbert.
- Cuthbert's Feast Day: March 20

CONNECTING CUTHBERT'S LIFE TO THE PILGRIM'S COMPASS

Many of these allude to events in the *Life of St. Cuthbert* by Bede.

Encounter:

- ✚ Seeing angels at time of Aidan's death
- ✚ God in the creatures of the earth. Otters at Coldingham. The eagle who provided the salmon.

Struggle:

- ✚ Tension between ministry and solitude.
- ✚ Balance between productivity and preservation of his relationship with God who was source of his holiness and joy.

- ✠ Also balance between the needs and demands of others and his own felt needs.

Wounding:

- ✠ Boyhood injury or tumor (knee).
- ✠ Tuberculosis and yellow plague.
Incessant internal-organ pain in years after plague.

New Name:

- ✠ Spiritual guide, Abbot
- ✠ Wonderworker of Britain
- ✠ Bishop

Suggested Contemplative Practices

Photography prompt:

As you engage in your contemplative walk, become aware of what is inviting you to pay attention and what you notice stirring in you in response. Receive each invitation as a gift and as a catalyst for your own reflection and inner growth. How does this image reveal new things to you, new perspectives about who God is? How might the practice of photography transform your own images of God?³⁷

Journal prompt:

There is a song called Walk in Peace by Adam Tice and Sally Ann Morris (your small group leaders

³⁷ *Eyes of the Heart: Photography as a Christian Contemplative Practice*. Christine Valters Painter; Sorin Books; Notre Dame, Indiana; 2013, page 126.

will play this for you). The lyrics are: “Walk in peace. Walk in beauty. Walk in the spirit of God and when you walk, Christ is there.”

As you walk around this holy place, what resonates about these lyrics? What stirs deep within you?

Florilegium

Prayer

“To pray only when we feel like it is more to seek consolation than to risk conversion. To pray only when it suits us is to want God on our own terms. To pray only when it is convenient is to make the God-life a very low priority in a list of better opportunities. To pray only when it feels good is to court total emptiness when we most need to be filled. The hard fact is that nobody finds time for prayer. The time must be taken.”³⁸

³⁸ Joan Chittister, OSB, *Wisdom Distilled from the Daily*, 31

Friday, October 2

TRAVEL DAY TO OBAN

Itinerary

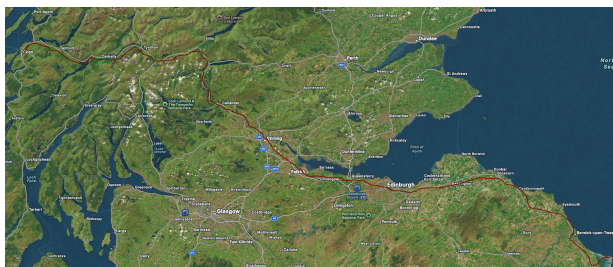
We will travel the breadth of Scotland today on our way to Oban.

Bus Pick-up at location TBD at 10:30 AM

As we approach the West coast we will pass north of Glasgow Scotland's second largest city whose patron saint is Mungo.

Dinner — 5:30 at Olive Garden

2 Railway Pier, Oban



Place

Arriving in Oban we will find a quaint and bustling coastal town which owes much of its prosperity to the Oban Distillery, and also to the fact that it is a rail, and ferry terminal which serves to get people to the Hebridean islands. You can find really good seafood all along the wharf and the fish & chips are among the best in the UK. A few years ago Oban had a Michelin-starred restaurant which Sarah and I enjoyed — but I believe it is now closed.

Saint of the Day — Saint Mungo (Glasgow)



Icon of St. Mungo.

Saint Mungo, also known as Saint Kentigern, Cantigernus or Cyndeyrn Garthwys, lived from 528 to 13 January 614. He is the patron saint and founder of the City of Glasgow.

According to the Life of Saint Mungo written by the monk, Jocelin of Furness, in about 1185, Mungo's mother was Princess Theneva (or Denw), daughter of Loth, the King of the Gododdin, who ruled an area centered on today's East Lothian. After an illicit

encounter with her cousin, the young King Owain of North Rheged, now part of Galloway, Princess Theneva fell pregnant. Her unamused father had her tied to a chariot and launched off Traprain Law. It miraculously landed softly, hurting neither Theneva or her unborn child. The Gododdin, now believing Theneva also to be a witch, then cast her adrift in a coracle without oars on the River Forth. She drifted up-river and came ashore at Culross in Fife, where Kentigern was born.

Kentigern was given the name Mungo, meaning something like "dear one", by St. Serf, who ran a monastery at Culross and took in both mother and son. St. Serf then oversaw Mungo's upbringing. At the age of 25, Mungo began his missionary work on the banks of the River Clyde. Here he was welcomed by people previously converted to Christianity by St. Ninian, and here Mungo built his church, close to the confluence of the River Clyde and the Molendinar Burn. Since the 1200s the site of this early church has formed part of Glasgow Cathedral.

WHEN COLUMBA MET MUNGO

When Columba heard about the fiery apostle of Glasgow he was keen to meet Mungo in the flesh. Often when Columba travelled he would go alone or with a few companions, but on this occasion the community insisted on a strong turnout with some appropriately holy books and precious treasures to show how important Iona and its Abbot were in Scotland.

When Mungo heard about Columba's visit he too was very curious to meet the great apostle of Ireland. Equally his community at Glasgow was determined to put on a good show, demonstrating their importance, so some processional banners and special vestments were prepared for the forthcoming summit.

Of course, as ever, politics were at play here too, since Scotland was still divided into different peoples and kingdoms. Glasgow was in the British Celtic kingdom of Strathclyde, while Iona was on the boundary between Dalriada in Argyll and the kingdoms of the Picts. How would the influence of this new faith play out in local politics? Which kingdoms and whose holy apostles would take precedence?

The big day came and messengers arrived at the Molendinar river to breathlessly announce Columba's approach. The Glasgow procession set out, led by Mungo carrying his sacred staff of office. Meanwhile, of course, the Iona delegation had formed into a ceremonial procession led by their Abbot with his sacred staff or crook.

Many people had gathered to watch, intrigued no doubt to see who would defer to whom. Who would give way and pay homage, as worldly kings would expect?

The two processions approached from different sides. Hand-bells were rung and horns blown. They came to a stop as if by mutual consent about twenty yards from each other. Silence fell as the two saints looked across the

short distance. Both were simply dressed and bareheaded, with their crooks resting on the ground in their right hands. Then at the same moment Columba and Mungo walked towards each other, alone. Coming close, at the exact same instant, they held out their crooks to each other and the staffs were exchanged, giving with the right and receiving with their left hands. And then staffs still in hand they embraced each other as brothers and children equal in God's sight.

As their arms unfolded, a huge smile lit up their faces, and the people cheered and shouted their approval. Each of the two great apostles had met in the other a kindred spirit to esteem and cherish.³⁹

Suggested Contemplative Practices

Photography prompt:

This is a long travel day by bus. You may wish to sort through your images or reflect on what you have seen.

Journal prompt:

Given that today will travel, spend time reflecting — What does God look like, sound like, smell like, taste like, and feel like? Keep all of your senses attuned to responses to these questions in the world

³⁹ *Pilgrim Guide to Scotland* by Donald Smith, pp. 102-104.

around you. How might you represent these different sense experiences of the divine through imagery?⁴⁰

Florilegium —

PILGRIMAGE AS

THE HOME OF OUR SOJOURNING ⁴¹

Each day is a journey and the journey itself home.

—Matsuo Bashō¹

TOWARD A DEFINITION OF PILGRIMAGE

“In recent years as I have led a number of travel pilgrimages, I have often been asked to define pilgrimage and, more specifically, to speak to the two most common notions of pilgrimage:

✠ Travel to a distant location for religious purposes

✠ Pilgrimage as a metaphor for discipleship throughout one’s life

Over the years I have collected dozens of attempts to succinctly define pilgrimage from authors across the centuries who have given us a variety of ideas about this discipline. I find something of value in each of them, but none of these efforts capture the full essence of the practice of pilgrimage. Nearly every

⁴⁰ *Eyes of the Heart: Photography as a Christian Contemplative Practice*. Christine Valters Paintner; Sorin Books; Notre Dame, Indiana; 2013, page 128.

⁴¹ Lang, Paul H.. *The Pilgrim's Compass: Finding and Following the God We Seek* (pp. 18-20).

definition is aimed at one of the two notions listed above, which is also the distinction my fellow pilgrims are often interested in sorting out. Is pilgrimage a commitment to lifelong discipleship, a metaphor for shaping one's life before God? Or is it the act of making a specific trip in search of a better love for God and one's neighbors? It is, of course, both.

Interestingly, the Hebrew word translated “pilgrim” or “pilgrimage” has connotations appropriate to both of these main definitions. The word is *magor* (pronounced “maw-goor’”), and it derives from a word for “dwelling” or “home” but morphs in its usage to mean something like “place of sojourning.” Thus we have the odd juxtaposition of the word for home with the practice of sojourning. Perhaps the best and most intriguing use of the word is in Psalm 119:54, where the Hebrew is *bet meguray* (pronounced “bet’ meh-goor’ay”) or “house/home of our sojourning/wandering.” I love the oxymoronic tension of this phrase—the home of my wandering/sojourning. In Hebrew, “pilgrimage” suggests a tension within the very root of the words used to describe it. The foci are:

1. Home, a residence
2. Wandering or sojourning

We find the same tension in the practice of pilgrimage both as a metaphor for faithful discipleship all our days and as travel for the purpose of sacred encounter. *To be a pilgrim is thus to inhabit the home of our sojourning.* In common parlance, one is either at home or sojourning. When the psalmist says, “Your statutes have been my songs wherever I make the house of my sojourning” (Ps. 119:54, au. trans.), we imagine the life of people like Abraham and Sarah, the

wandering Arameans⁴ whose faith-testing adventures with God initiate the history of the biblical patriarchs and matriarchs.

We pilgrims are left to embody the mystery that we inhabit the most natural and authentic of things (our true home) by escaping the familiar confines of our “home.” We pass over the threshold of our domicile and seek out our risen Lord in the wilderness of the world. And if Genesis 12 is to be trusted, we do that understanding that God will reward our courage and obedience by blessing us and by entrusting to us the noble work of being God’s blessing to those we meet along the way. Below I explore pilgrimage as a way of describing our discipleship when we are at home, and then as a practice of spiritual formation as we sojourn on a travel pilgrimage.”

Saturday, October 3

Oban to Iona



Itinerary

We will board the ferry in Oban for Mull where we will transfer to a bus for the beautiful drive across Mull (about an hour). Then a second small ferry crossing to Iona. There are scenes of beauty in every direction today but on the bus across Mull — for Paul’s money — the seats on the right hand side of the bus (looking North) give the best views across water to distant mountains. If you miss a north-facing seat today — you will have another chance on our return trip in a few days.

Place

Today we travel by sea for the first time. The convenience of modern ferries are a far-cry from the leather & pitch coracles of St. Columba’s day, and yet the time on the water today may remind us of the strong yearning to seek out and find “the place of my resurrection” which so motivated the early Celtic saints

and led them to throw themselves upon the mercies of wind, wave, and tide.

Saint of the Day — Brendan



Do you know the story of Saint Brendan the Navigator? It was a “best-seller” throughout the Middle Ages, becoming one of the most widely disseminated and copied works of Europe and the British Isles. St. Brendan and his fellow voyagers set out on an epic quest to find the “Promised Land of the Saints,” (= heaven). For seven years they endured the perils and hardships of the North Atlantic seas. They occasionally made landfall and their narrative has been called the first description of a transatlantic navigation to

Newfoundland via the “stepping stone route” of outer Hebrides Islands, to the Faroe Islands, to Iceland, to Greenland, to Newfoundland. If the voyage of Brendan truly was all the way West to Newfoundland and back it would represent a truly astounding geographic pilgrimage.

But the story of St. Brendan is a peculiar story full of extraordinary moments of wonders beyond the possible. They encounter a sea creature so large that its back is mistaken for an island. They encounter all manner of talking animals (particularly birds), and throughout the seven-year peregrination they only refer to time by the seasons of the liturgical year, and the hours of the daily offices. This would not have been unusual for monastics of that age, whose whole life was characterized by the commitment to keep up unceasing prayers for the world. And yet, the constant measuring of time by liturgical season and hour of prayer points to a deep and important aspect of this sacred travel. Brendan and his fellow pilgrims were not just moving through the waters of the North Atlantic. They were keenly cognizant that they were moving through the sacred precincts of time. They knew that they were encircled (“precinct” derives from *praecingere* ‘encircle’) within the mystery of God’s eternal NOW. They arrived at the destination of their quest — the “Promised Land of the Saints” — but the question is this: “Did they get to the Promised Land of the Saints by boat, wave, oar, tides, and strain of back? Or did they arrive at that holy destination by prayer, worship, attention to the narrative of the gospel, and a willingness to stop seven times daily to pray the hours?”

Perhaps they got where they were going by a resilient commitment to both the outer journey of

boats and oars and tides and the inner odyssey of a loving commitment to the discipline of immersing themselves in the prayers of God's people. Praying the daily offices throughout the seven year cycle was a way of hallowing time. Each moment was seen as a moment for decision to either follow the call as an obedient creature, or strike out on their own in some form of self-reliant autonomy.

As we make our way from Oban to Iona, perhaps we too will embrace the regular practice of returning our attention to God in prayer/worship and find that our pilgrimage is far more wondrous and holy.

If you are interested in praying the daily prayers we have provided them to you through the app and website. St. Columba, St. Aidan, St. Cuthbert, St. Margaret and others we will encounter on our pilgrimage all prayed the daily offices. Let us also begin hallowing time and growing in our familiarity and appreciation of the discipline of daily prayer.

Suggested Contemplative Practices

Photography prompt:

Today we travel by water and by land. What image(s) might your camera capture that illustrates the places of transition: earth to sky, water to sky, sacred to profane, light to darkness, earth to galaxy?

Journal prompt:

Iona has been described as one of the thin places. Explore your emotional connection to this holy place. Delve into your experience stepping onto this

island, traveling past the nunnery and seeing the abbey. What is your sense of awe, wonder, reverence, and peace?

Florilegium

The excerpt below is from the travel-journal of Samuel Johnson (famous editor and compiler of the *Oxford English Dictionary*) and James Boswell (Scottish Lawyer, biographer, and diarist who was a friend of Samuel Johnson and who for many years urged him to visit Scotland). Samuel Johnson was a corpulent man and often found the travels in the wilds of Scotland difficult — never more than when on the Hebrides. Mull, in particular, posed difficulties for the two as roads were almost non-existent, homes were few and far between, and the weather made sea-travel unreliable and dangerous. As a consequence they walked many miles through boggy heath. I include this excerpt because I experience a very different sensation when I am on Mull than they did as they saw in the heath and hills a source of vexation and stagnation — whereas I see a landscape replete with signs of God. — PHL

“Having not any experience of a journey in Mull, we had no doubt of reaching the sea by day-light, and therefore had not left Dr. Maclean’s very early. We travelled diligently enough, but found the country, for road there was none, very difficult to pass. We were always struggling with some obstruction or other, and our vexation was not balanced by any gratification of the eye or mind. We were now long enough acquainted with hills and heath to have lost the emotion that they once raised, whether pleasing or painful, and had our mind employed only on our own fatigue. We were

however sure, under Col's protection, of escaping all real evils. There was no house in Mull to which he could not introduce us. He had intended to lodge us, for that night, with a gentleman that lived upon the coast, but discovered on the way, that he then lay in bed without hope of life.

We resolved not to embarrass a family, in a time of so much sorrow, if any other expedient could be found; and as the Island of Ulva was over-against us, it was determined that we should pass the strait and have recourse to the Laird, who, like the other gentlemen of the Islands, was known to Col. We expected to find a ferry-boat, but when at last we came to the water, the boat was gone.”⁴²

⁴² Johnson, Samuel; Boswell, James. *A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland and the Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* (Oxford World's Classics) (pp. 114-115).

Sunday, October 4

Iona



Itinerary

All the days on Iona are essentially “free” days where you are invited to explore this extraordinary island and to find places to pray and reflect on your relationship with God. Morning and evening meals will be at The Columba Hotel on this schedule:

Breakfast — 8:00 AM

Dinner — 5:45 PM

Today, as it is the Lord’s Day, we will attend the service at the Abbey for the main worship. It is at **10:30 and includes Communion.**

Worship at the Abbey: Weekdays you are invited (as the Spirit prompts you) to attend morning and evening services. These are not required, but they are typically well-designed worship and many have found them to be meaningful.

Morning Service — 9:00 AM

Evening Service — 9:00 PM

Place — Iona Nunnery



Nunnery pictured above — The nunnery was an Augustinian order and was dedicated to St. Mary the Virgin. Built in the 1200s it was established at about the same time as the Benedictine Abbey was built. Women lived and worshiped in this community for three centuries — though very few records remain of the community. It is thought that the first woman to be prioress was Beathag, sister of Reginald, who is described as ‘*na cailligh dhuibh*’ - or “Black Nun,” referring to the black habit of the Augustinian orders in Ireland, from which the first leaders of the community are likely to have come.

There are old tales regarding the island opposite Iona called *Eileen nam Ban* or “island of the women.” If you look out from Iona’s ferry terminal and a bit north you will see the rocky crag between Iona and the shore of Mull. Any evidence of a nunnery on the island ceased to be visible by the 17th century. It seems likely that the notion of a nunnery on the island is an exaggeration. Most likely the women could have been housed on the island while the nunnery was under construction but without making any significant

shelters on *Eileen nam Ban*. That would explain why evidence of their presence was so fleeting. At best now you can find the small foundation of an oval-shaped bothy.

The nunnery, even in its partially ruined state, is one of the best examples of the architecture of its kind. There is enough left to imagine something of the life of those who lived and prayed and worked and worried, and kept the daily offices for roughly 300 years. The walls of the edifice which are bathed in centuries of prayer are now open to the sky. A few grave markers offer scant clues about the women who lived and died in service to God in that holy place. Perhaps the abbey which was rebuilt and in which we worship has its own kind of beauty, but one cannot help but contrast the open-aired nunnery with the closed-in spaces of the Abbey.

Saint of the Day — Adomnán



Abbot of Iona Abbey (679–704), hagiographer, statesman, canon jurist, and saint. He was the author of the *Life of Columba* *Vita Columbae*, probably written between 697 and 700. This biography is by far the most important surviving work written in early-medieval Scotland, and is a vital source for our knowledge of the Picts, and an insight into the life of Iona and the early-medieval Gaelic monk, Columba.

He is also author of the "Law of Adomnán", also known as the *Lex Innocentium* (Law of Innocents), which was promulgated amongst a gathering of Gaelic

and Pictish notables at the Synod of Birr in 697. It is called the "Geneva Accords" of the ancient Irish and **Europe's first human rights treaty**, for its protection of women and non-combatants, extending the Law of Patrick, which protected monks, to civilians.

It is thought that Adomnán may have begun his monastic career at a Columban monastery called Druim Tuamma, but any Columban foundation in northern Ireland or Dál Riata is a possibility, although Durrow is a stronger possibility than most. He probably joined the Columban familia (i.e. the federation of monasteries under the leadership of Iona Abbey) around 640. Whenever or wherever Adomnán received his education, Adomnán attained a level of learning rare in early-medieval Northern Europe. It has been suggested by Alfred Smyth that Adomnán spent some years teaching and studying at Durrow, and while this is not accepted by all scholars, it remains a strong possibility.⁴³

Suggested Contemplative Practices

Photography prompt:

Give some thought to what the “sacred” is in your life and to the spiritual truths that guide you on your path. Make a photo excursion and gather images that reflect this sense of sacredness and illustrate the essential oneness of all beings.⁴⁴

⁴³ Notes on Adomnán are lightly edited from his entry on Wikipedia. - PHL

⁴⁴ *God is at Eye Level: Photography as Healing Art*, Jan Phillips; Quest Books; Wheaton, Illinois; 2000, page 143.

Journal prompt:

What is God teaching you through what you see and hear?

Florilegium

Rule Attributed to Saint Columba⁴⁵

- ✚ Live in balance between solitude and community.
- ✚ Be always transparent and honest in imitation of Christ.
- ✚ Whatsoever little or much you possess of anything, whether clothing, or food, or drink, let it be shared generously with others for it is not befitting a person of faith to have excessive property when others are in need.
- ✚ Let your home be modest and simple.
- ✚ Cultivate soul-friendships with a few to converse with you of God and the Bible; to visit you on days of solemnity; to strengthen you in the Teachings of God, and the narratives of the Scriptures.
- ✚ Submit to every discipline that is of devotion.

