



Diocesan Pilgrimage 2013

All Weekends beginning
May 18/19 through Sept. 7/8

- Join the parish community for Mass
- See God's beauty in the sacred statues and artwork
- Experience the culture and history of the diocese
- During this time of pilgrimage, celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation at any local church in the diocese
- Reflect on your own spiritual journey



For more information visit us online at
www.welcomecatholics.com

Take a Spiritual Journey This Summer

We Make Pilgrimage Together

by: Rev. George Smiga

The religious practice of pilgrimage is not uniquely Christian. Almost every faith tradition has its own form of making a journey to a religious site. Christians inherited the practice most directly from Judaism. The three great Jewish pilgrimage feasts were Passover, Pentecost, and Booths, celebrated each year in Jerusalem. Because Jerusalem was the city of Jesus' death and resurrection, it became and has remained the primary destination for Christian pilgrimage. In time, other sites associated with the tombs of martyrs or an apparition of Mary or one of the saints also became the focus for pilgrimage.

Although it is always possible for an individual to make a pilgrimage alone either as a penance or expression of faith, people usually make the journey together with other believers, often in great numbers. The first Holy Year in 1300 welcomed 200,000 pilgrims to Rome. During its centenary celebration in 1958, Lourdes hosted eight million.

This community aspect of pilgrimage, however, is more than statistics. It carries a profound theology. Pilgrimage is based on the sacramental conviction that outward material realities are the occasion of God's grace. The physical journey of the pilgrimage mirrors our spiritual journey to God. We make that journey with others, as part of the Church. As pilgrims move toward a sacred site, they symbolize the Church journeying to the New Jerusalem. This physical action, occasioned by faith, is the opportunity for God to heal and bless us.

The Letter to the Hebrews presents the community of believers on a journey with Christ in the lead: "Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed" (12:12-13). Throughout our lives we travel with Christ leading us and healing us. In pilgrimage we enact that journey. If you decide in this Year of Faith to make a pilgrimage to one of our diocesan sites, see the faith in your movement, recognize the Lord who leads you, and never forget that you do not travel alone.



Visit one of the parishes listed to receive your "Pilgrim" passport. Then, travel to the remaining parishes to have your passport stamped, including: St. Mary, Elyria • St. Mary, Painesville • St. Mary, Wooster • St. Sebastian, Akron



Complete your journey at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, Downtown Cleveland



The first 1,200 to complete their pilgrimage with a fully stamped passport, receive a commemorative Year of Faith medal blessed by Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI.