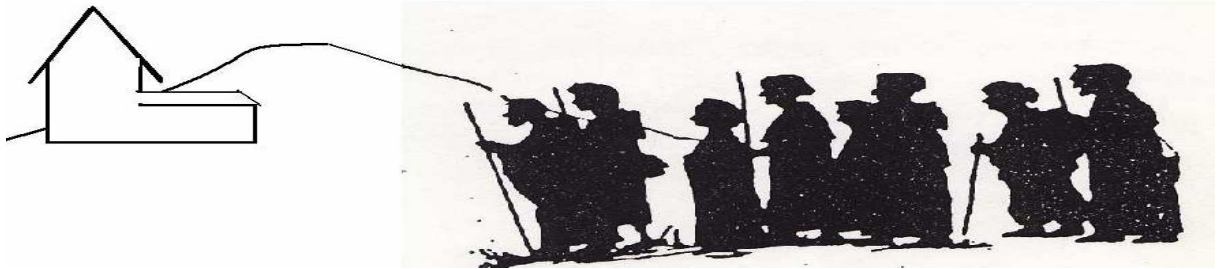


The pilgrim process

A Theology for the way



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(This is a shortened version with no pictures).

You are welcome to contact me on Dan@Scotlandmail.com for any assistance or help preparing your pilgrimage whether it is a physical journey or to be seen as a congregational journey.

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Models and methods

1 Introduction – reason and purpose of this paper on pilgrims

The pilgrim process is about man and his ongoing quest for recreation and renewal and quality of life. The idea is not just about finding old paths in nature leading to a shrine but about man to day and his personal relationships and his relating to the environment. It is as much a journey to reconnect with the depths of oneself as well as a journey to rediscover this spirituality in our land, churches and community. It is a physical journey too, often on paths where other ‘pilgrims have walked.

The pilgrim is borderless and open-minded. This nation is built by Gaels, Norsemen, Irish, Scots, Saxons, Britons and to day also people originating from Eastern Europe and all over the world. There is no room for diversion, inequality or ethnical separations. Britain itself is a holy place. It is ecumenical, inter religious and can meet the spiritual needs of those not belonging to any religion. We have in this, as a nation an original fundamental blessing to lean on and to live with. That blessing does not have any specific creeds but is universally human and opens up a spirituality that is for everyone, without limits.

One of the foundations in ancient belief was that of pilgrimage, whether it was by going within one self or by visiting holy places, or the natural combination of these two. To be a pilgrim is to rediscover the old paths that our forerunners discovered that leads to a better understanding of my self and my community. That is why the pilgrim of to day is not only the one visiting but also the one who is resident here.

There are many signs today of profound discontent even where there is plenty. Suggested here, is that finding old pilgrim paths and perhaps making new ones is a way that will help people connect with their deeper selves and meet their deepest needs. Not only for individuals, it is a way of empowering groups of people and organisations to find ways of rediscovering inner peace that truly will open up for that harmony that is the dream and hope for this life.

This paper aims to reach a variety of organisations as well as individuals and to form a base for inspiration and further studies and development.

The idea is to find a method for, tourist organisations, education boards and official bodies as well as dioceses and local congregations for them to be inspired and dynamic, as well as giving people on ‘holiday’ a new possibility to find ways to real recreation.

This paper will focus on the role of the Church and it is an encouragement to the church to take up these ideas as a way to reach out.

Scottish aspects;

The reason for writing about reviving and developing the idea of pilgrims and pilgrimages in Scotland is the hope that It is vision, will not only inspire church people, but other organisations who could use this idea as a means of reviving some of the true meaning of Scotland and what it was originally founded on. It is what the Scottish ancestors thought was worth fighting for and today what tourists dream of finding here. That is the unique spirituality of this land, which breaks through the barriers of modern living, touching and re awakening the heart, the re creation we all seek in life.

2 Who is this for?

* People like you and me.

For anyone really who at times feels the need to get away from it all, perhaps when life is too much, or not enough and time out is needed to recharge the batteries. It is a way to find a new meaning in day-to-day life as well as a meaningful and recreational leisure time.

It is a question of finding to day, inspired by the old pilgrim idea, ways of empowerment that will give every day of life a deeper meaning. It is about finding one self and a true meaning of being a human, whether we are at home or on holiday. Thereby it will use the history of this nation to empower and inspire life to day and in the future.

In undertaking a pilgrimage in to the depths of this nation, its history and people opens up possibilities for a consciousness that is grounded deep within and thereby opens up for harmony and solidarity.

* People of the church

Who are seeking a means of bridging the gap between the signs of spiritual lack in our communities and the heart of the Christian message which if realised meets our deepest need. The church is, or should be, the healing power, not only for those already inside, but for those seeking the power of this nation as tourists.

One of the foundations in the ancient Christian belief was that of pilgrimage, whether it is within your self, by visiting holy places, or the natural combination of these two. Churches, new or old are holy places and have still the natural ability to give people the spirituality they need and seek in various ways.

There is no question about it but the Church to day needs to strengthen their relations towards both local non-churchgoers as well as tourists of different kind.

In this paper, we see this as a common task and it is to point to the fact that churches here of course refers to all the major churches.

(As this paper has, as one of its intentions, the internal development in the Scottish Episcopal Church, it has therefore a natural reference towards that branch of our Christian church.)

* People in the tourist industry

People in the tourist industry who are keen to give visitors and tourists the fullest experience of re-creation possibilities. The United Kingdom is always so much more, it has depth and a spiritual underlying meaning that formed this Kingdom and made it so special and thereby it stood out against other countries.

Scotland, England and Wales have a good reputation abroad for being countries where you can find true recreation for both body and soul. We need to take advantage of that reputation and open up possibilities for people, both tourists and locals to reach that spirituality. It has uniqueness in nature, people and history that can bring out spiritual awareness and healing to body and mind.

To be true to tourists and regard them as pilgrims is to be true to the inherited inclusiveness we have to hold in trust. That means that the country it self actually is giving this harmony and peace but sometimes we have to guide the seeking visitors to places were the holiness is breaking through.

What is missing now is active tourist information that leads people only not to shops and nightlife but to Cathedrals, churches, parks and to nature that is unique in the world. It is unique not only because it is extremely beautiful but because it is loaded with spirituality. That spirituality is what the pilgrim is seeking. Sometimes he needs help to find the way. We need pathfinders that open up the often hidden treasures of both history and to day as well as in natures and in human constructions.

Although a large number of people are enjoying shorter workweeks today, other factors have prevented more people from seeing an increase in their leisure time; such as commuting time, increased maintenance time for taking care of new possessions such as cars, homes. More people suffering from the stress of living in bigger cities, which means that more time is required before they are ready for leisure activities. The distinction between work and non-work has also become progressively vaguer. It is clear though that even if the absolute amount of leisure time may have increased little over the past several decades, the way people use it is changing.

* People running Leisure centres, Historical sites, Providing Accommodation and those responsible other fields of interests.

The increasing globalisation brings to people constant new impressions. At the same time peoples, preferences for experiences become more individualistic. Through the constant increasing advertising and commercialisation, people become choosier. They can allow themselves to be more selective.

In this situation, we have to ask us the question: How to present our attraction or business so that it not only appeals to external pleasure but also opens up possibilities for a spiritual experience.

To survive and to develop in the tourist business to day, we have to be able to offer something more than just accommodation and pastimes.

Time is now moving rapidly to an age where people, on annual leave, on conferences and company education are asking for alternatives.

The time is over when the guest was pleased with high standard of the accommodation, good food and different leisure facilities.

Today they are asking for deeper substance to their holidays or conferences. We might say that they are asking for a spiritual input that will give new energy so that they can take on their life tasks with a new and fresh commitment.

In the future above all, the customers will require individual inner experiences together with quality and service. To meet this demand from the customers, the hotel, B&B or leisure attraction needs to have a profile that points to a well thought out concept. When finding this concept the establishment needs to take its aim from its natural conditions and the competence among the staff as well as the wishes from the customers. The pilgrim idea is a way to reach goals.

We cannot deny that within the Tourist industry the need for profit is necessary so the goal is to assume or at least try to reach the stated goal and in the same way make the idea profitable. The Pilgrim idea is to be seen as a complement to the ordinary market but will certainly be of a great importance to find new customers above all in the off-season period. Therefore, it might be a way of increasing revenue.

3 What is the need? / Recognizing the pilgrim in us all

* Separation and Dreams

Man and woman are created in peace and love, in equality, and with possibilities to share all that life gives us together.

In that there is an original blessing dwelling in all whether we are aware of it or not. Somewhere we seem to have lost that blessing.

We have lost the innocence of being children standing in front of the big adventure that is being alive and sharing that life with others.

That does not mean that we have erased the holy image of the light within.

The true human in us might be hidden or forgotten but not lost. It might be held in terrible bondage by wrongdoings, but at heart we are the image of the beautifulness of life it self.

We have distorted the image but not lost it.

Life to day is to often diverted and almost corrupt and not always do we feel the wholeness and holiness of being a part of something good and unique.

Deep inside every man and woman have a dream about wholeness. It is a dream about a state of Paradise in mind as well as in nature.

This is also the dream of being a member of a nation built on principles of inclusiveness and harmony.

Even the common dream of a social just society seems to day so often obscured. Words about solidarity, common consideration and fairness are often experienced as useless and empty. The society to day is to often favouring speed, youth, quick money and egoism.

Where is the dream of wholeness and holiness?

The Church is actually on a mission to offer all that harmony and should be a picture of that lost Paradise. It is the basic mission given her to fulfil. That is not always true to day. Churches are locked and sometimes both divided and speaking a language that is not incorporating and liberating people, but alienates them and sometimes even scares them away. The modern church, shovelled into a something "private", seems to be content with being just a separate part of life. Prayer, as a bridge between work and leisure has been lost in this process.

We have a situation of diversity and alienation.

This state of "stress and efficiency" is also reflected into people's leisure times.

The word pilgrim actually means "someone who is not at home" someone who is on a journey. In the same way, the word tourist can be deducted from the word "touring" someone who is moving and looking for something.

No other age of human history can offer so many possibilities to find that something, than ours.

People's annual leave is today extended.

In this, it is a sad thing that the numbers of suicides and abuses are increased during holidays. Alcohol and other forms of drugs seem to be the only travel companion for many on holiday.

It is a sign of how our stressful working day have become a baggage that we carry with us in to our leisure time.

The pilgrim process is a way to bring awareness into our leisure time.

* A Way out and a way in

As the meaning of the word pilgrim is someone that is not at home, we can also associate it with all who are homeless within themselves. All who are not feeling that they are a good picture of the ideal human being? (Or by the way; presenting a picture of a good nation or a paradise church.)

There are moments when you can see the glory of Gods image in people and places. Sometimes unexpected. Moments when the light of love breaks the walls of stress, ignorance, egoism and wrongdoings. Moments in love when you become one with the universe. This kind of moments for instance Scotland has many to offer. The Spirituality of the nation and its rich history are a source of findings harmony.

The intention of the pilgrim process to day is not only to encourage people to travel. It is not to find new places to visit. It is not a journey for travelling or walking for its own sake.

The goal is to come back into the day-to-day life. To come back recreated to spirit, mind and body.

That is why we set out for a journey, to be recreated. Leisure time is actually a way for us to find that key to our inner harmony and peace. It is a time for us to find the original blessing that dwells within.

To be a pilgrim is to make the best out of that golden opportunity the holiday time is. A true pilgrimage does not end when work starts and everything is back to a day-to-day life. It is a constant journey that leads to the depths of our self and our experience of that future paradise we all want to be apart of.

That also goes for the nation and the church them selves.

Parliament, officials, Church people, Leisure workers have to go out on a pilgrimage in order to come back, into the world, where it has to guide more pilgrims and support them with heavenly manna.

They are pathfinder for all others. They have a responsibility to be there to guide and assist.

The pathfinder themselves need to be recreated. Recreated in order to recreate others. This is creating attentiveness and understanding of what their work is actually about. In addition, it will give a meaning to an often outgiving job. To work with people is not just a job it is having a relationship and an awareness of the others need.

The Pathfinder needs to do this journey himself in order to lead others in a good and secure way.

In that, we are all pilgrims whether we are politicians, church leaders, tourist workers or just ordinary people longing for harmony.

* The meaning of Pilgrimage; To Return

The medieval pilgrim did not only have a way to go that guided him to the goal. He also had a way to return.

A pilgrim always returns to his home with a new vital energy. His quest is a journey in a land of open minds, constantly influenced by the people and places he experiences.

Both the goal and the journey become realized in the society he lives in. That is why the pilgrim process furthermore is a brick in building the future. The quest from ancient time meets the challenges that face us in the present day.

4 Pathfinders

The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you.

Mark 4:11

***The Ordained ministry**

Every company of pilgrims in the medieval times had their pathfinder, someone that did know the best and safe way to the goal. A pathfinder's duty is to point to possible paths for the pilgrim's purpose. He knows the way and he knows the pilgrims he is leading. He knows the way to the beautiful spots to rest. He knows where the ford is and how to find the holy well where clean and vigorous water is flowing. The pathfinder is also the one that makes sure that the resources for the journey are sufficient and healthy. He knows this because he is following a succession. The experience of his predecessor is living in him and he is constantly training his successors.

The ordination of a pathfinder, as a minister, is his identification and the awareness that he is following a good succession and this is the foundation he stands on. The foundation that makes him frank, sensitive and honest to the people he meets.

Some of the walkers walk quickly while others walk small tripping steps. Some pilgrims can carry baggage that is heavy and big while others lose their breath under the smallest pressure. The pathfinder is not walking the pilgrim path because he wants to reach the goal first. He has a duty, a vocation to lead. That might also mean that he has to look for those that are lost on the way. Even those that are slow and meek have the right to reach the goal. The pathfinder has a duty to them all. Sometimes he has to push and drive pilgrims and even carry their heavy loads.

The pathfinder knows how to find the paths leading to the paradise that people of the word thought they lost. None of the appointed are appointed to be the first in paradise them selves, but are ordained to hold in trust the keys that will lead the seeker to true recreation. The ordained is an administrator of the spiritual foods that every pilgrim needs, in order to be able to reach the goal.

Along the way, the pilgrims always come across those who have fallen out or are lost. There are also people, sitting in the ditches that have been on the path once but have now rested for so long that they no longer know where to go.

People are lost, without compass or maps to life; they are homeless and currently walking in emptiness without any goal. You meet the lost ones in both council estates and in mansions, in towns and village, people who no longer believe neither in them self or others.

The pilgrims and their pathfinder also meet those who are asking why the pilgrims are walking. What is the meaning with life, what is a future anyhow? The pilgrims on the way should always be prepared to give a good and accurate answer. This is mission. The pilgrim process is a strategy for reaching out to those who do not have the means to come them selves.

*The Lay people

When the number of pilgrims is too many the pathfinder will appoint lay people to take responsibility in the same way as he/she.

Sometimes pilgrims themselves voluntarily assist in making the journey as comfortable as possible. Sometimes their experiences in some fields are even deeper than the ordained minister.

Local people have additional another know how than the pathfinder has, and if he is wise he listens to their advice.

There is a fact, that the “team of leaders” do not have time to take on new tasks or are stressed and already overloaded with responsibilities. This leaves much to the ordained priest. This statement indicates the need for delegation in all church work.