⁴⁵ St. Columba (521 -597) Columba did not leave a written rule. The following rule, attributed to him, was set down much later - likely by Adomnan his hagiographer who did not know Columba, but who interviewed those who had known him in-person. I have edited this Rule to suit my own purposes and shortened the list by perhaps 40% — PHL.

✙ A heart and mind fortified and steadfast for white martyrdom

[that is ascetic practices like praying, reading/
memorizing scripture, tithing, etc].

✙ Forgiveness from the heart for every one.

✙ Constant prayers for those who trouble you.

✙ Let your vigils be constant from eve to eve.

✙ Three labors in the day: prayers, work, and study.

✙ Take not of food till you are hungry. (No gluttony)

✙ Sleep not till you feel the need to sleep. (No
indolence)

✙ Speak not except when it is essential. (Silence is
golden)

✙ Love God with all your heart and all your strength;

✙ Love your neighbor as yourself

✙ Abide in the teaching of God in every
circumstance.

Monday, October 5

Iona

Itinerary

All the days on Iona are essentially “free” days where you are invited to explore this extraordinary island and to find places to pray and reflect on your relationship with God. Morning and evening meals will be at The Columba Hotel on this schedule:

Breakfast — 8:00 AM

Dinner — 5:45 PM

Worship at the Abbey: Throughout our stay you are invited (as the Spirit prompts you) to attend morning and evening services. These are not required, but they are typically well-designed worship and many have found them to be meaningful.

Morning Service — 9:00 AM

Evening Service — 9:00 PM

Place — Martyr’s Bay & Columba’s Bay⁴⁶

“Martyrs Bay, situated close to the village, has had an important role in the history of Iona and holds many memories.

In 806, the bay was the scene of violence when sixty-eight monks were mercilessly slaughtered at the hands of Norse invaders. That violence reminds us of all victims of torture and massacre in our

⁴⁶ from *Iona - A Pilgrim’s Guide* by Peter Miller. (Canterbury Press: Norwich, 2007) p.28.

contemporary world, and the continuing task of reconciliation.

This bay is hallowed for other reasons. Through the centuries it has provided a landing place for funeral processions. Here were carried ashore the mortal remains of kings and chiefs and many less exalted folk. Their coffins rested on a grassy knoll called the ‘Ealadh’, before moving on to the final part of their journey to the Reilig Odhran (the graveyard).”



Columba's Bay⁴⁷

“On this pebbled beach at the southern tip of the island, Columba is said to have arrived from Ireland on the Day of Pentecost in 563. Legend has it that, having clambered up the beach with their leather-bound boat (Known as a coracle), Columba and his twelve monks climbed the hill to the west of the bay to confirm that their beloved home country could not be seen. ‘The Hill of the Back to Ireland’ became a landmark for them as they moved forward in mission...

⁴⁷ Peter Miller's Iona - A Pilgrim's Guide (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2007) p.38-39.

Every part of Iona has a story, and this small bay — known as Port a’Churaich (the Harbour of the Curragh) — is steeped in legend. The Celts took particular delight in immortalizing even the most insignificant details of their human story; tiny hills, hidden coves, deep caves, broad beaches, and special stones took on names that are descriptive of events and of individual achievements...

As part of our meditation at this bay we take two pebbles from the beach. One we throw into the sea as a symbol of something in our lives we would like to leave behind, while the other we take back with us as a sign of a new commitment in our heart.”



Saint of the Day - St. Brigid



Saint Brigid of Kildare is one of Ireland's three patron saints, alongside Saint Patrick and Saint Columba. Although the historical details of her life are intertwined with legend, she has been revered for more than 1,500 years as a model of generosity, hospitality, healing, and spiritual leadership.

Her Life

Brigid is traditionally believed to have been born around 451 AD near Faughart, County Louth, Ireland. According to early accounts:

✠ Her father was Dubthach, a pagan chieftain, and her mother Brocca (or Broicsech), who had been enslaved.

✠ From childhood, Brigid showed extraordinary compassion. She frequently gave away food, clothing, and even valuable possessions to those in need, much to her family's frustration.

✠ She declined marriage, choosing instead a life dedicated to Christ. She received the veil as a consecrated virgin, likely from Saint Mel.

✠ Around 480 AD she founded the famous monastery at Kildare ("Church of the Oak"), which became one of the most influential Christian centers in Ireland. It served both women and men and developed into a renowned center of prayer, learning, manuscript production, and care for the poor.

✠ Brigid was known as an abbess with remarkable influence, exercising authority that, according to Irish tradition, extended even over bishops within the monastery's sphere.

✠ She is thought to have died around 525 AD, and her feast day is celebrated on February 1, which also coincides with the ancient Celtic festival of Imbolc, symbolizing the coming of spring.

Her Miracles

The earliest biographies of Brigid, especially those by Cogitosus and later medieval writers, record numerous

miracles. Whether understood historically or symbolically, they consistently portray her as embodying God's abundance and compassion.

1. The Butter and Milk Miracles

Brigid repeatedly multiplied butter, milk, and food to feed the poor and travelers.

These stories echo Jesus' feeding miracles, emphasizing that generosity participates in God's abundance.

2. The Cloak That Covered the Land

One of her best-known legends tells that Brigid asked a local king for enough land to build a monastery.

He mockingly agreed to give her only as much land as her cloak could cover.

When she spread the cloak, it miraculously expanded across many acres, prompting the king to grant her the land for Kildare.

The story symbolizes God's surprising generosity rather than human calculation.

3. Healing Miracles

Brigid was credited with healing:

blindness,
paralysis,
leprosy,
wounds,
infertility,
and various illnesses.

4. Protection of Animals

Animals occupy an important place in Brigid's legends.

She is said to have:

restored dead cattle,
protected sheep,
blessed dairy herds,
rescued wild animals,
and showed extraordinary tenderness toward all
creation.

Because of these traditions, she is often regarded as a
patron of farmers and livestock.

Her Spiritual Legacy

Brigid emerges as:

a woman of fearless generosity,
a protector of the vulnerable,
a healer,
a peacemaker,
a wise spiritual leader,
and a founder of Christian community.

Her life illustrates a spirituality in which prayer
naturally overflows into hospitality and care for the
poor. The recurring theme is that God's grace is
abundant enough to transform scarcity into generosity,
exclusion into welcome, and ordinary acts of kindness
into signs of the Kingdom.

For many Christians today, Brigid remains a powerful
example of contemplative action—a saint whose deep
communion with God was inseparable from practical
love for neighbor and creation.

Suggested Contemplative Practices - optional walk to Brigid's Well

Photography prompt:

Make an excursion to a place that brings you comfort. As you experience this peacefulness, see if you can discern what about it creates that sense of well-being. Make a photograph that contains as much of the essence of this place as you can.⁴⁸

Journal prompt:

St Brigid welcomes us to consider the thresholds in our lives. What threshold are you crossing during this pilgrimage? How open are you to crossing into a new space and a new way of living that reflects God's presence more deeply in your life?

