

Monthly Devotion

JULY

“Blessed are those whose strength is in
You, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage”

Psalm 84:5



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“The geographical pilgrimage is the symbolic acting out of an inner journey. The inner journey is the interpolation of the meanings and signs of the outer pilgrimage. One can have one without the other. It is best to have both.” - **Thomas Merton**

July is often associated with pilgrimages. For the Celtic Christians and particularly those in Ireland the last few days of July were a holiday time which became an occasion when monks and ordinary pilgrims set out on pilgrimages. The weather at this time of year giving them the opportunity to travel easily and to be able to sleep out under the star.

Pilgrimages often see the pilgrim journeying to special places, places that we may refer to as ‘thin places’- places where there is a deep holiness and connection with the Divine.

The word pilgrim comes from the Latin word ‘peregrinus’ which means one who travels through the land. For many pilgrims the destination is not necessarily the main event, rather it is the journey that has the most impact.

The outward journey, the daily trek which takes in the scenery around becomes entwined with the inner spiritual experience that takes place during the walk. Both experiences combine to help the pilgrim experience a deeply personal and sacred ‘Knowing’.

Pilgrimages can be long and arduous, or they may be a journey of pure joy; whatever the experience the pilgrim cannot fail to be moved and changed as the ‘clutter’ of life is left behind with each step.



Your visit to Shallowford House may be for a variety of reasons-perhaps not a pilgrimage, but God has called you to this place and so in quiet moments there is the opportunity to walk around the grounds and enjoy the scenery and connect with God. You may take in the flowers and shrubs, or the apple trees which are laden with fruit. You may go and see the animals and spend some time with 'Bruce' the Alpaca.

Take time to enjoy the simplicity of the natural world and leave behind all those things which clutter your life.

Make room for the Holy Spirit to dwell with you and give you Peace.

To Pray

God bless the path on which you go.
God bless the earth beneath your feet.
God bless your destination.
God be a smooth way before you,
A guiding star above you,
A keen eye behind you.
This day, this night, and forever.
God be with you whatever you pass.
Jesus be with you whatever you climb.
Spirit be with you wherever you stay.
God be with you at each stop and each sea,
At each lying down and each rising up,
In the trough of the waves,
on the crest of the billows
each step of the journey you take.

Amen

Our monthly devotion is written by Susan Hutchinson
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