*The Mission church

Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. 1 Pet 3:15

Wherever the pilgrim went, he always, met people on his way. They asked him questions and he was always prepared to answer them and give an account of his journey and his hope.

He or she was a living witness to a living God that gave hope and meaning to this life and gave life a perspective that was eternal.

The pilgrim played an important part in spreading the gospel to remote places. The pilgrim was someone that for many on the way was a glimpse of the holy. He or she was out on a journey to recreate himself, but in his meeting with others on the way he also managed to be someone that spread holiness and hope into an often dark and hard world. The pilgrim was therefore both on the way, but in that, also a sign for many to the way to a new life.

The news of a band of pilgrims on their way spread throughout villages and people went out to meet them, just to listen to them and be inspired by them.

In all this, they were inspirations to others to join them on the journey towards holiness and harmony.

Even our churches are living witnesses of the holy and complete. Places where people can be reached by the good news of the God that is the uttermost holiness. Churches are there not for their own sake, they exist to give people a sanctuary and a descent answer to life's deepest questions.

The church must always be prepared to answer anyone who asks for its hope and faith.

A closed church is not prepared.

An open church that lacks interest in the one visiting is not true to itself.

A church that does not have the right tools in communication with people outside is not a church true to the call to mission that Jesus issued.

A living church must therefore be open, not only as a building but also in its language and other means of communication.

Some Practical tips in order to be a living, prepared church.

'Welcome' signs at the gate

'Welcome' on entrance door or in the porch

Flowers in the porch – which can be very simple

Well presented, easily visible, welcome literature, guides and invitation to prayer.

A simple prayer at the door, clearly displayed

Quietness and simplicity

A quiet chapel / corner with icons, candles or carvings as a focus

Easily visible and attractive prayer cards/leaflets, books of meditations, bibles – in pews and significant spots.

Candles available to light, (on metal stands, planted in sand, or tea-lights placed among pebbles), with appropriate prayers nearby.

Prayer request books, boards or trees, with an explanation of how the prayers will be included in the church's worship.

Prayer pools offer an imaginative alternative. A pebble, for the person, is immersed in a bowl of water representing God's all surrounding love

Leaflet describing a reflective prayer walk round the church.

Sensor lighting as door opens

Maybe Quiet music playing - *very much a matter of taste*

Possible means of making a free cup of coffee

'Peace be with you' (or similar) on back of external notice board

There are of course more ideas to make the church welcoming and prepared to answer any question that the pilgrim or tourist had when he, she decided to open the church door.

In a secular age, it is a challenge to present the truths of the Christian faith using comprehensible, attractive and gentle language and imagery.

It is right that we should seek to impress and inspire visitors with the fascinating history and beautiful architecture of our churches, but it is also important that we should seek to engage them in the faith for which those churches were built.

A Church is always on a mission pilgrimage

People in public service as Pathfinders

The first and most important duty the pathfinders from public service have is to build trust. No pathfinder can lead his company of pilgrims in a secure way if he does not himself believe that he can reach the goal.

If they do not have a foundation in their own life, they will definitely not be trustworthy. The need of finding the inner security and harmony is therefore so important to day because it is somewhere lost. The people that are entrusted to lead are so often insecure and without faith in what they are undertaking.

Their pilgrimage will start in taking time to reflect over themselves and their duty. They are all doing their best, no one will say anything else, but the pressures on them are often hard and ruthless. Inner strength and harmony is a way to trust in oneself and their duty, as well as the source in which they find the courage to take the responsibility to guide the flock of happy pilgrims on their way towards the future.

This island once was a spiritual centre in this part of the world and it still has the ability to give real peace to all those searching for it. Thousands of modern pilgrims still come to this land every year to seek the hidden treasure of the quality of life.

People living here are doing the same journey themselves in search for a future with real quality of life.

Throughout history the key to spiritual experience has been an open gift to both locals and pilgrims but today it is so often hidden, hidden behind curtains of both financial difficulties as well as of ignorance and neglect.

The Pathfinder has a duty, whether he is elected or employed as a civil servant, to hand that key to people searching for it.

The pilgrim idea is in this, a way to recreate an awareness and spirituality that too often is lost or hidden in obscurity.

This land and its history have given us all possibilities in the world. – We must accept that challenge.

6 The Role of the Church as “Pathfinder”

The Pilgrim idea is a way to inspire congregations and clergy to find ways to reach out to those not yet reached by the gospel. It is to provide an active worshipping and caring Christian community for everyone, whether resident or visitor.

To day, there is also a need for church growth. Congregations need to be attractive to new members. Unfortunately, this is also a financial necessity.

To sum it up it is a question of taking the task of being a church on a constant mission tour seriously. It is to be that oasis where people, whether living in our community or being tourists, can find new strength to cope with their day to day life. It is a question of empowering people and to lead them on towards the goal we seem to miss to day.

In this, the first step is to reach our self. To open up so that we can be reached by the spirituality we believe is flowing into this world.

This idea outline is also a challenge to priest, deacons and lay people to be themselves, in various ways; pilgrims and at the same time to be Pathfinders, leading people to sources of life quality.

The church has a responsibility for people not only one hour on Sunday or at Christmas.

Churches and congregations must take a spiritual responsibility in people’s leisure time.

This increasing flow of tourists coming to your area is also an increase in people with spiritual needs. That is where the local church is coming in to the picture.

There is a need to activate and to strengthen the Church and to reinforce the Episcopal identity in the Anglican family.

That is necessity. Here there is also a need for the diocese to take responsibility and for the Anglican fellowship of churches as such to accompany the pilgrim churches on their journey.

The local Congregations are therefore in need to be encouraged to fulfil their participation in meeting these new “pilgrim tourists”. It will be theirs to benefit from. There are also financial possibilities in this. It can also create or rather open up for associated (non-resident) members.

Churches, both locally and overall, are the main “institution” that can take the responsibility to assist people on holiday to real recreation.

The churches have a responsibility to take up arms against the lack of care and concern for spiritual matters that embrace humans on holiday.

On the other hand we ought to notice that people on holiday often visits churches and places where the church people should be.

As churches, we should know where paradise is, and we should know how to reach there already in this life. One of the best opportunities we have to preach and to live the gospel to people not yet reached by the good news is right there in people’s leisure times.

The fact is that they are looking for the good news. Sometimes a Tourist is searching right in front of us in our own churches. Why do we not tell them that we have found what they are looking for?

It is in times when man as a pilgrim is confronted with diversion, meaninglessness and resignation that the church clearly can points to wholeness and holiness as alternatives. In times of uncharitability and insecurity, the church witness about faith, hope and love will be strongest.

The church, or rather religions have an offer to give man about holiness and wholeness.

In addition, the thing we have to offer is what people to day are missing.

Unfortunately, the church does not reach people with its message. To day, we live in two different areas; the church and the secular and the church has not found the proper language to break the barriers between these areas.

To the medieval man, Church was something natural, a natural part of society.

It was a natural thing to turn to religion in order to find what was missing in day-to-day life. The church was the picture of another reality, a reality that was holy and whole.

In a world where everyday was a struggle, the church was the carrier of beliefs in to the future. The church was the strength and the energy people needed.

Can the awakening of the pilgrim process be a possibility for the church?

In our leisure time, we can find a common language. The goal is to give peoples leisure time a meaning and a substance.

To be a pilgrim is to live to day and not in the past. The goal is set in days to come. It is an old ancient way to be recreated. However, it is to the people to day that it reaches out. It is a history breaker as well as it breaks boundaries between peoples and nations.

In learning our history, realising the Celtic spirituality and opening up to see all people as potential pilgrims, searching the healing holiness, we have abilities to re discover the role of the Church as a sign, a cross for the people. The church is or should be the healing power, not only for those already inside, but also for those seeking the power of this nation as tourists. In doing that, being open to regard the

tourists as pilgrims, we might also find the means to reach those near to us that today are alienated from the Church.

The nation that once was the spiritual centre of this part of the world still has the ability to give real peace to all those searching for it. Thousands of modern pilgrims come to this land every year to seek the hidden treasure within them selves.

The Church has the key, and that is given to be used for the recovery of many. It is to lead the pilgrims on in peace and harmony. The church is the one knowing the way, the pathfinder.

* Organising Open Churches:

Unfortunately, many or rather most of the Episcopal churches in Scotland are closed. It is somewhat better in England but far from good. Sometimes there is a possibility to have key access after contacting the priest in charge but that is mostly quite complicated and can be improved.

In Glasgow, the cathedral (St Mary's) is closed even if there are people on site. This is almost frightening. This church should be open daytime all year around!

If not one of the cities larges churches are open to people, whether tourist or not, we must understand the difficulties for small countryside churches to reach out as this paper will suggest. However, we cannot just be pleased with that sad assertion. Instead, we must do whatever we can to reopen our churches and find resources to do that.

Our buildings are tools of mission. We do not only have to go out to evangelise, people will come to us if they are allowed. Maybe not in droves for the rural churches but they will come. We have an amazing opportunity to plant a seed of faith (if tiny) in each and every visitor who enters a church.

It would seem as an obvious element in the mission of the whole church, to encourage every single congregation to address the issue seriously. When they have entered into this open and friendly journey they will see tourist and locals as pilgrims, searching for the light and truth we have. The next question will be; 'who are our visitors?' and 'what do we offer them to take forward on a spiritual journey?' This is a simple way for the church to improve its credibility, attractiveness, and even – slowly – possibly - membership.

* The Church Building as a pathfinder

The question is does a visit to a church building convey something special and sacred, and enable the visitor to get in touch with a spiritual part of themselves. Is there something numinous here, or is it just another fascinating museum?

The quality of 'holiness' is impossible to describe. By its nature, it is ungraspable. You just know it when you encounter it. Mostly our churches have a strong potential to create the feeling of holiness to any visitor. We just have to see the church as a gift to us from our ancestors that we now are opening to allow new generations to experience the holiness in their life. The church is an instrument of mission.

Previous Christian generations displayed the words of the Creed in church to explain what they believed about God. They created stained glass windows to tell the stories of the bible and the saints. These are still to be seen, the windows in almost all churches, the Creed in a fair number. In the world of Christendom, they made sense to the people, because they rehearsed them week by week in acts of worship, in bible classes, in sermons and in Sunday school.

Today neither Creeds nor biblical pictures make sense to the majority of the population because they have no reservoir of knowledge to draw on. Apparently young students beginning undergraduate courses in Fine Arts now have to pursue a crash course in elementary biblical history to help them to understand the works of mediaeval painters.

Neither do most people have any actual experience of church furnishings being used in worship.

They need to have explained the function of altar, pulpit, lectern and font. They need to be told about chancels and sanctuaries and naves and aumbries and what they are used for.

We need to find a language, which communicates all these things in an intelligible way that makes faith seem interesting and attractive, avoiding using Christian jargon.

There is no question about it but the Churches to day needs to strengthen their relations towards both local non-churchgoers as well as tourists of different kind.

* Churches and Tourists

What impression does a church building make on such modern non-churchgoing people? The words 'we aim to change tourists into pilgrims' trips lightly off many lips. Realism says that for many tourists this is a touch ambitious; a 5-10 minute visit is not going to achieve that transformation. Nevertheless, there must be ways of, at the very least, disturbing not confirming existing prejudices; at best sparking some imagination and interest in what the church is about.

Churches are places of faith. That is why they were built, to worship God and to draw people closer to God. When visitors come into a church, for whatever reason - interest in its history or architecture, simple curiosity, a place out of the rain, or as a wedding guest – this provides an opportunity to plant or nurture small seeds of faith, to stimulate growth in spiritual awareness or exploration.

Decampment

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. Ps 119:105

There is to day a common longing for wholeness and holiness that is calling people out to seek new ways and new life. On the way out the road is full of salesmen that advertise their different products. Products that they are proclaiming giving people happiness and bring the world to a new age. By their fruit, shall you recognise them says Jesus and gives the Church a task to unmask the false prophets.

The old path in nature is shaped by nature and peoples need. They follow the good way, it passes beside the wet lands and look for the best fords. When you walk on a path, you will not always see the goal but you have to believe, rely on the path that it is taking you all the way. Sometimes it feels like the path it self has life. It knows where the best possibilities are. The path it self knows where the best resting places is to be find. It will lead you there.

At the same time as you walk old ways, every step is a new step. Nature changes, history changes, society changes, weather changes and people change. There is always a new day that meets the wanderer.

It is the pilgrims understanding of the goal that gives the path its contents. The outward walk is a sign of the inward longing.

All our walking is depending on the first step and the walk ending until you take the last step. The intention of the first step is to point to all the others. A part of the goal is anticipated in the first step. It is your intention that make the way a pilgrim path.

Every step is a process of leaving one thing to reach something else. Something new is coming already when you leave the old.

To be on the move is a part of being a pilgrim. To be on the move is a part of being a church. To be on the move is a part of being ordained. To be on the move is to be almost there.

7 The Role of the Tourist Industry as “Pathfinder”

The tourist of today is a part of a profitable industry but there is still a search for some form of recreation. In fact, holiday is a form of antithesis of work. The idea of annual leave is to gain strength so that the worker can be able to do a good job.

To be a tourist is to be on a quest for recreation. It is to search for experience and that special feeling of leisure that gives you strength to go back to work.

Recreation has a religious meaning and it is about “being born again”. That is why the similarities between a modern Tourist and a pilgrim are noteworthy. The main difference is that the religious pilgrim is aware of, and notices, the spiritual dimension in what he sees and experiences.

Tourism is to day an international movement. The distances have shrunk and “everywhere” is easy to reach.

All tourist opinion polls come to the conclusion that Churches are one priority targets for the sightseer.

One way to go forward is to establish local interfaith forum for co-operation in spiritual tourism. This cross-denominational and interfaith forum brings together national and local organisations with an interest in the future of historic places of worship. It aims to develop a shared vision on the way forward, to strengthen the ‘third sector’ voice for these places and to increase the capacity of the sector through collaboration.

8 The Role of Hotels, B&B's, Heritage conservation agencies etc. as "Pathfinder"

Along the Pilgrim way, there were resting places where pilgrims could rest their tired feet and gain new power to carry on their journey towards the holy goal.

Many were the inns and guesthouses, small or big that made their living on being this oasis for the pilgrims. We can say that the accommodation industry has much, if not all to thank the pilgrims for.

Many of these rest houses were situated near where pilgrims had their sacred meetings.

Pilgrims often took the ways that lead them, not straight to the goal, but passing holy oases on the way. These rest houses or hotels were for the pilgrim something more than just a place to sleep. It was a part of the journey and in some cases a part of the goal.

In rediscovering the pilgrim, we realize that what we offer in our Hotels and B&Bs are more than just a bed and something to eat. The place to rest is also a place for reflection, to summon up, to write your diary or letter and to plan for the coming day.

The innkeepers were not only the one offering the accommodation he was also a source of knowledge as well as someone who could comfort, understand and support.

He was in himself a pathfinder. He knows the history of those who had walked the way before and he could give good advice and encouragement. Sometime the staff at the inn had to be like nurses to take care of sore feet and other diseases.