Florilegium

The Call to Pilgrimage as Absence

*God has been calling and I interpreted it as 'absence.' I have been ignoring, denying, until the hurt was so great I dropped everything to find him.*⁴⁹

Encounter lies at the heart of the discipline of pilgrimage. The discipline is predicated on the promise that if with all our heart we truly seek God — that God will surely be found. It is as if God is hiding in plain sight, and very few are even bothered to begin

⁴⁸ *God is at Eye Level: Photography as Healing Art*; Jan Phillips; Quest Books; Wheaton, Illinois; 2000, page 59

⁴⁹ Notes on Spiritual Awakening – Rita Lang 1999

searching. To be a pilgrim is to adjust one's perception and one's focus in order to encounter the God who is present and who desires to be found. The finding of God happens both "out there" in the people and places around us, but also, importantly, God is found in the heart of the pilgrim.

Sorting out an encounter with the God who invites us on the journey is sometimes tricky. We wonder how we are to disentangle our personal desires and impulses from the movement of the Holy Spirit. We worry that to acknowledge a message from the metaphysical somehow points not so much to our spiritual health as to our psychological instability. We are looking for encounters as clear and punctiliar as a lightening bolt and find ourselves wandering through a life as misty and murky as the Cloud of Unknowing.

Sometimes encounter is experienced as absence. Oxymoronic as that seems, my mother (quoted above) was not the first and will not be the last to discover that her perception of "absence" was actually the presence of God's calling. She knew that she was missing someone but only later understood who that person was. The yearning of her heart was speaking volumes about the love of God and God's desire for relationship. "God has been calling," she writes in 1999 at the age of sixty-nine, "but I interpreted it as 'absence.'" Only when "the hurt was so great" did she finally "drop everything to find him." Whether mom knew it or not, she was, of course, echoing the insights of St. Augustine, who wrote of God in the opening paragraph of his Confessions, "You have made us such that our hearts remain restless until they find their rest in you."

Sometimes our pilgrimage begins with an encounter which authorizes our departure from a settled life. And sometimes we depart our settled life, as my mother did, aware only that we are desperate to be in a meaningful relationship with our Creator, Redeemer, and Friend. It is that painful absence of a deep relationship with our Lord which pulls us out of our old orbit and draws us into a new trajectory. It is a revolution of sorts which reorients our living around God who is the center of our universe.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Edited from a blog entry of 2017 in *Stillpoint*. PHL.

Tuesday, October 6

Iona

Itinerary

All the days on Iona are essentially “free” days where you are invited to explore this extraordinary island and to find places to pray and reflect on your relationship with God. Morning and evening meals will be at The Columba Hotel on this schedule:

Breakfast — 8:00 AM

Dinner — 5:45 PM

Worship at the Abbey: Throughout our stay you are invited (as the Spirit prompts you) to attend morning and evening services. These are not required, but they are typically well-designed worship and many have found them to be meaningful.

Morning Service — 9:00 AM

Evening Service — 9:00 PM

Saint of the Day



Icon of Saint Finbarr of Cork

Saint Finbarr Bishop of Cork in Ireland. Legend tells us that he visited Barra Island (a Hebridean island near Iona) and gave it his name in the late 500s. This seems very dubious and the connection is more likely that devotion of Saint Finbarr

reached the island and a small church was established *Cille Bharra* (Church of Finnbarr). “It has been speculated that the 12th Century ruins lie atop an earlier chapel dating back to the 7th Century A.D. and dedicated to St. Finbarr, the 6th Century Bishop of Cork in Ireland. Legend has it that he preached in, among other places, Barra.”⁵¹

Even though the historicity of a preaching ministry of St. Finbarr of Cork is suspect, it remains that the memory of St. Finbarr has been significant on the spirituality of Barra, so knowing more about St. Finbarr is good.

St. Finbarr — Birth 560, born of a master smith/craftsman and a royal slave girl (perhaps she was a Royal Courtesan). Death date is uncertain with dates assigned from 610 to 633. If we take the 633 date for his death in Cloyne, Ireland it would mean he was roughly 73 — quite an old person for that time. It is claimed that the sun did not set for two weeks after his death — one of a host of miracles associated with Finbarr.

Finbarr was a learned man, prone to anchoritic disposition, and founder of a number of monasteries - chief among them the one at Cork. His teaching was renowned. He lived his life in the Psalms and showed great wisdom and gentleness of spirit.

The concept of *anamchara* is important in St. Finbarr’s story. *Anamchara* means “soul friend” and describes someone who is teacher, confessor, fellow companion, and spiritual guide in one’s life. In modern parlance it is something like a spiritual director, though *Anamchara* suggests a personal

⁵¹ saintsandstones.net

mentorship/friendship which is more than most spiritual direction relationships. Finbarr, following the wisdom of the *Apophthegmata Patrum*, ultimately concludes that while we may have many mentors, friends, and companions who are soul friends, **our most important *anamchara* is the Holy Spirit.**

I give thanks for Saint Finbarr whose faithful labors and spiritual insights made him an anamchara to peers and a spiritual mentor to people far and wide. I give thanks for his holy vocation as a teacher of the faith. May I teach well and also be a faithful soul-friend to others. Amen.

Suggested Contemplative Practices

Photography prompt:

Begin by doing some free writing in response to the statement “what I believe” and then complete that phrase. Continue to do this for several minutes, each time writing a new response, digging deep inside of you to discover what values feel most important. Then bring your camera out into the world and see if you can receive images that speak to some of these statements of belief.

Consider taking these home and creating a sequence that tells a story about your heart’s commitments.⁵²

⁵² *Eyes of the Heart: Photography as a Christian Contemplative Practice.* Christine Valters Paintner; Sorin Books; Notre Dame, Indiana; 2013, pages 130-131.

Journal prompt:

The journal prompt for today is embedded in the photography prompt. In addition, journal about your relationship with God.

Florilegium — Discerning God's Will

Cassian said that discernment is the eye and lamp of the body . . . The monk who discerns



is kept from veering to the left in carelessness in sluggishness of spirit, and pretext of control;



is kept from veering to the right in stupid presumption and excessive fervor beyond restraint.

Cassian also offered the image of the test applied by the money-changer who discerned true gold. We are to place thoughts on the scales of our heart and weigh them with exacting care.

1. Is it filled with what is good for all?
2. Is it heavy with the fear of God?
3. Is it genuine in the feelings which underlie it?
4. Is it lightweight because of human show or because of some thrust toward novelty?
5. Has the burden of vainglory lessened its merit or diminished its luster?

For Cassian, humility was the path for the search. A monk was to disclose his thoughts to his spiritual guide. Self-disclosure and obedience, which produce humility, lead to discernment.

Wednesday, October 7

Iona

Itinerary

All the days on Iona are essentially “free” days where you are invited to explore this extraordinary island and to find places to pray and reflect on your relationship with God. Morning and evening meals will be at The Columba Hotel on this schedule:

Breakfast — 8:00 AM

Dinner — 5:45 PM

Worship at the Abbey: Throughout our stay you are invited (as the Spirit prompts you) to attend morning and evening services. These are not required, but they are typically well-designed worship and many have found them to be meaningful.

Morning Service — 9:00 AM

Evening Service — 9:00 PM

Place

Iona has often been described as a “thin place,” by which is meant that the veil which separates the sacred from the profane is very “thin” here and one is constantly stumbling upon God in the most ordinary moments. I have been to Iona seven times now and, though I cannot explain it, I have come to feel like I am coming home when I stand on the deck of the little ferry between Fionnphort and Iona. Even before

Christianity arrived on this little island the pagans had identified hillocks on the island which they understood to be the home of magical creatures.

One such hill (which can be easily found on the way heading west across to the Machair on the back of the island) was later named the “Hill of Angels” because of an episode described by Adomnan in his *Life of Columba*:

[III 16] How a great number of holy angels were seen, coming down from heaven to confer with St. Columba “Likewise, on another occasion, when St. Columba was living in Iona, he addressed the assembled brethren, making his point with great emphasis, saying: ‘Today I shall go to the machair on the west coast of our island, and I wish to go alone. No one is to follow me therefore.’ They obeyed and he set out alone as he desired. But one of the brethren, who was an artful scout, took a different route and hid himself on the top of a little hill that overlooks the machair, for he was eager to find out why the saint had gone out alone. From his vantage point, he could see St. Columba standing on a knoll among the fields and praying with his arms spread out towards heaven and his eyes gazing upwards. Strange to tell — look! — there was suddenly a marvellous apparition, which the man could see with his own bodily eyes from his position on that nearby hill. This cannot have happened, I think, without the permission of God, who desired that the reputation and glory of St. Columba, notwithstanding his own reluctance, should be made more widely known among the peoples because there had been a witness to this vision. For holy angels, the citizens of the heavenly kingdom, were flying down with amazing speed, dressed in white robes, and began to gather around the

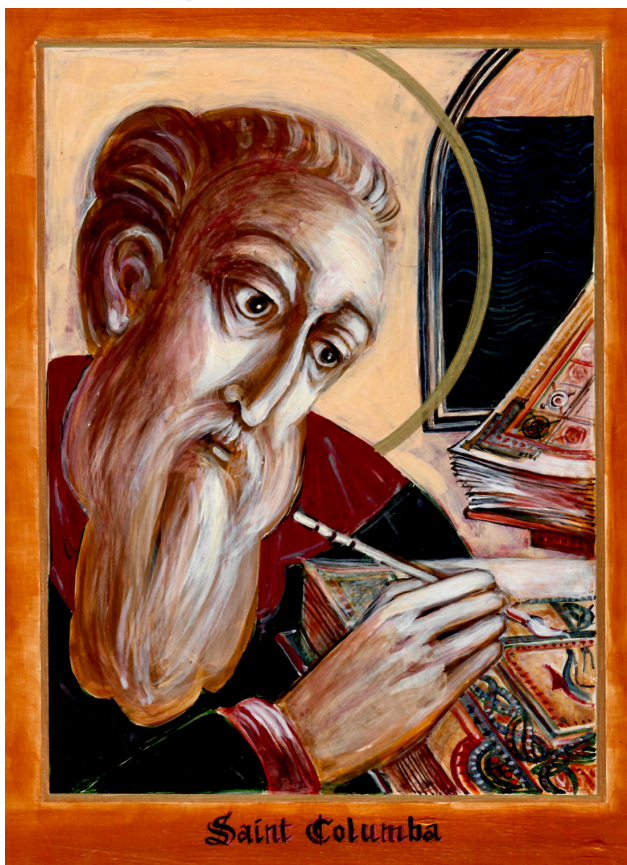
holy man as he prayed. After they had conversed a little with St. Columba, the heavenly crowd — as though they could feel that they were being spied on — quickly returned to the heights of heaven. St. Columba himself, after this conference with angels, went back to the monastery, where he again called the brethren together. He reproached them severely and asked which of them was guilty of disobedience. They protested that they did not know what he referred to, but the man, who was aware of his own inexcusable disobedience, could not bear to hide his sin any longer. He knelt in front of St. Columba in the sight of all the brethren and begged his forgiveness. The saint took the brother aside, laying stern threats on him, as he knelt, and charged him never to give away to anyone the least part of this secret concerning his angelic vision, so long as the saint should live. After St Columba had left the body, the man disclosed to the brethren how he had seen the apparition of the heavenly host, and publicly affirmed what he said. Hence today the knoll where St. Columba conferred with angels affirms by its very name what took place there, for it is called Cnoc nan Aingel, that is, the angels' knoll.”⁵³

[The Pin marks the site of angel's knoll]

⁵³ Adomnan of Iona. *Life of St Columba* (Penguin Classics)



Saint of the Day — Columba



Icon of Saint Columba

St. Columba was born c. 521, in County Donegal, Ireland and died June 8/9, 597, on Iona in the Inner Hebrides, Scotland. His feast day is June 9. Columba is an Irish saint who is credited with having had a main role in the conversion of Scotland to Christianity in the 6th century. He is a patron saint of Scotland and one of the three patron saints of Ireland, along with St. Patrick and St. Brigid. He is also revered as the patron of poets; and bookbinders and is invoked against floods. Columba and his associates and

successors spread the gospel more than any other contemporary group of religious pioneers in Britain.

Columba is believed to have been born in the civil parish of Gartan in what is now County Donegal, in the northwest of Ireland, though many of the details of his birth have been contested by scholars. He is believed to have been the son of noble parents and a descendant of Niall of the Nine Hostages, who founded the great Uí Néill dynasty in the 4th century. His baptismal name, Colum, comes from columba, the Latin word for dove. His Irish name, Colm Cille, means “dove of the church.”

Columba studied in Ireland under Saints Finnian of Moville and Finnian of Clonard and was ordained a priest about 551. He founded churches and the famous monasteries (Derry) and (Durrow). He also established a religious community at (Kells).

About 563 Columba and his 12 disciples traveled by a small boat with a wooden or wicker frame covered over in tarred animal hides to the island of Iona in the Inner Hebrides. Columba and his 12 disciples decided upon Iona as their springboard for the conversion of Scotland. The religious community that was established there was regarded as the mother house and its abbots as the chief ecclesiastical rulers even of the bishops.

Excavations on Iona in 1958 and 1959 revealed Columba’s living cell and the outline of the original monastery. Different traditions claim that he is buried on Iona or in Saul, a village in the former County Down in Northern Ireland, alongside Saints Patrick and Brigid. Both sites have become places of pilgrimage.

