

October 27, 2022

Dear Pilgrims,

Fall is in the air; leaves are turning golden and falling; days have fewer hours of light; nights are leisurely and long; thanksgiving is in our hearts; blessings abound. And it is time to prepare our hearts, minds and bodies for a Pilgrimage in Place, a self-designed offering of Gratitude, November 25-27, 2022. Our practice has a rhythm and dependable aspects. You are free to map out your own pilgrimage to a place that is holy to you, by a route that stretches your endurance, with a heart holding the prayers of others and a mind focused on a particular scriptural text. So, on this day I'm asking you to register for the Gratitude Pilgrimage (pilgrimageforunity.org) and to use these questions/resources to guide your preparation:

- **The Theme:** Walk, Pray, Give Thanks. Keep it simple: just one step and then another; pray for the intentions and concerns collected from others; explore the place of gratitude in your heart and life.
- **Where will you walk?** Holiness hides in plain sight. It may be in an untended cemetery or a pristine church building; it may be where hundreds have paused to pray or a quiet spot known only to you; it may be along flowing water or on a windswept mesa/mountain. Walk to a destination with the assurance that the holiness of God awaits you there.
- **The Text:** the Beatitudes Matthew 5: 2-12. Read these daily; use different translations; engage in conversation, research and reflection; may these Beatitudes be your spiritual compass.
- **With whom will you walk?** Walking alone provides the opportunity to converse with yourself: the self you have been, the self you are, and the self you are becoming – each within the frame of blessings. Walking with friends allows your heart to listen to another's story and your mind to open to new perspectives – these too are framed by blessings. Walking with folks you don't really know invites even deeper listening and opening; you might consider sharing this pilgrimage with someone from another faith or tradition; learn from them what gratitude means.
- **The Community of Pilgrims:** Once we were mainly from New Mexico, but over the past three years we've expanded north, west and east – the furthest south is Las Cruces and Los Angeles! Still we gather twice as a community of pilgrims: at the Opening Zoom on Friday, Nov. 25 @ 8 am/MT and again on Sunday, Nov. 27 at 6 pm/MT for a Closing Zoom; each gathering includes voices of pilgrims, prayers, reflections, music and time for small group conversation. Knowing you are not alone as a pilgrim is a blessing deepened by these Zoom connections.
- **How will you walk?** Devote one day to a longer walk or two or three days to shorter distances. Request and send in intentions to be shared; pray these intentions every day. Personalize your plan according to your context (rural or urban, uphill or level, enjoying the sunshine or prepared for stronger weather). Photo document and share your pilgrimage on the website. This is your pilgrimage, it is not a random ramble. Celebrate gratitude by being a pilgrim.

Remember to share the attached flyer with your community of faith, your family and friends. Encourage others to register and step out as pilgrims. Pray for the Steering Team as they design and fulfill their tasks. And most of all, be blessed and bless others.

Peace, Pilgrim Kay