

# **St. Joseph's Pilgrims – 2013**

## ***Adult Pilgrimage to Scotland***

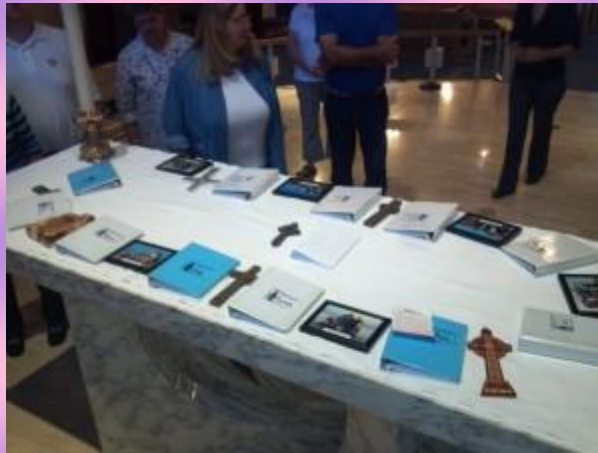


**September 14, 2013**

## **2013 Pilgrims are on their Way**

**By Wpadmin**

The St. Joseph's 2013 Pilgrims arrived in Scotland this morning. After a short prayer service at the altar, surrounded by mementos from all previous pilgrims, they had



Crosses and photos from the previous 7 pilgrimages surround the journals for the 2013 pilgrims



Footprints for the 2013 pilgrims on the nave floor of St. Joseph's

headed off to Palm Beach airport. Thanks to all the angels who provided transportation. May the pilgrims' footprints be a reminder that we are all united in prayer.

## **Saturday – September 14**

### **By Father Marty**

Alleluia! All arrived safe and sound along with all of our luggage, both personal bags and kitchen "goodies." (No syrup breakage this year but we did compassionately remember Chelsea as we wagon trained the luggage carts out to meet of the customs hall.) After a welcoming embrace from our driver Ian Morrison, all the pilgrims met him and we boarded the bus. Our friend Karen MacCormick did her splendid tour of Edinburgh Castle, and even though it was very crowded, the pilgrims did their impromptu prayer and hymn inside St. Margaret's Chapel. Some of the tourists present commented on the beauty of the experience. We stopped at Marks & Spencer to exchange money, and then went to their food court to purchase picnic food for lunch. It was the first experience at this food extravaganza for most of the pilgrims, and they loved it. We filled a cart with everyone's goodies, and were off for a driving tour past HolyRood (Sorry, the queen's at Balmoral this time of year), and then up the mountain towards Arthur's Seat. It was a gorgeous day, so we stopped at the Swan Pond and sat on the rocks above for our picnic lunch. Then, after a short "freshen up" break at the Knight's Residence, we proceeded on to Rosslyn Chapel for our tour. We experienced both the public talk and then Karen filled in with a fascinating walking tour of this beautiful place. At 6pm, the public was escorted out, the doors were shut, and there we were — the twelve pilgrims (11 of us plus Karen left alone inside to worship in this beautiful spot. It is amazing how beautiful the group sounded singing Charles' "Glory, Glory Hallelulah when I Lay my burden down." Maybe David will get some new choir members before we're through! This was a spiritual highlight of the day, with many offering prayers for their gratitude for this opportunity and for our loved ones back home. We returned back to the hotel, and with everyone pitching in from boiling pasta and cutting bread to walking down the street to purchase our "refreshments," we had a spirit-filled dinner huddled on the couches in the living room of the biggest suite (the same place where our youth had the musicians perform last year). After a short prayer, we laid down for a night's rest after being up since Friday morning in Florida (which adds up to about 31 hours). Tomorrow? Sailing to Inchcolm Abbey is on the schedule, but gale force winds are in the forecast, and we didn't bring our surf boards, so there may be a back up plan in place.) LLL, 10 pilgrimettes and a priest

## **Sunday – September 15**

The only disappointment for the pilgrims today was their inability to connect with the Saint Joseph's Church community during the 9:30am service. Gale force winds (not "Gail" force as some have eluded to one of our illustrious pilgrims) caused the Maid of the Forth sailing vessel to switch our departure time to the earlier sail at 12:15pm. Consequently, we were sailing back from Inchcolm at the time of the 9:30am service at St. Joseph's. A wedding party had sailed with us with a bagpiper over to Inchcolm, and their wedding took place in the Chapter House of the Abbey ruins while we were there. In addition, there was another group celebrating a birthday for a member of their group, and they brought a fiddler with them to celebrate. Consequently, the gale force winds and rain were overcome by the beauty of the pageantry, as the piper led us off the boat and over to the ruins. We met the bride and groom, Rachel (from Minnesota) and Daniel, and we promised them we would ask St. Joseph's prayers in addition to ours offered at Inchcolm for their life together. We were able to have our picnic lunch seated at a big table in the refectory, which was a special highlight for us as Karen MacCormick talked to the group about the history of monastic life on Inchcolm and the history of the Celts. Then we toured the rest of the ruins, and after a frantic search towards the end of our time, we finally remembered how to access the Warming Room, and had our sung "umm" meditation in the beautiful acoustics of that space. It was very meaningful for all, especially when they understood that every other pilgrimage group had done this before them. On the sail back, it was time to call St. Joseph's, but the wedding party and the birthday party had converged, and a huge celebration broke out with the fiddler playing, everyone clapping, and the bride and groom dancing. The noise level was such that it was impossible to communicate on the cell phone. (Our group had prepared short statements of gratitude that were connected to Sunday's Gospel – how they were grateful for a particular "silver coin" that they had found in their own life. We will share those via this blog once we have settled in on Iona tomorrow (Monday).) The pilgrims visited St. Giles Church & Cathedral, and spent some time in the Thistle Chapel with Karen explaining the significance of the place and its ornate carvings. Then the group had some free time to walk the Royal Mile followed by a dinner together back at the Knight Residence. After dinner, three of the local musicians we had previously experienced on pilgrimages from the Stramash group came and did an incredible hour of Scottish music and singing. We were especially excited that tour guide and friend Karen and Alastair McCormick joined us for the evening. Dessert and conversation followed until Fr. Marty broke up the party and told us all we had a big day ahead of us traveling all the way to Iona and needed to go to bed.