One of the most enduring legends associated with St. Columba is his encounter with a great beast in the Loch Ness. As the story goes, while Columba was visiting the Pictish courts, he came upon a group of people burying a man near the River Ness. The man had been reportedly attacked by a “water beast” while swimming. Columba, upon hearing this, sent one of his followers to swim across the river. As the beast approached the swimmer, Columba made the sign of the cross and commanded the creature to “go no further, and touch the man not.” The creature halted as if it had been “pulled back with ropes” and fled, and Columba’s follower returned to his companions unharmed.

Columba was known for his love of study, joy in living, and powerful prayers. He seemed never to have an hour pass in which he was not studying, praying, or enjoying the beauty of God’s creation. He would call God, “Lord of the elements.” By his prayers many were cured of their diseases and he was known to have kept company with angels. Not infrequently other monks reported that while Columba prayed alone at night he was surrounded by an immense blaze of heavenly light.

At the hour of Columba’s death he spoke to the gathered brothers these words, “These, O my children, are the last words I address to you: Be at peace, and have genuine kindness toward one another. If you will follow in the ancient teachings of the faith, God, the comforter of all good, will be your helper, and I, abiding with him, will intercede for you. God will not only give you enough to supply your needs in this present life, but will also bestow upon you eternal

reward which are laid up for those who obediently keep God's commandments."

This brief life of Columba was pulled together using several resources:

- ✠ An entry from Encyclopedia Britannica;
- ✠ *Columba* by Ian Finley;
- ✠ *Wisdom of the Celtic Saints* by Edward Sellner;
- ✠ and mostly from *Life of Saint Columba* by Abbot Adomnán of Iona.

I give thanks for Saint Columba — dove of the church. I give thanks for his life of study, prayer, and corporeal acts of mercy for the sick and imperiled. May I follow his final instruction (which echoes Jeremiah's instruction) and seek out the ancient ways — the good ways — and walk in them obediently, that my life might glorify God and bless all those I encounter. Amen.

Suggested Contemplative Practices - Optional walk to Columba's Bay

n.b. — the walk to Columba's Bay is not an easy walk. It requires a good bit of up and down on sometimes steep terrain and rocky paths; there are no bathrooms but a few places to stop if needed. It is about 3.5 miles round-trip, perhaps more. For those not wishing to go, perhaps they may consider walking to the north shore. Or perhaps spending time around the abbey.

Note for a walk to Columba's Bay:

For those who do go to Columba's Bay, it is often called "the bay of new beginnings." John Phillip Newell encourages us to pick up one of the many

stones and think of something you wish to toss away. Toss the stone back into the bay. Then select of a small stone to take home with you as a symbol of new beginnings. If some of our friends cannot make the walk, consider selecting a stone to take to them.

Photography prompt:

Sit quietly and imagine that within you is part of Divinity that wants to be expressed through your work. How would you go about manifesting the Divine in your work?

Go for a walk with the explicit purpose of photographing the life force within things. Let your eyes be drawn to whatever attracts them. Notice what things you notice and see if you can tell why you notice them. What are the life forces that draw you?⁵⁴

Journal prompt:

What about your old life or a burden you carry you wish to toss away and not bring back home with you? What new beginning is stirring within?

Florilegium

I WANT TO TELL YOU OF MY OWN
EXPERIENCE, AS I PROMISED.⁵⁵

Not that it is of any importance. But I make this disclosure only to help you, and if you derive any profit

⁵⁴ *God is at Eye Level: Photography as Healing Art*; Jan Phillips; Quest Books; Wheaton, Illinois; 2000, page 78.

⁵⁵ From *Sermon Seventy-Four, On the Song of Songs vol. 4*, by Bernard of Clairvaux, translated by Irene Edmonds (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian Publications, 1971-80).

from it I shall be consoled for my foolishness; if not, my foolishness will be revealed. I admit that the Word has also come to me-I speak as a fool-and has come many times. But although he has come to me, I have never been conscious of the moment of his coming. I perceived his presence. I remembered afterwards that he had been with me; sometimes I had a presentiment that he would come, but I was never conscious of his coming or his going. And where he comes from when he visits my soul, and where he goes, and by what means he enters and goes out, I admit that I do not know even now; and John says: "You do not know where he comes from and where he goes." There is nothing strange in this, for of him was it said, "Your footsteps will not be known."

The coming of the Word was not perceptible to my eyes, for he has no color; nor to my ears, for there was no sound; nor yet to my nostrils, for he mingles with the mind, not the air; he has not acted upon the air, but created it. His coming was not tasted by the mouth, for there was no eating or drinking, nor could he be known by the sense of touch, for he is not tangible.

How then did he enter? Perhaps he did not enter because he does not come from outside?

He is not one of the things which exist outside us. Yet he does not come from within me, for he is good, and I know there is no good in me. I have ascended to the highest in me, and look! The Word is towering above that. In my curiosity I have descended to explore my lowest depths, yet I found him even deeper. If I looked

outside myself, I saw him stretching beyond the furthest I could see; and if I looked within, he was yet further within. Then I knew the truth of what I had read. "In him we live and move and have our being." And blessed is the man in whom he has his being, who lives for him and is moved by him.

YOU ASK THEN HOW I KNEW he was present, when his ways can in no way be traced?

He is life and power, and as soon as he enters in, he awakens my slumbering soul; he stirs and soothes and pierces my heart, for before it was hard as stone, and diseased. So he has begun to pluck out and destroy, to build up and to plant, to water dry places and illuminate dark ones, to open what was closed and to warm what was cold, to make the crooked straight and the rough places smooth, so that my soul may bless the Lord, and all that is within me may praise his holy name....

I have marveled at the depth of his wisdom when my secret faults have been revealed and made visible; at the very slightest amendment of my way of life I have experienced his goodness and mercy; in the renewal and remaking of the spirit of my mind, that is of my inmost being, I have perceived the excellence of his glorious beauty, and when I contemplate all these things I am filled with awe and wonder at his manifold greatness.

But when the Word has left me, all these spiritual powers become weak and faint and begin to grow cold,

as though you had removed the fire from under a boiling pot, and this is the sign of his going. Then my soul must needs be sorrowful until he returns, and my heart again kindles within me—the sign of his returning... As long as I live the word "return," the word of recall for the recall of the Word, will be on my lips.

As often as he slips away from me, so often shall I call him back. From the burning desire of my heart I will not cease to call him, begging him to return, as if after someone who is departing, and I will implore him to give back to me the joy of his salvation, and restore himself to me.

Thursday, October 8

Iona to Edinburgh

Itinerary

8:50 AM. ferry to Fionnphort! This is the first leg of a complex series of ferry and bus rides which are like dominos. If we miss one the whole remaining trip becomes problematic.

9:20 AM. Bus transit across Mull.

11:00 AM. CalMac ferry to Oban.

11.50 Our motor-coach will pick up at Oban Ferry Terminal.

Crossing the breadth of Scotland to Edinburgh with comfort stop en route if necessary.

