

Pentecost Pilgrimage in Place, 2023

Saying “Yes” By Pilgrim Becky Glad

I just finished reading, for the second time, a beautiful book entitled The Gift of Being Yourself: The Sacred Call to Self-Discovery by David Benner. In it the author explores how the knowing of oneself and knowing God are completely interrelated, intertwined. On pilgrimage, we have the opportunity to take up that exploration for ourselves, for it is in the lived, experienced relationship with the Trinity that we come to see ourselves as They see us...each one of us, deeply loved and uniquely created to display the gifts of the Spirit to the world.

How will prayer, intention, and context help us in this deep and sacred exploration? Tonight, I want to lead us through a simple exercise to help us to imagine our “yes” in response to God’s invitations to us.

If you’re willing, close your eyes and imagine the first steps of the walking portion of this pilgrimage in place. For most of us, this will be sometime tomorrow. In your mind’s eye, envision that moment. Where are you? Who are you with? Imagine the Spirit moving in such a way that you catch glimpses of God’s presence with you as you take these first steps...notice the light, colors, shapes, warmth or coolness of the air, the breeze or the stillness, the sounds, God in others, God in you, in what you’re carrying in your heart, in your body, in your feet walking. **Yes to this day, God. Yes to You.**

Now imagine, what will this walking day hold? Prayers. Exchanges with God’s Spirit, with the Risen Christ, all around. Emotions. Heavy burdens I may be carrying for myself, those I love, this world that is suffering. Longings. Desires. Bursts of joy, of grief, of hope? What will surface for me today? What will I allow to surface? **Make a simple prayer for the day: Lord, help me to bring all of who I am to You, who is Love. Help me to show up to myself, to You, to all of your creation.**

Notice that you are not alone. If you are walking by yourself, who might you encounter? Who might you notice as you pass? If you walk in the company of others, how will God come to you through them? How will God come to them through you? Through laughter, or a shared snack, or a listening ear? **What would be the most authentic gift you could imagine offering to others?**

What will the walking day hold? You will let it unfold, let it come to you, let God come close. By God’s gift of grace, you will choose to be awake to wherever the Spirit leads you in your inner journey. You will choose by this same grace to be awake to the world around you, both the immediate space you occupy and the larger world the Spirit loves. You will look for opportunities to love and to serve. **You wonder: What gift am I to offer out, to God, to myself, and to the world around me? Yes to Love. Yes to using my gifts to further love and unity in the world.**