So are the modern hotel and B&Bs also pathfinders. They are a part of the journey to inner harmony for travellers. That is why it is so important that harmony and engagement are so essential among the staff and management in our accommodation facilities as well as among those working with attractions of different kind.

Goal and motivation is significant in order to achieve the vision of working with the whole guest; both body and soul.

In order to reach the goals the co-workers shall be motivated. Initiative is the answer to why people do certain things and not other.

The leadership of the establishment has to encourage the co-workers own initiatives. No suggestion is so bad that it is not worth discussing.

This is also a way to create a good atmosphere of the business.

There is a need for clearly stated goal and codes. If you work where the goals is uncertain you will be uncertain in your work. There should be reachable short time targets that you can analyse and be re correct easily.

A contribution to create a strong culture within the hotel can be to involve the co-workers in designing guidelines for the activities. This also creates a feeling of "We" in the work.

To create a good feeling it is necessary to respect dissimilarities. Even conflicts shall be taken up to the surface so that the company can use the different perspective that these conflicts generate. It is always better to meet a conflict as soon as it emerges.

The purpose with a dialogue is that it gets access to a quantity of different opinions that broaden the limits and thereby reach further than is possible on your own.

This also creates a good atmosphere and a stronger feeling of participation feeling amongst the staff.

"Staff-development" demands a leadership that is encouraging, supporting, stimulating and has a positive attitude to dialogue. A manager should see himself almost as a teacher or an instructor. The best quality is his ability to encourage the co-workers to do what they are best at and to do their best for themselves and the hotel.

The future manager should measure his successes on what the co-workers have achieved rather than to see what he, himself has achieved.

This is a question of how to “empower” the entire establishment with spiritual passion.

The Pathfinder hotel is a hotel that can strengthen the pilgrims as well as the staff.

9 Churches, Pilgrims and their ways

* Stones and Celtic crosses

“...and he took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak, that was by the sanctuary of the lord. And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words of the lord which he spoke unto us: it shall be therefore a witness unto you...” Joshua 24: 26-27

Joshua’s stone has its counterparts all over the world. In Europe they are particularly common and in a notable way in former Celtic areas.

In western parts of Scotland, in the fading years of Celtic identity, they were given the form of a cross. We know it as the Celtic cross. The Celtic cross is often raised high above the ground but placed where people are around, on squares or at crossroads. It has a circle uniting the four arches and has a combination of old ancient symbols like the knot and Christian symbols. Sometimes it has stories on them, in carved pictures or written with runic script.

In Celtic time, the standing stones and high crosses were the village library, its art gallery and a sign of their faith. They were reminders to all travellers and pilgrims that their own life-journeys were a part of the eternal journey of the whole human family. They rose like compass needles guiding people to listen to the core of their being and to live true to what their forefathers had achieved. The ground where they stood was acknowledged by the entire community as sacred space.

Can they have any meaning to us today? We, who can access the worldwide web of global information by the touch of a key, Do we need to read our stories engraved on a piece of stone or just feel the sacred atmosphere where silent stones are erected?

Joshua’s stone as well as the stones and crosses standing in this part of the world are reminders to us of a story that is the foundation of our community. Where they stand is sacred space, where we recognize our oneness with each other and our first source in God.

They remind us of the steady compass in our hearts that guides us on. We may call it conscience or we can call it love. No name can hold the fullness of its truth. But if we turn our back on it and choose, our self made courses the stones will stand as a silent witness to our desertion of ourselves and our history.

Most of us may not have any stones or high crosses in our village square today but we all have one in our hearts and in our memories. We have a deep, if buried, sense of when we are true to our self and others as well as knowing within when we letting ourselves and others down.

We all have a story that we know is interwoven with the story of others, the history of nations and humanity that stretches its genes back to the days of creation. What story would your stone tell if it could speak? Do we have that silent place where we can be still and just listen to our own story?

This nation has throughout history been known to have these places. Places for silence, places for closeness, places to discover your self and God.

Do we know where the sacred places are? Have we lost them? Are they just hidden? If they are, can we find them again or have we already drifted so far apart from our own history that we no longer recognize them? Still today, these crosses in stones call to our historical awareness. Can we living today, see them as signs of a higher meaning and purpose in our life and societies existence or are we a generation that no longer have whether memories or dreams of the future?

To be true to those who lived and worked here through history and built this land we have to take their testimony seriously or we will lose the identity, of what we actually are.

* Jesus and singing stones

There are stones also in the story of Jesus. There are singing stones, stones to kill, weeping stones and resurrection stones. The singing stones are those who stand out against religious bigotry, fanatics and intolerance. We know them from Palm Sunday when Jesus said "If these (the people) would be silent the stones themselves will start to sing"

The religious fanatics and the intolerant wanted to use the killing stones both for Mary Magdalene as well for as for Jesus himself. The fanatics still to this day use stones in many countries just to kill.

The crying stone stands in the middle of Gethsemane herb garden. On its hard surface the tears of a Jesus in suffering and doubt are falling mixed with sweat and blood.

It is a hard stone but it listens when no one else is there for you.

The resurrection stone is the stone that covered the tomb of both Lazarus and Jesus. When it moves it, reveal the secret of life and death. It bears on it the mark of angel hands and it tells us that love is stronger than any rock.

Our Celtic forerunners saw their high crosses as signs and sacraments on the covenant between God, themselves and creation. Still today, these crosses in stones ask something from us and our brothers and sisters in this part of the world. They call to our historical awareness. Can we living today, see them as signs of a higher meaning and purpose in our life and societies existence?

Have the stone crosses of Celtia turned themselves into crying stones after all these year? Are they crying over a society and its people who have turned their back on their forerunners faith?

The stones are still standing in many places as reminders to us of nations that once were the leading spiritual community in this part of the world. It is an offence to those people who erected them to neglect their message. Therefore, I pray that they will be for us; turned into stones of resurrection. I want to feel the healing pouring out from

the standing cross; a glorious vision throughout this land. That is coming soon, through the faith that cleans your wound, a time when hearts of olden glory will be renewed.

In all that, the church has a commitment to live up to - to exist for the people. To be a cross that reminds people of their heritage and lead them to the faith that cleans their wounds. Churches are like those standing stones and crosses, reminding people of a faith that lives throughout history, and who have the possibility to recreate and make whole.

The nation that once was the spiritual centre of this part of the world still has the ability to give real peace to all those searching for it

In learning our history, realising the spirituality and opening up to see all people as potential pilgrims, searching the healing holiness, we have abilities to re discover the role of the Church as a sign, a cross for the people. The church is or should be the healing power, not only for those already inside, but also for those seeking the power of this nation as tourists. In doing that, being open to regard the tourists as pilgrims, we might also find the means to reach those near to us that today are alienated from the church.



* Prayer and The Link between work and leisure

Traditionally the religious man divides the time into three equal aspects. Work, Prayer and Rest. A holy trinity that is the fullness of life. This three is also likely to be dependent on each other.

The work is broken up by the leisure time and by the prayer. In the same way the prayer and the leisure-time is the foundation for the work.

Sunday is (was) a day of rest from work and in the same time the meaning and the goal for the work during the week.

It is through work that leisure finds its meaning and it is through the fruits of work that leisure mean recreation.

The modern church, shovelled into a something "private", seems to be content with being just a separate part of life. Prayer, as a bridge between work and leisure has been lost in this process.

The result is a church that is alienated from people's real life.

This has created a sharp borderline between work and leisure. To day man is feeling alienated in both this worlds. Work is in competition with leisure time and leisure time is not be incorporated or mixed with work.

The holiness and the wholeness has lost is significance in both the work and leisure time to day.

Recreation and real leisure is something strange (alienated) too many of us to day.

Today everything is done in a high tempo. Society is changeable and fashion is as changeable as the stock market. Overnight business can rise or fall, pay rises or unemployment.

In the same way, the modern tourist is bringing the hectic work in the city with him out, into the holiday land.

Travel is today also a question of time and you might give yourself a few minutes on each sight.

Maybe the tempo and the demands are so high today that every stop is a failure in some way. To stop is for many a paradox to efficiency and successfulness. Sometime it is as if people today are afraid that silence and tranquillity can cause them problems. The last century's belief in constant success has repressed our need for tranquillity and spiritual trust.

The result is alienation from the self and the surroundings, insecurity and a loss of a spiritual code. People are, in spite of many economical successes afraid and feel insecure. Moreover, many people, those who are insecure are close to violence and different forms of drugs. Man to day is disconnected from him self.

The pilgrim process was a longing for quality and meaning to life.

You went to a shrine to be filled with life powers or to heal what in different way has been broken in your life.

The pilgrimage was a conscious journey both spiritual and bodily. The goal was to return home as a new man.

To be a pilgrim was to have a goal in life. The journey would give you both spiritual and emotional experiences that gave the way meaning and content. It was something that changed both you self as well as people around you. By the experience handed down from generations before, the pilgrims did know that there were places where holiness was revealed.

To be close to a place like that was to be close to God.

It is in times when man as a pilgrim is confronted with diversion, meaninglessness and resignation that the church clearly can points to wholeness and holiness as alternatives. In times of uncharitability and insecurity, the church witness about faith, hope and love will be strongest.

That is why it exists in the world; to be a sign of the ongoing creation. A witness to people and a picture in front of them, showing unity, love, hope and equality.

The church is a sign of that paradise that was lost but is now returning.

To reach this everybody has to be recreated.

The church is a tool of Gods outermost purpose. The church is those reconsolidated with God and each other through Jesus Christ.

This reconciliation is not just a historical event but also an ongoing process.

The church as such is a pilgrim, constantly on the way towards the goal. This pilgrim lives in reality, with all problems and obstacles. The path is sometime dangerous and the pilgrim church must be careful how it takes the next step. Nevertheless, it has to walk to reach the goal. But the church should be optimistic because she knows the goal.

* A church on a pilgrimage

Where pilgrims were walking in our countries they were a sign of a living religion. In their footsteps followed priests and announcers of different kinds. The pilgrim had always something new and interesting to tell about the "big" world. They were all a witness, not only of a living church but also of a living society.

They brought and gave new ideas to the districts and at the same time, were dependent on the people they met.

The pilgrims were a witness of faith and hope to the people.

Today we need a church on a pilgrimage. We need churches that meet people on the street in the village. A church, that is a living sign of the living presence, now and always and not, as today, a carrier of a dark historical burden.

We need a pilgrim church.

* The Recreation

To enter a spiritual quest on a pilgrimage is a longing after renewal and recreation. That is why the old pilgrims are the prototype of the tourist of today.

The difference may be that the vast majority of today's tourists are wasting the possibility of real recreation. It is in returning to the day-to-day life that the full meaning of the journey is found

To day, many people return to their workplaces after a vacation worn out and actually in need of rest. It is sometimes a hard life to be a tourist as well as it is hard to be a member of a small local church.

* On the field

The idea outlined in this paper is to engage and inspire local congregations and clergy to rediscover their own church and history.

In this idea outline is also a challenge to priest, deacons and lay people to be them self, in various ways; pilgrims.

To take that step is to leave something behind. To enter the journey is to feel the hope. To reach the goal is only to realize the opportunities you have. To return is to come back reconciled, renewed and recreated.

Deep inside, every man and woman has a dream about wholeness. It is also a dream about a state of Paradise in mind as well as in nature. Still, people to day find their own existence and society, divided and incoherent. Even the common dream of a social just society seems today be held in obscurity. Words about solidarity, common consideration and fairness are useless and empty. Society today favours speed, youth, quick money and egoism. Where is the dream of Wholeness and holiness?

The state of "stress and efficiency" is also reflected into people's leisure times.

The holiday that was to give tranquillity and rest has become a stress giver.

Churches, both locally and overall, are the main "institution" that can take the responsibility to assist people on holiday to real recreation. The churches have a responsibility to take up arms against the lack of care and concern for spiritual matters that embrace humans on holiday. In this, also the churches have a responsibility. A huge number of tourists visit different churches during their holidays. If they are lucky, the church is open. If they are blessed someone from the congregation is in the

church. If they visit a cathedral, there might be a guide around. Mostly they are providing a guided tour amongst the architecture and arts of the church. The spiritual inspiration that once created the beautiful churches is absent and the tourists could as well have visited a museum. The church has a responsibility for people not only one hour on Sunday or at Christmas. The church has to be a living, all day, all time, source of spirituality not a museum.

* The Pilgrim Process

The pilgrim process was a longing for quality and meaning to life.

You went to a shrine to be filled with life powers or to heal what in different way has been broken in your life.

The pilgrimage was a conscious journey both spiritual and bodily. The goal was to return home as a new man.

To be a pilgrim was to have a goal in life. The journey would give you both spiritual and emotional experiences that gave the way meaning and content. It was something that changes both your self as well as the people around you. By the experience handed down from generations before, the pilgrims knew that there were places where holiness was revealed.

To be close to a place like that was to be close to God.

There is to day a common longing for wholeness and holiness that is calling people out to seek new ways and new life

* The holy and the complete

In Old Norse, the word for saints and sunbeam is the same (Geisli).

The sunbeam is not the sun but it reflects the sun and through it, you can feel the heat of the sun.

The saints are not God. However, their reflect something about God.

Holy places and Shrines are not paradise and are not even holy by them selves. But they reflect something spiritual to the visitors.

Saints are in some way pilgrim followers. They walk beside us and support us in our efforts to reach the goal of life.

Holy places are holy because something has happened there that we can benefit from on our pilgrimage. Holy places are not the goal in it self but they are reminders of something greater. They are oases to rest by. They give us strength and send us further on our pilgrimage.

Maybe they help us to find rest. Maybe they can recreate us.

The need of shrines of different types escalated in the beginning of the last millennium. There were big places and towns with big cathedrals as well as small local shrines in small distant villages.

The interest in saints and their lives also had its golden age during the middle ages. The saints could be big and famous international stars or just local men and women who had a reputation in a country or district.

The goal for the medieval pilgrim was not to reach the holy place or shrine on their pilgrimage. The goal was to come back home – renewed, recreated.

* Without Borders

Pilgrims are without borders. There are no limits in horizontal or vertical connections. The borders that the rulers of the world have created by the sword have always been broken by the pilgrims.

The goal is international and ecumenical.

The reality has also opened the pilgrims' eyes for the inter-religious understanding.

It is the realisation of the presence. of the holiness in this world that has united pilgrims.

It is a truly human experience and is not dependable on books or media.

In the same way is the Church with capital C without borders or limits. There is a common ground that unites regardless of congregational and national boundaries.

The Pilgrim process is a way of encourages ecumenical links and will open up for understanding of different traditions.

The church is not an end in it self. It has a purpose.

It is a tool, a picture, a sunbeam that reflects the possibilities of finding paradise.

Tourism is to day an international movement. The distances have shrunken and "everywhere" is easy to reach.

All tourist opinion polls conclude that Churches are one-priority targets for the sightseer.

This is an opportunity for the local churches, not only to promote the gospel but also to promote the local church and to open up possibilities to increase the number of paying members.

What they experience in a church during their holiday, they will bring with them to the church at home.

The local Congregations are therefore in need to be encouraged to fulfil their participation in meeting these new "immigrants and tourists". It will be theirs to benefit from.

* The pilgrim Road

There were in fact no pilgrim roads. The pilgrims used the roads or paths that have been used by travellers during ages.

Between two places, there are many different roads and the traveller chooses the road he feels will suit his purpose best. Someone wants to make the journey fast, another chooses the safes road and a third looked at the size of the wagon. Others went by the river as far as they could and so on.

The pilgrims however choose the way that leads them to places where holiness was breaking through. They went on the roads where others have had experiences of the unusual or where holy men or women already have wandered.

That is the reason why some passages were more frequently used by pilgrims than other.

The pilgrim way was in created whilst the pilgrims were walking on it. The way or the path is not something that exists as an aim in it self. It does exist because it gives the traveller experiences on the journey and will lead him to the goal.

The way guides people to an oasis of holiness. The pilgrim way connects different holy places and experiences. In other words, it is the traveller's attitude towards the road that is to verify if it is a pilgrim path or just an ordinary road.

The way, that for someone is a necessity to find holiness is for another just a piece of road, something necessary but boring.

* Resort

In the old days when the church still had the power to levy an execution of punishment on people, they could sentence someone to a pilgrimage to a certain place.

A letter of indulgence could be given to someone who entered on a pilgrimage.

Different shrines had different values and the implication of the forgiveness could vary. The most important thing here is that the legal system in the middle Ages regarded a pilgrimage as a way to renew someone. When a former "criminal" returned from a pilgrimage, he was regarded as cured from the criminal diseases.

Pilgrimage was furthermore to be regarded as healthy and good cure for ordinary disease.

All places and thereby the churches have their history and their local saints. They are a part of a local history in both bad and good times and events.

To be able to attract new pilgrims we might have to rediscover these "saints".

It can be locally famous persons or just someone local that we can build our history around.

Of course, we might in our area have both historical buildings as well as events that can help us to promote our church, our B&B or our camping site.

Sometimes even industrial sites, good or bad, as well as nature as such that can be our "saint"

If nothing of that is within our area, we might have to create our sunbeam. It might be an exhibition, Biblical flower garden, a nature pilgrim path or just the unique way we are.

* Returning home

In promoting the gospel and work for the kingdom of God, we must also bear in mind that the goal for the pilgrim and the tourist is to return home. A good and healthy visit to one local church in a foreign land might create an interest for the church at home. If a person has a good experience of visiting a church, it will be remembered not only in his camera but more important in his heart.

In the same way the pilgrim, will never forget the holy place he visited. It was forever a part of his life.

We have many small but holy places all around our churches and we can see it as an ecumenical project there are hundreds of oases to include.

The intention of the pilgrim process to day is not to make people travellers. It is not to find new places to visit. It is not a journey for travelling or walking for its own sake. The goal is to come back into the day-to-day life. To come back recreated to spirit, mind and body.

That also goes for the church it self. It has to go out on a pilgrimage to come back into the world where it has to guide more pilgrims and support them with heavenly manna. And the pathfinder, the priest and deacons after their pilgrimage are returning with new experience and knowledge. Recreated in order to recreate others.

11 Putting it all together; spirituality for all

It is clear that we need to understand ourselves, the society in which we exist as well as the environment surrounding us before we have a fair chance of inventing and projecting the future that lies ahead of us.

Whether our aim is to raise awareness of our nation's history and spirituality, enrich that spirituality or to provide recreation opportunities for people.

We have to undergo some form of inner journey our self in order to find the base for this nation and its spirituality.

People in official work need to be educated in a history that was not given to them in school. Members of congregations need to find awareness of the world outside and that the church is a part of and a builder of this nation.

People working with tourist issues and in different forms of leisure-industry will need to be prepared to meet a new form of tourism.

It is a shame that official institutions like schools and social services, as well as Tourist institutions do not use the capacity in spirituality, pastoral cure and historical awareness that priests and ministers of the church have.

I hope that this writing can change that.

On the other hand, it is sad that congregations and priest do not always realise the spiritual need in the world outside the church and that the Churches as such are sources of healing and possibilities, for this nation and the future.

The pilgrim process is hopefully one step in a direction towards the future.

Although this writing has taken many references out of a church environment and has that as one of its main intentions, it is right to point out here that the overall purpose of this is, when it is come to official authorities, is not to impose any specific creed or belief.

Spirituality is without borders and limitations, whether in creeds, nations or time.

12 Appendixes

1. The Kishorn episode

Out of nowhere, as a city child would say, one can find Kishorn and the small Episcopal Church; Courthil chapel. It is situated half an hour's drive from Loch Carron, which is also about half an hour's drive from the nearest A road. (A87)

Almost by coincidence, I stumbled on this wee church one summer day, out touring with my family in the North West. The church suddenly was there and what made me stop was the traditional Scottish Episcopal Church "welcome to us" sign. This church is actually almost out in "nowhere" and is attached to the ruins of the impressive Courthil House with its huge walls.

To my surprise, the door was open, let me enter into a fine, and balanced church, which had both silence and the signs of being a living church.

Unfortunately, local information about the church, the congregation and the area was sparsely. The only thing I could find was an (old) typewritten note attached to the wall. It was not particularly reader friendly but that did not, amazingly overshadowed the positive feeling I had being there. It was one of these places that can actually create emotions within you. Even my son, strangely (!) liked the place. For this little story, the most important thing was that it was open and that was also the reason to that episode that was to happen.

While leaving the church we felt we ought to take some photos of the church and the ruins. While we were taking the photos, we might have taken one step out on the single-track road and a car stopped. First I thought I had obstructed it by being too far out on the road. One good thing about single-track roads is that they act as a natural speed limiter. Instead of rebuking me the passenger in the car lowered the window asking me "what are you taking photo of"?

"A church" I said a bit surprised.

"Out here" I heard from the driver's seat, "Let's have a look".

The couple who come from Glasgow stepped out of the car followed by two kids in the early teens. Now the interesting conversation started and I find myself being a guide, not only to Kishorn chapel but also an informant about the Episcopal Church as such and more was to come.

The couple, who was by no means churchgoers, had no or very little knowledge of an Episcopal Church and now suddenly they meet an Episcopal priest out in nowhere. I could not say anything specific about the church as such but I gave them a small talk concerning church inventories and of course about the nice stained glass window. Naturally I took the possibility to inform them about the Episcopal Church and some of its history.

Suddenly the subject change and the woman told me that her good father had died just two months ago. That changes the situation almost into a moment of pastoral care. Their experience of the funeral was remarkably vague. They had the impression that it had been a non-religious funeral, although it had been conducted by a pastor in the crematorium. That was not the big issue for any of us at that moment. It was just an opportunity for her telling about her father in different aspects. It was a talk about how he struggled at the shipyard and how he manages one year to take the family down to Cornwall. Her story ended with a soft tear in her eye and the husband's arm around her shoulder while we all was standing on the bewildered but sanctified burial ground a short walk from the church.

Remarkably all the children both theirs and ours were following it all in silence and almost with reverence.

We went back to the cars and left the church in Kishorn in different directions.

I feel quite sad that I had not been giving them a “business-card” with my telephone number and so. But on the other hand I do not have any business card. I must try to persuade the treasury of my congregation so that I can have some. It is a part of our mission to reach out.

It was a good half an hour in Kishorn and it inspired me to take up the writings on “Pilgrims and Tourists” again.

There must be hundreds of people like the couple I meet, out their touring around in Britain. I could feel the honest thank they gave us for this important moment in their and ours life.

I do hope that the next time when they or anyone else needs a moment like this, it will be an open church there on the route they are travelling. And if there is not a living minister present, hopefully there will at least be a “business card” so they will know where to find one.

The Drama in the Church

The pilgrim life was a dangerous life. On many parts of the pilgrim route there was a danger of both wild animals as bandits.

This is in it self a drama. The whole idea of moving from one place to another is a risk. But as tourists and pilgrims we take that risk.

In a good Franciscan spirit, the drama also has its place in the church. The whole liturgy is a cosmic drama.

It is a drama of the divine struggle between good and evil as well as a drama within every man and woman.

As the liturgy should involve ordinary, people it also opens up for dramatisation of biblical and human history.

As a church we should use this possibility more frequent than we do to day.

Work with drama and other cultural expressions, with and in the church, open up people’s awareness about the church.

As an example, Glencoe church is a beautiful building set in a beautiful area. At the same time this is also the area where people’s greed and violence culminated in massacre. (1692). This is an example of a non-Christian event that can be reflected in the church liturgy in this particular place.

The church in Dunoon, Scotland is situated right near the well of St Bride. This could be an attraction as good as any other. It could be a base of diocesan pilgrimage. It is also a holy history that could reflect it self in the liturgy of that particular place.

There might be other holy wells that could inspire churches to integrate it into their life and work.

There might be a common interest to take water for baptism from holy wells. Not because it should be regarded as specific holy but because it can give people the feeling that this is not ordinary tap water. The water is something more and the church officials have done a small effort to get it.

Of course, the drama in the liturgy is also a question of resources. A possibility to go a bit further in this is to create contacts with local groups. (Theatre and historical societies or musicians)

As a church we must avoid living in the pre-assumption that other groups in our area are not interested in being a part of a Christian service.

Mostly this will be seen as a challenge and it also opens up a natural way into dialogue.

Imagined example

To day, we have our many beautiful and “holy” churches and we have tourist touring around in the country. The aim is to combine these two.

Churches in an area often have a link between them that is formed by history and nature.

Every congregation and every church is unique and have their local traditions and local knowledge. It would actually be a presumption for me to write this suggestions and it is in fact impossible to do so without living in the context.

This suggestions is more to be seen as general ideas that could be implanted in most environments. Some ideas are just personal and the local congregations will surely have more and better ideas.

1. CHURCHES IN A PASSPORT

Naturally, one of the first things one think of is to line the Churches together as if they were on a pilgrim path. Physically you cannot move the churches but you can build links between them. Links of history, saints, architecture, inventories traditions and so on.

One easy think to encourage tourist to visit selected churches is to introduce a Pilgrim passport. A passport with has a function almost like orienteering’s checkpoints; You get a stamp or mark when you visit a church.

Collect different “churches” in your Pilgrim passport and you will be entitled to some form of gift. (Maybe a special Bible signed by the Bishop!)

A visitor in one church should be recommended to travel to a specific church by staff or a nice sign

2. NATURE PATHS AND MEDITATION

Around some of the churches, you can create a small nature path to walk, with meditation points. Even in these “paths”, you can have some form of pattern or link between churches.

A Bible Garden is any garden that has plants that are mentioned in the Bible. There are more than 125 plants, trees and herbs.

The simplest way is to adapt your existing garden by inter-planting it with biblical species and labelling them accordingly

The garden does not need to be big. You might start with 10 different plants, properly organized.

You need an introductory plan and explanation on a board near the entrance.

There is also a need for a bench or other place to rest. There might also be a sign with some bible quotations that suits either the moment of meditation, the districts characteristic or flowers.

3. WITH LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

It is also important to link up with local folk museum and organizations.

There should be no problem in working together with local business to promote a town or an area.

4 .SUMMER CHURCHES

Some of the churches where there are parishioners who can give their time as guides and hosts can be open as “summer” churches. In these, you meet friendly people who can talk about the church, the district and offer you a cup of coffee.

Many churches, especially on the countryside are suitable for becoming a “summer church”. The problem is often resources.

Many congregation members are already stressed by commitments in ordinary church work. This also goes for clergy. Maybe the diocese can contribute to a couple of churches for summer activities. Organisation is important in trying to start a summer church.

There is a need for a common education for those engages in the open summer churches.

People in one church should be able to say something about the church in the next village. This is to create a feeling of belonging to the same apostolic church.

It will give people within the congregation a feeling of belonging together as well as giving the pilgrims a feeling of unity and awareness.

There is also a possibility to apply for European money.

4b.

In some churches, there should be a possibility to have spiritual guidance. Ways of guiding around in the church, but in the same way lead you into prayers and hymns.

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5 PATRON SAINTS.

Most of the churches have a patron saint that we can point to and “raise to life”. This is to create a profile and encourage festivals.

Every church should have a sign informing about their patron saints.

This could also lead to a special celebration day in the church and to exhibitions and so on.

6 INTERNATIONAL

Maybe there is a possibility fore some congregations to discover their specific nature and their specific patron saint and from that extend their contacts with other congregations in the country and why not abroad. (Porvo)

Think of an interchange between churches in UK or Europe dedicated to for example St Paul

7 STUDY GROUPS

The diocese should encourage the local congregations to form study groups. This is to learn more about their own church but also to encourage the knowledge of other churches.

8 INFORMATION

A plain brochure should be produced which consists of information concerning the churches in the area or in the diocese.

Every church should have information concerning all other Anglican Churches in the diocese.

9 PILGRIM LITURGY

Maybe we can “create” an easy pilgrim liturgy that is used in certain churches as a tourist service during daytime.

This is to make the tourist familiar in an easy way to the church and its functions as a room for meeting with the divine. This should be on a leaflet “to take home”.

10. MEETING

- a. Every tourist that visits our churches should be regarded as a pilgrim.
- b. Most tourists are alienated from the church and its true meaning.
- c. We should on the other hand remember that as believers we have a mission and that the church is a living sign of supreme power.
- d. To meet the tourist as a pilgrim we have to understand the way he/she understand the church.
- e. Somewhere, we should be able to meet each other. This meeting takes place in a spirit of dialogue.

MODELS AND METHODS TO CREATE PARTICIPATION

All congregation development that has been a success has grown out of needs and ideas of mission and worship. It is a question of the churchgoer’s joint ministry.

What the first Apostles actually did was impossible. If they had stayed by the fact that they could not do it, the first mission would have failed. Christianity would have remained as a sect in Jerusalem.

But they did not accept that the problem was to stand in their way of thinking.

Convinced in faith that they could do it they set out and did the impossible.

In the same way, a pilgrimage is never easy. However, it is not impossible.

The first Apostles as well as the pilgrims were possibility centred.

A pilgrimage is a well planned but hazardous journey for spirituality.

The result of success is renewal and hopes for the future.

I also give inspiration and new ideas.

The pilgrim returned home with new ideas, new ways approaching problems and with inspiration from the world around.

In one way, the pilgrim movement during the medieval times was a way of spreading news and development. It was a way of making internationalisations.

The pilgrim returning home was aware of that the local church was a part of something bigger. It was and is a part of worldwide movement.

The small congregations and churches have, in their own context something to give to both the worldwide church as well as the worldwide society.

Mission is in a sense the experience of the local congregation given to others. Out of faith in Christ comes a longing to proclaim his message to others.

What I do in my home church is actually a small but important piece in the impossible mission that started by the apostles 2000 years ago.

That is why impossible terminology never should be a part of church discussions.

In faith, nothing is impossible but there might be a question of empowerment.

Prayer in order to find power to do the impossible was one of the first apostolic prayers.

That is why mission, evangelisation and all other church related work must start in our services.

Moreover, in this we are a congregation doing worship together. Actually; that is the way we make congregation to something more than one hours relaxing and meeting on Sunday.

The more people that can be engaged in making the services the deeper it will be rooted in the heart of the congregation.

The pilgrim needs the way and the goal to fulfil his purpose and he needs the home congregation to live the intention and purpose with the pilgrimage

The ministers or the priest main purpose, beside administer the sacraments, should be to empower the people of the congregation.

In order to fulfil his ordination he needs a congregation as well as they need him to become a Eucharistic and holy unity.