N.B. Our coach will need to go directly to Edinburgh that day in order to let the driver escape the city traffic on the way back out. **We suggest you have something to eat on the boat or bring snacks as a lunch stop is not easily possible.** We'll have some time to relax in Edinburgh before our celebration that evening.

5:30 — Celebration Dinner at Luckenbooths
329 High Street



Place — *Wee Dreich*

Scottish folk are sometimes want to say that Scotland is, “wee dreich” which translates something like, “a bit dreary, gloomy, bleak, miserable, grey, depressing, devoid of sunshine, rainy, wet.” If you investigate the etymology of this quintessentially Scottish word you’ll find that it derives from a Greek word for “dark,” and/or an Old Norse word for “lasting or enduring.” It is worth pondering how such an enduringly gloomy place has been the place of resurrection for so many luminaries of the early Christian church in the United Kingdom.

One of the most beautiful poems in Isaiah is given in chapter 58.

“Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;
you shall cry for help, and he will say, ‘Here I am.’

If you remove the yoke from among you,

the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,
if you offer your food to the hungry

- and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness
and your gloom be like the noonday.
- 11 The LORD will guide you continually,
and satisfy your needs in parched places,
and make your bones strong;
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters never fail.
- 12 Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the foundations of
many generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to live in.”
- [Isaiah 58:9-12 NRSV]

“Then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday.” It is no wonder that Aidan and Cuthbert were called the light/fire of the north. Christian pilgrims can still be torch-bearers for God in the gloom of our current world. We can be the light-bringers to those who dwell in darkness.

The gospel according to John begins this way:

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being 4 in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. 5 The

light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

I am enamored with the idea that our chief task as people of God and as disciples of Jesus is to be those who yearn for and work for the establishment of a workable human community. Today we begin the journey back home. More and more the question to ponder is how will we bring the light and life we have received on pilgrimage back with us so that we, in Isaiah's poetic imagery, are worthy to be called, "the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.

Saint of the Day — LIFE AND DEATH OF SAINT ANDREW⁵⁶

Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee when '...he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea for they were fishermen. And he said to them, 'Come follow me and I will make you fishers of men'. At once they left the nets and followed him' (Matt. 4:18-21).

In John's Gospel we learn that John the Baptist 'when he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!"' (John 1:36). .. 'Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him "We have found the Messiah" (that is the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus.' (John 1 40-42).

⁵⁶ What follows is from the webpage of the National Shrine to St. Andrew on the website for St. Mary's Cathedral in Edinburgh. <https://www.stmaryscathedral.co.uk/standrew/> You will note the British spellings throughout this piece.

This is how we are introduced to Andrew, who was a follower of John the Baptist and who became known as the 'First called'. As an Apostle, Andrew played a significant role in Christ's ministry. All twelve Apostles were given authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness while preaching.

Andrew was present during the Last Supper and in the garden at Gethsemane; he saw the risen Christ after the Resurrection, and received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

According to tradition, Andrew left the Holy Land after Pentecost to spread the Word in Greece and Asia Minor. In 60AD, during the reign of Nero, he was working in Patras, where he baptised the wife and brother of the Governor, Aegeus. The Governor was so incensed by this, he ordered the death of the Apostle. Andrew was crucified on a cross in the shape of an X on 30 November.

This day is recognised around the world as his feast day, and was a Holyday of Obligation in Scotland until 1918. The instrument of his martyrdom – the X shaped cross – has become the symbol of Andrew and appears on the Scottish national flag (the Saltire), as a reminder that he is patron saint of Scotland.

THE RELICS OF SAINT ANDREW

The bones of the martyred Saint were buried in Patras and remained there until 357 AD, when most were removed to Constantinople at the command of the emperor Constantine. From this time devotion to St Andrew spread throughout the western Church. In the eastern Church St Andrew also gained a devoted following, becoming the patron saint of both Greece and Russia.

In 1204, French and Venetian Crusaders sacked Constantinople. The French removed many relics (including the Shroud), to Western Europe. To protect the relics of the Apostle, Cardinal Peter of Capua, the Papal Legate to the East, brought the body of St Andrew to his home town, Amalfi, in southern Italy.

Since 1846 the relics in Amalfi Cathedral have produced a mysterious and miraculous oil, called manna, every year on days specifically associated with the saint – 28 January and 30 November.

THE SCOTTISH SHRINE TO ST ANDREW

Legend has it that relics of St Andrew were brought to Scotland by St Rule from Patras. What probably happened was that the relics were brought from Rome by St Augustine in 597AD as part of his great mission to bring the Word to the Anglo-Saxons.

I suppose it is right that we who are strangers sojourning in England and Scotland should end our pilgrimage giving a nod to the patron saint of Scotland, who himself was not native here — and in fact may have only come here after his death. And yet, even something so small and temporal and his body has shown great power to inspire faithfulness in Scotland.

Perhaps we are off-put by the focus on and veneration of relics of this nature. Protestants often are. And yet, seen for what they are — not magical objects that people worship instead of God — but rather as small ordinary things which speak to our great yearning to re-connect with and honor the lives and ministries of the earliest Christians. I have been in Edinburgh many times and have never made time to go to the St. Mary's Cathedral to see the National Shrine to Saint Andrew. Perhaps this time I will go. Perhaps I

will take my bible and my beads and sit for a bit to give thanks for Andrew.

Suggested Contemplative Practices

Photography prompt:

A day of travel and a day to reflect: Take one of your favorite photographs, and write the story behind it. Why did you take it? What did it mean to you? What else was going on at the time?⁵⁷

Journal prompt:

Are there some people in your life you consider more “spiritual” than others? What are the qualities that contribute to this impression?⁵⁸

Florilegium — The Lantern out of Doors⁵⁹

Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844–89). *Poems*. 1918.

SOMETIMES a lantern moves along the night,

That interests our eyes. And who goes there?

I think; where from and bound, I wonder,
where,

⁵⁷ *God is at Eye Level: Photography as Healing Art*; Jan Phillips; Quest Books; Wheaton, Illinois; 2000, page 135.

⁵⁸ *God is at Eye Level: Photography as Healing Art*; Jan Phillips; Quest Books; Wheaton, Illinois; 2000, page 89.

⁵⁹ ⁵⁹ Nicholson & Lee, eds. *The Oxford Book of English Mystical Verse*. 1917.

With, all down darkness wide, his wading light?

Men go by me whom either beauty bright

In mould or mind or what not else makes rare:

They rain against our much-thick and marsh
air

Rich beams, till death or distance buys them
quite.

Death or distance soon consumes them: wind

What most I may eye after, be in at the end

I cannot, and out of sight is out of mind.

Christ minds: Christ's interest, what to avow or
amend

There, éyes them, heart wánts, care haúnts,
foot fóllows kind,

Their ránsom, théir rescue, ánd first, fást, last
friénd.

Friday, October 9

Flights home

Journal prompt:

What are you taking home with you? How will you answer the inevitable questions from friends and family when they ask: “What was your favorite part?” Is it possible to put your experiences on pilgrimage into words? How will you share it?