



Season of Creation 2020: Jubilee for Earth September 1 – October 4, 2020

You are invited to go on Pilgrimage!

Visit Mount Saint Vincent through these pictures, choose an outdoor space near you, or sit at home with your imagination.

A pilgrimage is a journey, often into an unknown or foreign place, where a person goes in search of new or expanded meaning about their self, others, nature, or a higher good, through the experience. It can lead to a personal transformation, after which the pilgrim returns to their daily life. (Wikipedia definition) The theme of pilgrimage is woven into many of the books which make up the Christian Bible. It is a multi-faceted concept which includes ideas of journey, experiencing exile, living as a pilgrim or sojourner, and the quest for a homeland. (the internet)

As you begin your pilgrimage, take a moment to just be...breathe in the wonder and beauty of God's Creation; breathe out cares, worries, concerns that you have for yourself, your family, the larger extended family of God. Breathe into God's Unconditional Love and breathe that Love out into our world, to those near and far. Breathe in the gift God is offering you now though you might not be able to name it. Breathe out that gift, known or unknown, to make room for God's ongoing gift of creation happening in and through you and among all life.

Throughout your pilgrimage you might want to quietly chant the words to *Earth Community*, by Jan Novotka, "Reverently, Consciously, Compassionately. I want to walk. I want to live within the Earth Community." Song is available for purchase. You may be able to listen to online.

Visit the Peace Pole or a place that brings you peace. Let your breath be your Peace Prayer. Bring names of people and intentions to mind as you gaze softly on what is before you. Listen to sounds. Feel the air surrounding you. Notice smells and sensations. Remember Jesus' words to us, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." John 14:27.

Disregard for the duty to cultivate and maintain a proper relationship with my neighbor, for whose care and custody I am responsible, ruins my relationship with my own self, with others, with God and with the earth. When all these relationships are neglected, when justice no longer dwells in the land, the Bible tells us that life itself is endangered. (Laudato Si', LS 70)



On your pilgrimage, see if you notice mushrooms. If you do, take time to wonder and be grateful for how mushrooms benefit the ecosystem. Give thanks for the gifts they bring us. Scientists are researching their use in decomposing nuclear waste; in cancer research. I give thanks for the laborers who do tedious, dangerous and underpaid work to bring mushrooms to our tables to eat. You may want to search the internet to find out more.



A fragile world, entrusted by God to human care, challenges us to devise intelligent ways of directing, developing and limiting our power'. Laudato Si' #78.



Find a rock on your pilgrimage. Spend time with it. Touch it. Notice how it feels. Hot. Cold. Hard. How is the rock “speaking” to you? Rocks are powerful symbols. They are mentioned in the Scriptures of all world religions. Psalmists speak of God as “the Rock of my Salvation.” Rock formations tell us of our history in geological time. As we look across the Palisades (picture on right shows the Palisades) we are reminded that the Palisades are part of a 200 million-year

mountain range older than the Himalayas. Many of the huge rocks in the Northeast come from the last Ice Age as glaciers began to melt. Make this pilgrimage time one that includes reflecting on our place in deep history. We stand on ground that Native Americans lived on over 10,000 years ago. Invite them to join you on pilgrimage. Learn at least one fact about the Lenape who lived on this holy ground.



Do you know where the butterfly bushes are? If so, take a walk there. Even if this is not the butterfly season, google “imaginal cells” and find out about the caterpillar, its life cycle to butterfly and its imaginal cells. Though initial imaginal cells die, imaginal cells keep coming and eventually the future butterfly emerges. Same DNA but a different form of life. Take time to imagine new possibilities. Take time to dream and to plant seeds of new growth, in your mind as well as through specific actions. Think of a positive affirmation for yourself. For a loved one. For our world. Say it out loud. Repeat it. Let that be your “imaginal cell” bringing forth new life. Repeat it often. Have hope. Know that the butterfly (your affirmation) will emerge.



On your pilgrimage, go out during different times of the day. Spend time outdoors at twilight. Be aware of sights, sounds, smells and lighting at twilight time. Dawn! Midday! How are they different? What do they evoke in you?

“The entire material universe speaks of God’s love, his boundless affection for us. Soil, water, mountains: everything is, as it were, a caress of God.” (LS 84)

“To sense each creature singing the hymn of its existence is to live joyfully in God’s love and hope” (LS 85)

“God has written a precious book, whose letters are the multitude of created things present in the universe.” (LS 85)

On your pilgrimage, have you found a “tree friend”? Or do you have many? Spend time with a tree. Let it speak to you. Notice its roots, its trunk, branches and leaves, its nuts and fruits if they are present. Be aware of the lifegiving gifts of trees ... especially old growth forests, rainforests, and all green things. They are critical for life on Earth and for human and nonhuman survival. “I think I shall never see a poem as lovely as a tree...” Look up Joyce Kilmer’s poem, *Trees*, and spend some time reflecting on it.

“If we no longer speak the language of fraternity and beauty in our relationship with the world, our attitude will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters.” (LS 11)

Take time to reflect on the different seasons of the year. Do you have a favorite? If so, what do you like about it?



Pope Francis calls us to ecological conversion. “This conversion also entails a loving awareness that we are not disconnected from the rest of creatures, but joined in a splendid universal communion. As believers, we do not look at the world from without but from within, conscious of the bonds with which the Father has linked us to all beings.” (LS 220) On your pilgrimage, take time to reflect on this quote and how this pilgrimage draws you to this loving awareness.



Signs of hope.

Take time outdoors to gently consider the following questions. Don't "push for" answers. Be with the questions. Trust that the Spirit will help you find your voice, now, later or even weeks from now. Questions are more important than the answers!

- ❖ Who and what offers you hope?
- ❖ When or where did the beauty and wonder of God's creation bring you peace, courage, hope and strength?
- ❖ How might a "pilgrimage" such as this inspire and bring you peace, hope and love?
- ❖ Name a sign of hope that you wish to share and choose one person to share it with.
- ❖ Think of a way we might together strengthen each other in hope and bring hope into the world.

The following quotes from Laudato Si' are offered for reflection. You may want to read over them and choose the one that speaks to you. Use it as a mantra. Repeat it several times as you walk your pilgrimage asking for an open heart, mind, eyes and will.

1. The God who created the universe out of nothing can also intervene in this world and overcome every form of evil. Injustice is not invincible. (LS 74)
2. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty... that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. (LS 246)
3. Let us sing as we go. May our struggles and our concern for this planet never take away the joy of our hope. (LS 244)
4. We must regain the conviction that we need one another, that we have a shared responsibility for others and the world, and that being good and decent are worth it. (LS 229)
5. Love, overflowing with small gestures of mutual care, is also civic and political, and it makes itself felt in every action that seeks to build a better world. Love for society and commitment to the common good are outstanding expressions of a charity which affects not only relationships between individuals but also "macro-relationships, social, economic and political ones. (LS 231)
6. We are speaking of an attitude of the heart, one which approaches life with serene attentiveness, which is capable of being fully present to someone without thinking of what comes next, which accepts each moment as a gift from God to be lived to the full. (LS 226)

Season of Creation 2020 prayer can be found at

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RANyrrjoHYzNzFL5N1fg5H8Y4RvglUbE/view>

If interested in a zoom conversation to reflect together on our pilgrimages, contact Cdeangelo@scny.org, 9/1/20