LLL 10 females and a Father

## **Monday – September 16**

Sunday night, after thanking the musicians and extending meaningful goodbyes to Karen MacCormick, our tour guide and friend, and her husband Alastair, the pilgrims had a short debrief and prayer. Great teamwork enabled us to get all of the group and kitchen bags packed onto the van prior to retiring for the night.

On Monday morning, everyone was up and about and ready with luggage to pack the van and begin the trek west to Iona. We are very grateful for Ian Morrison, our coach driver, who came early to help Fr. Marty pack up the luggage van, and the hotel staff, one of whom came in on his day off to assist our group in getting the luggage downstairs to the van. The Knight Residence manager Colin expressed his thanks for the plates of American goodies we had put together for the staff who had assisted us. We departed on time at 8:30am for the long trek – 2 1/2 hours to the Green Welly truck stop, another hour to Oban, grocery shopping at Tesco for 5 days' worth of supplies, on to the ferry terminal, then one hour ferry to Craignure on the east coast of Mull, transfer to the Bowman's Bus to cross over to the west coast of Mull at Fionnphort, then board the short ferry over to Iona, and finally walk over to the youth hostel on Iona. (Dee kept Fr. Marty Company as he drove the luggage van separately while Ian drove the rest of the pilgrims in the coach.)

Everything went like clockwork — the shopping at Oban was the smoothest ever, and everything fit into the luggage van. The pilgrims only needed to carry themselves onto the ferry. The weather did not seem to deter the spirit — cold, "gail" force winds and driving rain that came in bands. The group cozied up in the ferry's restaurant and shared some local Beef & Ale Pie and fish & chips. Lots of laughs, especially when the restaurant employee's accent made it sound like "Beef and Eel" Pie, and when Rochelle purchased a beer called "Kilt Lifter." Upon arrival in Oban, the pilgrims had to find their way to the Bowman's Bus, as Fr. Marty had to drive the luggage van across Mull — a windy, one lane roller coaster road — and one has to hurry because if you don't get to the Iona ferry before the bus, the ferry leaves you behind. And it's the last ferry of the day. So the scene unfolded with the nine pilgrims wandering off the ferry and looking for the bus as Fr. Marty and Dee drive by, with the pilgrims shrugging their shoulders and saying, "Where's the bus?", and Fr. Marty and Dee pointing to the bus as they hurry past — trying to make sure they have enough of a head start that they get across the island before the bus.

All worked out well. Dee tried to pretend not to be nervous as Marty hurriedly navigated the hairpin turns, avoiding everything from steep drop offs to roadside sheep. What an incredible feeling it was to arrive at the Iona ferry terminal and drive ALL the luggage onto the ferry in the luggage van, and then DRIVE ALL THE LUGGAGE ALL THE WAY TO THE YOUTH HOSTEL on Iona! (The past seven pilgrimage groups, especially Charles, will appreciate that fact more than anyone.) And to top that, John MacLean from the youth hostel had his station wagon present, and he was able to transport four of the pilgrims in addition to the two who got in the luggage van. Barbara, Rochelle, Gay, and Chris

Pedic did the one mile walk in the cold and rain over to the youth hostel, and all four said at reflection time that it was a highlight for them.

We met the wonderful new staff at the Youth Hostel — Cora, Chris, Alice and Dan, and all four of them assisted us in transporting all the luggage and the food into the youth hostel. Everyone pitched in to organize it all, and after a “family meeting” with John explaining youth hostel protocol and officially introducing the staff, we prepared for a light dinner, with Dee leading the way in preparing a healthy salad and pizza while the others sorted out the rest of the supplies.

The group celebrated Compline after dinner. We appropriately sang “Would you come and follow me” after such a long pilgrimage journey. We reflected on the day and had quiet time to write in our journals. After some comforting hot chocolate, we retired for the night, tired but grateful for such an eventful day. LLL 10 gals and one guy

FYI: Photos coming later today (once they wake up and I can upload them!)

**Sunday – September 15**

## **Pilgrim Reflections**

On Sunday, September 15, the pilgrims had some quiet time in the refectory at Inchcolm Abbey. At that time, they reflected on the Gospel of the Day, and were prepared to share via phone call with the St. Joseph's 9:30am service the "silver coin in which they rejoice." Since we were unable to make that telephone call, here are the pilgrims' thoughts:

"I treasure the silver coin of encouragement that I receive from my St. Joseph's family that pushes me to challenge myself and grow in spirit." – Christine Pedic

"I am so grateful for all the unexpected love I have found at St. Joseph's that we all have extended to one another." – Pat Lyren

"I am grateful I found my silver coin – my St. Joseph's family which has enabled me to walk with my God more closely on this wonderful pilgrimage." – Gail Drane

"And the silver coin I am grateful for is my family including my St. Joseph's family and the new spiritual mountaintops of this journey." – Barbara MacKenzie

"And the silver coin I am thankful for is the Holy Spirit alive and well in my life and that of my family." – Gay Sideris

"I am thankful for the silver coin of friendships." – Karen Haney

"So very thankful for Rel's support of me to go on this trip – thank you so much." – Rochelle Prince

"The positive encouraging, loving St. Joseph's family." – Dee Zlatic

"I am so grateful for Justen coming back home so I could participate in this pilgrimage adventure." – Joan Fox

"The silver coin I have found and am so thankful for is this very experience and journey in Scotland that I have so longed to be a part of. It has only been two days and so far it has far exceeded my expectations. It is glorious! Special place with special people." – LuAnn Langley

"The silver coin in which I rejoice is a parish that encourages and prioritizes and nurtures the spiritual growth of its members." – Marty Zlatic

**2 Responses to Pilgrim Reflections from Sunday – September 15**

## Tuesday – September 17



After the loooooonnggg journey to Iona, the pilgrims had a leisurely morning to recover. The howling wind and cold made it easy for most to stay cocooned up in bed under the warm blankets. After a late brunch of blueberry pancakes and apple sausage, the pilgrims gathered for midday prayer and an exercise on the spiritual discipline of scriptural imaging, utilizing the Transfiguration account in Matthew 17: 1-9. The group then embarked for a walk to Iona Abbey for a tour and visit. All enjoyed the afternoon free time for journaling, reading, and exploring. Rochelle, Dee and Luann chose to walk back to the Iona Community book store for a poetry reading by one of the community's authors. They listed that experience as one of the unexpected highlights of their day, and they shared one of the poems appropriate to our group at dinner.

The group began the dinner prep for our seafood fest, and we were overjoyed to have our host workers at the hostel join us — Dan from Australia, and Cora, Chris and Alice from the UK (London, Brighton and surrounding area). Following dinner clean up, the pilgrims braved the cold and wind for a night walk to the Abbey for their weekly healing service. The abbey was packed, which made the reverence and focus of the service even more powerful. The group returned to the youth hostel for hot chocolate and sharing of the day's highs and lows. All were anxious to "crash" in bed soon thereafter.

LLL 10 lassies and a lad

FYI – due to the winds and rough surf, Mark Jardine has recommended that we delay our sail to Columba's Bay until Thursday. Therefore, Wednesday will be another day for internal spiritual explorations (and weather permitting, external physical exploration also.)



Wednesday – September 18



The pilgrims awoke to another cold and windy day, with intermittent “stiletto” driving rain. The constant changeover from sun to rain has resulted in many incredible rainbows. The pilgrims who are counting them are well over twenty already. After breakfast, we reflected on the story of Elijah (1 Kings 19), and his discovery of God not in the wind, earthquake, or fire — but in the silence. We embarked on a silent meditative walk down to the Abbey, where we settled in Michael’s Chapel, a small worship space next to the Abbey. After the hymn “Create in me” set the tone, the pilgrims each wrote their own version of Psalm 23, listening as Fr. Marty’s gave the meanings of each phrase in the verses. The pilgrims then broke into dyads to share the experience with a partner. We concluded with a rousing version of “Go Tell Everyone,” and then broke the silence with a walk around to see the interior of the Abbey not included in yesterday’s tour.

The pilgrims had a leisurely walk back to the youth hostel, and fun and conversation filled the room as everyone sliced and diced to make a Mexican feast of tacos and fajitas. The group gathered after lunch to discuss our remaining time on Iona. (It is hard to believe we are already at the mid-way point in our Iona experience.) Because the weather was still wet, the optional hike up the Dun I mountain was postponed, and Fr. Marty led those who wanted on a short walk down to the closest beach for exploring and rock collecting. The “stiletto” rain returned in bands, but it didn’t seem to deter the pilgrim adventurers from their exploring. Others seemed content to read and reflect in the great room at the hostel, overlooking the beauty of nature from an environment that provided more warmth and comfort.

Our hosts Dan, Chris, Alice and Cora joined us again for a lively Indian buffet. Afterwards, half the group chose to walk back to the Abbey with Dan for the 9pm Commitment Service, while the rest stayed and had a lively conversation with our other hosts. They learned a lot about “proper English.” Eventually, everyone was back together for Compline and sharing, which included everyone reading their personalized versions of Psalm 23. The meditative walk and the spiritual exercise were a highlight for most.

Tomorrow, we will check the weather once again. If the weather does not change tomorrow morning (Thursday) , we will try and wait till Friday for one more chance for the sail to Columba’s Bay.

LLL 10 babes and a boy

**One Response to Wednesday – September 18**

## Thursday – September 19

The pilgrims awoke to wind, rain and cold, and after Fr. Marty conferenced with Mark Jardine (boat captain), we agreed that we would not attempt the Columba's Bay sail today. After most trickled in for breakfast coffee or tea by 9:00am, the group scattered to prepare themselves for the day's activity. With our pilgrim votive candles burning in the middle of our circle, Fr. Marty conducted a group exercise in Lectio Divina, based on the Scripture on the beatitudes and the salt of the earth/light of the world (Matthew 5: 1-16). We entered into some time for silent and reflection, and some commented how quickly the time passed. Great fellowship continued as the group gathered in the great room while a lunch of all the international leftovers was prepared. Our host Dan led us in a beautiful lunch time blessing before the culinary romp through the countries began.

Since tomorrow (Friday) will be the last possibility for Columba's Bay, we flip flopped the schedule and Thursday afternoon was left open for exploring. The weather cooperated and for the first time, the clouds cleared, the wind subsided a bit, and a warm sun shone, transforming the landscape and sea into a myriad of brilliant colors that up till now had only been seen in the rainbows amidst the clouds. Some wandered down to the nearby beach, others chose to read, journal and reflect, and still others ventured the mile walk into town. Rochelle and Luann became the legendary pilgrim heroes, as they hiked solo all the way up to the top of the Dun I hill, and still had enough energy afterwards to explore the town.

By late afternoon, most had returned to the youth hostel when the clouds and mist returned for another spell. Everyone pitched in to prep for a special dinner together, since we would be celebrating our host Alice, whose 28<sup>th</sup> birthday is today. The pilgrims presented her with a special card that Joan had passed around for all to write short notes, and Gail presented a Saint Joseph's tote bag as a gift. Rochelle had put together the famous Ghirardelli brownie cake, and when Dee adorned it with Alice's name spelled out in M&Ms and candles, the celebration was complete as we sang "Happy Birthday."

After dinner, most chose to stay and continue the fellowship, sharing our individual stories with each other. A few ventured back to the Abbey for the Evening Communion Service, and returned singing the song and dancing the dance they had learned as the recessional hymn. During Compline, we all shared our highs for the day, and there were not very many lows. Tomorrow (Friday), our last full day on Iona, promises to be the best weather day yet. We are hopeful that we can either sail or walk to Columba's Bay. We will chat with boat captain Mark in the morning and make a decision.

All went to bed happy, well fed spiritually, emotionally, and physically.

LLL, 10 mademoiselles and a monsieur.

Friday – September 20





All pilgrimages have their unique charisms and experiences. This particular pilgrimage had one of theirs today. With the rain subsided, but the wind and sea conditions still rough, the landing at Columba's Bay was described as "50-50%" at best. The pilgrims discussed whether we should attempt to walk it (which would mean that some couldn't go), or attempt the sail (which would mean that we might not be able to land at Columba's Bay). This group does things together, so we opted for boarding Birthe Maria at 10:00am, and sailing. The group began the post-breakfast walk, and just then there was

a car pulling out of the driveway where the youth hostel property ends. Rochelle and company flagged them down, and asked them if they would give Gay a ride down to the ferry landing. Gay has a sore toe, and the people kindly agreed to save her the 1.2 mile walk to the ferry landing. Everyone met Mark Jardine as he helped them aboard the boat, and after a safety briefing, off we sent. We were just a little bit beyond the bay, when someone said, "Look, a dolphin." Then someone else pointed to the other side of the boat and said, "Dolphins!" And then someone else said, "Dolphins, straight ahead." It was the most amazing sight. There were at least 15 of them, swimming and playing together around, under, and next to the boat nature's unique escort for our trip to Columba's Bay. When we arrived at the Bay, the turbulent water with white caps by the beach made it obvious that we would be unable to land there. Mark surveyed each of the three possible landing areas for quite a while, but it was not to be. Perhaps the dolphins were the gift sent to replace our landing at the Bay. We quickly came up with "Plan B," with Mark asking Fr. Marty to take the helm while he unfurled the sails. We turned off the motor and, with the brisk winds, enjoyed a beautiful sail back north up the sound. We paused with the boat rocking in the waves, and did some scriptural imaging with the three Biblical accounts of the storm at sea. Then, we continued our sail north of the ferry landing, and continued to the north end of Iona, veering over towards the Mull coast. We followed the Mull coast all the way around the northern tip, taking in the beautiful scenery all the way. This was new territory for St. Joseph's pilgrims, as no other group has explored this area of Mull. We anchored in a protected bay that is an old abandoned stone quarry, from which stones were cut to make lighthouses years ago on the western edges of the Scottish isles. Now it is an outdoor camp where the Iona Community has retreat experiences for groups, especially inner city youth. The wind and cold remained strong as we shared our picnic lunch (Question: Is there any ice for the soda? Answer: just put your finger in the cup.) Mark shared some stories about his growing up in the area (he at one point worked here as a young man when it was a fishing station). On the way back to the Iona ferry landing, we hugged the Mull coast even closer than before, and Mark found an inlet where there were seals sitting on the rocks and swimming in the water between the rocks and us. He slowly and delicately approached so as not to disturb them, then after they posed for a few photos, we gently backed out of the inlet and continued to the ferry landing to conclude our 5-hour cruise. Everyone gave Mark a rousing applause and hug as we approached the ferry landing, trying to give the passengers waiting for the ferry an "advertisement" for a future trip with this wonderful man. Handshakes and hugs, and the group was off on their own for final exploring Iona on their way back to the youth hostel to prepare for our closing dinner celebration with all our new friends. We gathered for a true agape meal with hostel proprietor John and his friend Rachel, hostel staff Alice, Chris, Dan and Cora, Cora's parents David and Christine, and boat captain Mark Jardine and his wife Anya and their daughter Freya. Gathered around the long table, decorated exquisitely by our artistic ladies, we gave thanks for the hospitality shown unto us for this eighth St. Joseph's pilgrimage to this holy hostel. John himself spoke of the wonderful connection that has developed between St. Joseph's and our Iona friends. (We hope he was serious about visiting St. Joseph's next January.) 7-year-old Freya provided the moment of the

evening, when she serenaded us with a Gaelic song she had learned at school. When invited to sing, she asked, "Do you want a happy one or a sad one?" We opted for the happy. The only thing more beautiful than her singing was to see the genuine love and pride on her parents' faces. Everyone pitched in to clean up and pack up, and by 11:30pm, we had finished Compline and reflected on the highs of the day. We were honored to have Dan choose to join us for prayer and reflection. For most, the dolphins and the banquet were the high. The low? Unanimously, leaving this thin place tomorrow will be difficult. LLL 10 sailorettes and a seaman

## **2 Responses to Friday – September 20**

Saturday – September 21







## **Saturday – September 21**

A pilgrimage, defined in many different ways throughout the centuries, has been defined by some as a “long and difficult journey to a site of religious significance for the purposes of spiritual growth.” If there would be a picture in the dictionary next to that definition, you would see a photo of this group next to it as an illustration.

Saturday began with breakfast, then packing up the van, hugs and tear-filled goodbyes to our Iona hosts, and then preparing for the walk to Columba’s Bay. Challenge #1: Unfortunately, the grass, extremely wet from all the week’s rain, wouldn’t allow for the van’s tires to get enough traction to make it up the wee hill to turn around. After some anxious moments, John and Chris came to the rescue and helped Marty to maneuver the van back and forth until it lodged itself loose enough to make it up to the road. John and Rachel were gracious to give a ride to some of the group who were feeling a bit challenged from the week’s physical demands. After the 1 mile walk (okay, Pat’s pedometer says it’s 1.4 miles) we arrived at the ferry landing with time to spare, and Mark was there with Anya and Freya preparing the boat for another excursion, so we were able to greet them one more time. Challenge #2: The ferry arrived, and Fr. Marty was all set to drive the van onto the ferry when the ferry employee motioned for him to turn around on the dock and back the luggage van onto the ferry. They don’t teach you this in seminary. With lots of prayer and Dee having her eyes closed, we maneuvered the van onto the ferry, and the foot passengers followed for the short trip across the sound of Iona to Fionnphort on Mull. The dolphins did a little synchronized swimming in the sound as our send off.

Challenge #3: The roller coast ride across Mull then ensued, with Fr. Marty in the van with Dee (eyes opened this time) and the rest on the Bowman’s Bus for the 36-mile drive to the east coast of Mull at Craignure. All arrived without incident to board the big ferry for the ride across to Oban on the west coast of Scotland. On the Craignure-Oban ferry, the group settled in a corner of the dining room. Some enjoyed the sandwiches packed for the trip, while others chose to indulge in the ship restaurant’s local delicacies. Upon arrival at Oban, there was Ian with the coach ready to go. Both van and coach passengers met up at St. Conan’s, about a 30 minute drive east of Oban, for a short tour of the church (built by a son for his mother so she didn’t have to go so far to church). We conducted a short service in the apse, beginning with “Seek Ye First.” The group was amazed at how good they sounded singing in this acoustically perfect place. Then, after a short reading from a poem about a monk traveling from Iona to Lindisfarne, we picked a rock out of a bag. Each rock is labeled with a pilgrim’s name, and we will now carry that pilgrim’s burden for them, becoming an anonymous prayer partner for them for the rest of our pilgrimage.

Continuing on, after a rest stop at the Green Welly, we continued on through the beautiful countryside. Since the tides at Lindisfarne would not allow us to cross over until 9:00pm, we planned a stop at Stirling Castle. The pilgrims were free to roam this enormous site, important for its historical connections to Scottish history. Then, we moved on to our dinner stop at Ocean Terminal, which was right on our route. Karen MacCormick had

been kind enough to make the arrangements for our group to eat at the Handmade Hamburger Company. Ian and Marty remembered last summer's pilgrimage group, who stopped at this same place last year on our way to Lindisfarne. Angela, one of the workers, had agreed to wait on our group at table, rather than everyone going up to the counter. This was a gift, and all enjoyed the multitudinous versions of burgers and salads offered.

Challenge #4: Now it was time for the final 90-minute journey to Lindisfarne. We've done this before – it's an easy drive – straight down the A-1. Easy, that is, unless there are unannounced road closures. We were detoured off the highway onto a small country road that wended around for miles. Ian found an alternate turn off road (a one-way road like Mull). The GPS now said we would arrive at 11:00pm. Then, there was another detour from the detour. Then, another blocked road with a detour from the detour from the detour. Thanks be to God for Ian, who figured out somehow how to get us as far south as Lindisfarne on the side roads so that when we came back to A-1, we would just cross over onto the Lindisfarne causeway road. We arrived at Lindisfarne, and after figuring out where Coble Cottage was located, everyone pitched in and carried and sorted all the food into the upstairs kitchen.

It was about 12:30am by the time we collapsed onto the couches to thank God for finally arriving and safely arriving. We said goodnight to those staying at Coble Cottage (Barbara, Gail, Chris, Karen, Luann and Gay), and Fr. Marty drove the rest of the luggage up to the Island House, where the remainder of the group is staying (Marty, Dee, Pat, Joan and Rochelle). We opened the windows at Island House to hear the sounds of the seals singing in the nearby water.

Challenge #5: we'll see if they can wake up in time for Eucharist at St. Mary's on Sunday morning.

While nowhere close to the early days when pilgrims braved the elements and walked for days in the wind, rain, and cold, our 2013 pilgrims received at least a sample of what such an intentional journey is like.

LLL 10 dames and a driver

FYI: If you are reading this blog prior to the 9:30am service on Sunday morning, it means we have Wi-Fi connection at Coble Cottage and WILL be attempting to Skype to the congregation during the 9:30am service at St. Joseph's.

**September 23, 2013**

## **Charlene Storm**

We awoke this morning to the sad news of the death of our beloved Charlene Storm, who passed away on Sunday with Doug and Kathy by her side. Char had recently relocated to the Longwood area near Orlando, Florida, where she could be closer to her family. She was under hospice care in her final days. Charlene served her God with humor and quiet passion at several churches, and we were blessed to have her as a companion at St. Joseph's for many years. Over the years, she was a faithful member of the altar guild, a weekly office volunteer, and money counter, member of the Daughters of the King, sent out the birthday cards every week for our Children's Ministry, a loyal sous chef for the Italian dinners, and was the most loyal Florida Marlins fan ever.

The sunrise here in Lindisfarne was especially brilliant this morning, perhaps because the light of another saint rises this morning with the sun.

Farewell dear Char. We love you and we will miss you.

**One Response to Charlene Storm**

Sunday – September 22



Rev. Kate









Challenge #5 from yesterday was a well-fitted yoke for our pilgrims, as all awoke excited to explore Lindisfarne and Skype home with our Saint Joseph's family back home. Everyone met at St. Mary's for the 10:45am service, and we sat right in front of the pulpit in the front rows. The church was full for Sunday Eucharist, and we were blessed with a beautiful sermon by Rev. Kate Tristram on this Sunday's Gospel, to which she applied the theme of faithfulness.

After the service, with stunning sunny 70 degree weather, we walked back to the Coble Cottage home to prepare lunch. Fr. Marty gave directions for the pilgrims to reflect upon prior to our Skype call this afternoon, which would take place around 3pm Lindisfarne time. Based on Rev. Kate's sermon at the Eucharist, we were to reflect upon completing the phrase, "I have seen God's faithfulness \_\_\_\_\_."

Fr. Marty hurriedly ran out with Dee to the grocery store to supply our kitchen. The causeway road would be closing mid-afternoon with the tide coming in, so there was little time to spare. (In talking to our friend who runs the Island Store, we discovered that last evening's road closures of the main A-1 highway only takes place after 10:00pm at night.) We all came together around the dining room table for the call to Saint Joseph's. An exciting moment – explained to Fr. Marty later on – was that the group was not ignoring his command for everyone to gather at the table for the call. Rather, they were downstairs trying to help Pat figure out how to get out of the bathroom where she was locked in. Until Pat was "freed," they weren't moving, despite her pleas of "Go, save yourselves, don't worry about me..." The story brought a lot of laughter in the retelling after the Skype event.

The Skype call was meaningful for everyone. To hear Rev. Wendy's voice and the congregation as a whole, we felt our unity as the body of Christ. After this, since the tide was in, and the quiet beauty of Holy Island was now ours to enjoy, we had decided to take a walk together, when Andy Raine popped in for a visit. After a chat and coffee, Andy agreed to join us – and consequently, lead us – on a walk about town. He showed us how the lookout (dedicated by Prince Charles when the youth were here last year) is now open to the public. He also showed us a special place (that Fr. Marty had never seen) that is reached through a narrow path along the water, where there are prayer hollows – protected indentations on the cliffs overlooking St. Cuthbert's island where one



can sit for prayer and reflection. As we continued on, we had been remarking how wonderful Rev. Kate's sermon was and how special it would be if we could get her to join us for a chat at some point, when lo and behold, there she was walking towards us to go down to St. Mary's to lead evening prayer. (Rev. Paul, the vicar of St. Mary's, had taken ill during the service and Rev. Kate had to take over. Remember Rev. Paul in prayer, as he was ambulated off the island to the hospital.) Rev. Kate agreed to join us tomorrow morning for a chat about the Celtic saints, a topic she knows a little about (she is one of the world's experts on the Celtic saints, especially Columbanus, about whom she has written the authoritative book.)

Everyone pitched in to prepare dinner. Andy Raine and his son Joel accepted our invitation to join us. Anna (wife) and daughter Martha needed to stay home so that Martha could get prepared for school this week. (Because of the tide schedule, the school students will be boarding off island for three nights this week.) It was great for Fr. Marty to reunite with Joel, and share stories and updates about our youth that became such good friends with him and Anna last July. It was especially a great connection that four of the youth whom Joel met are represented on this pilgrimage: Becca and Matt's grandmother Gay is here, Madison's mom Luann is here, and Maggie's mom Karen is here.

We had a great meal gathered around the big table where we had skyped with St. Joseph's earlier. Andy updated us on his latest projects, and, as a teaser for our Tuesday session, he prayed and sang a liturgical dance to John Michael Talbott's "Create in Me." With the time growing late, we gathered our journals and Andy joined us for Compline prayers. After a reprise of last year's youth pilgrim "theme song" Lay Down My Dear Sisters, we all headed to our respective places for a night's rest.

LLL 10 gulls and a guy

## Monday – September 23

There was an incredible sunrise over Lindisfarne Castle this morning, and as the sun heightened in the sky so too did the spirits of the pilgrims, with another gorgeous day with temperatures around 70 degrees. Everyone gathered in the sitting room at Coble Cottage, and after an introductory hymn of "I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light," Rev. Kate began her talk, which fascinated everyone. Without a note in front of her, she told the history and significance of Columbanus, the Irish monk and missionary. She interwove anecdotes and explanations of Irish monastery life, other Celtic saints like Columba, and the true meaning of "barbarians," along with some personal hands-on experience she has had with the Lindisfarne Gospels. This built up great anticipation for the pilgrim journey to Durham Cathedral and the Lindisfarne Gospels exhibit on Thursday.

It seemed like only minutes had passed by, when it was almost 11:45am, and Rev. Kate had to depart for another appointment. We expressed our gratitude for her sharing of her wisdom, which was both informative and entertaining. Mary Fleeson, from the Lindisfarne Scriptorium, then arrived to join us for a light lunch (which featured Dee's famous scones) prior to our workshop with her on Celtic knot work. Mary started with simple patterns, and before the session was over, the whole group was drawing complex Celtic trees with knot work in both the branches and the roots. She let us borrow her materials to practice in preparation for her follow-up session with us on Friday morning. The rest of the afternoon was left free for exploring and reflecting. Most went out to explore the outdoors, especially the beach area close to St. Cuthbert's Island. Some went to the bookstore to purchase Rev. Kate's books on Columbanus and Holy Island.

Later, everyone gathered and assisted with the slicing and dicing and cooking our dinner that we would share with Ian our coach driver and Andy and Anna Raine. After dinner, we moved over to the sitting room and Anna performed an angelic concert of Celtic music, as she accompanied her voice on the guitar. We concluded the night with the Northumbria Community's version of Compline, with Anna leading us in the sung refrains. There was a beautiful silence when we finished, with everyone seeming to let the quiet allow them to absorb everything we had experienced.

LLL 10 females and a father







## Tuesday – September 24

This morning the pilgrims were free to find God in God's beautiful creation. Several walked to the gardens beyond the castle, while others ventured to the north shore to find the "Hut," a geocaching site built of stones that has become an annual pilgrimage site for our groups.



All remarked how the tall grass and dunes mixed with the sea views were a glorious site to behold.



Everyone assembled at various times for brunch, and Andy Raine came at noon to lead a session on the Celtic saints. His ability to put things into a historical timeframe had the group transfixed as he spoke, and Andy interspersed his teaching with poems he has written regarding the sites connected with the spread of Christianity. Some of the group favorites were Lindisfarne (of course), Iona, Melrose, Tours, Patmos and Durham.

Midway through the afternoon, the pilgrims relocated to the outdoor patio, where Andy led them in a session of dance and movement. There was much laughter and emotion, and all agreed that, though they were concerned about this prior to experiencing it, it turned out to be a highlight for all.





Following the dance, everyone pitched in to get the early dinner on the table, so that we would be ready for the Skype session with the Nehemiah Retreat participants back at the Duncan Center. Andy spoke about the Northumbria Community history, the uniqueness of their dispersed community's vows, and also how he has incorporated hospitality, availability, and vulnerability into his own life. After answering questions from the pilgrims assembled in Lindisfarne as well as the retreatants assembled at the Duncan Center, Andy then talked about the street dance ministry, and how it has impacted the lives of both participants and watchers over the years. Andy then performed a beautiful version of "God of the Poor," and later he and Anna did the reconciliation dance that the pilgrims experienced earlier in the day.



Anna gave a beautiful bookend to the session with an opening and closing hymn.

It was especially fun for the pilgrims to be able to say hi via video Skype to Rev. Wendy, Dede Lewis, Rev. Bernie Pecaro, and several other Nehemiah participants back in Florida.





Several commented that the reality of the amazing technology didn't really hit them until they saw the faces of those we know back home. Everyone gathered in their respective places surrounding Andy and Anna either in person or around the video camera, and Archdeacon Hobbs offered a special blessing prayer for them. Although oceans away, we felt very close to our brothers and sisters back home.

After we said goodbye, Andy and Anna led us in the Tuesday Night Cuthbert Compline prayer, and then gave hugs and goodbyes after a long day. Since the pilgrims are now halfway through their Lindisfarne experience, we had a team meeting to end the day, both to reflect on our experiences and to go over the agenda for the rest of our time here. The most difficult part of the discussion seemed to be for the pilgrims to limit their choice to only one favorite high point in their Lindisfarne experience.

LLL, 10 ballerinas and a boy

**One Response to Tuesday – September 24, 2013**

## Wednesday – September 25

After a very full day on Tuesday, the pilgrims had a leisurely morning for prayer, journaling, and exploring.



The weather had turned cold, windy, and wet, so the weather gear and layered look was in fashion as on Iona. The group assembled for an early lunch at 11:30am, and we came to a mutual decision to proceed with the hike to Cuthbert's Cave. At lunch, we had some reflective time to open the gift from our Iona friends. As we read the inscriptions in the book they had presented us, we remembered again how special our time was with each of them. Dan had given a special remembrance to Gay, who chose to share her opening of the gift with us all. She was very touched by her encounter with Dan, and was now even more so with her gift.



We departed on the coach amidst the rain and wind and cold.

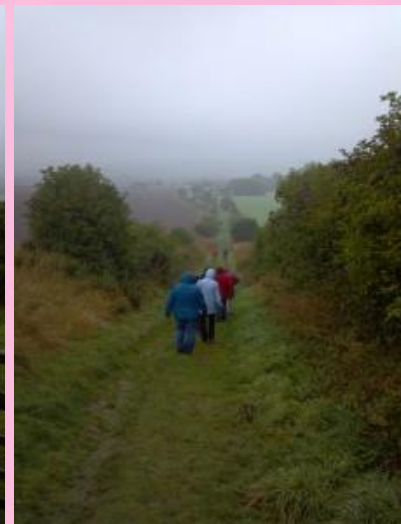


Ian was incredible to remember the back roads to get us there without a hitch, and because we have a smaller coach this year, he was able to drive the bus all the way to the parking lot at the entrance to the trail.



The rain worsened, and that first hill walking straight into the wind and stiletto rain had some doubting if we would make it. However, when we reached the top of the first hill and turned to the right, we were out of the direct path of the wind and rain, and the terrain became level and easy. Many were encouraged when they saw the sign at the top of that first hill, "Cuthbert's Cave - 1/4 mile." Fr. Marty brought up the rear of the group, and was surprised when they failed to look up to the left and see the cave before them. They had just kept walking straight and were already well past the cave. The shepherd didn't have a crook to pull them back, but he did have a voice they recognized, so when he shouted, "Hey the cave's back here!" they all turned to see their destination right up the short hill in front of them.

We spent some time in silence reflecting on the significance of this spot, enjoying the shelter it now provided us from the weather, and recalling that which is most important in our own spiritual lives which we desire for God to protect.





Then, after a chant of "Bless the Lord, My Soul," we gave some time for exploring before beginning the trek back to the bus and the trip home.



The rest of the afternoon was left open to dry our wet clothes and bodies, and then settle down for a fun dinner together with Ian. Some learned fancy new napkin folds as an added touch to our table.



All retired early after praying the Cuthbert Compline prayers from the Community of Sts. Aidan and Hilda. Tomorrow will be the all-day adventure to Durham Cathedral and the Lindisfarne Gospel.

LLL, 10 straying sheep and a shepherd

PS — Oh yes, we have forgotten to document the royal presence with us at Stirling Castle the other day:



**One Response to Wednesday – September 25, 2013**

## Thursday – September 26

The first part of the morning was free for the pilgrims. Some wrote in journals, a few chose to join Rev. Kate at St. Mary's for worship, a few went off and reflected on their own, while a couple enjoyed the warmth of the fire at Island House. The group met Ian at the coach park for our 10:30am departure, as soon as the causeway had opened. We knew we were on a tight schedule to wait for the tide to turn in order to leave the island, and still arrive at Durham in time for the Eucharist at 12:30pm.



Because of the Lindisfarne Gospels exhibition, the Durham Council has blocked vehicular access to the Cathedral grounds, so Ian dropped the group off at the bottom of the hill at Market Place, and Fr. Marty led a forced march up the hill to the cathedral.







We arrived in time to gaze open-mouthed at the expanse of the nave of Durham Cathedral as we walked to our seats. We were soon to discover that today was the annual day when the College of Canons make their required annual Eucharist as a group, so the service was held at the main altar instead of the small Cuthbert's Chapel. We told the pilgrims that it was really because of their presence that there was a solemn procession with about thirty clergy in various liturgical dress divided into three groups, each led by a vergier. Our group was invited to sit in the choir stalls where the Durham choirs normally sit, so the choir members of our group now have an additional bullet to add to their musical resumes. After the Eucharist, we made a short visit to the tomb shrine of St. Cuthbert, then we moved on to the Undercroft café for lunch. Because of the visit of the canons, the place was abuzz with activity and life, and the food was fresh and good. After lunch, we met up with Lilian Groves, who has led several of the Durham tours for our youth in the past. She is an exciting and informative person whom our youth still talk about. Lilian is also a good friend of Rev. Kate Tristram at Lindisfarne, so the circle of connections continues to draw wider.

At the conclusion of the tour, Lilian took us for a short prayer visit to the Cuthbert Chapel. There, at St. Cuthbert's tomb, we paused in silence while Chris Pedic, representing all of us, placed a votive candle at the tomb. We sang "Create in Me," with Lilian praying the collect for Saint Cuthbert in between the verses. It was a special moment. Then, after posing for a photo with Lilian at the sanctuary ring outside the main door, we had to say a farewell to Lilian that was much too hurried.



Our appointment for the sold-out Lindisfarne Gospels exhibit was at 4pm, and we needed to be queued up at the Library doors ahead of time.



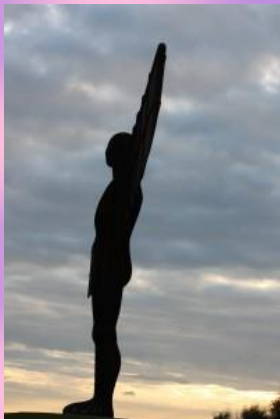


The exhibit was intriguing. The information was more than anyone could grasp in a single visit, but we made the most of it. The last room had the Lindisfarne Gospels opened to the Saint John page. It was amazing to see it just inches away from our eyes behind the leaded glass case.

We marched back down the hill to board the bus for the long trip home.



We stopped along the way to see the Angel of the North sculpture





and then continued on to Newcastle-upon-Tyne to enjoy a Spanish tapas dinner at La Tasca, and then walk on the Millennium Bridge.



From there is was a 90-minute ride home, so we arrived after the causeway had reopened, and all went quickly to bed just before midnight.





LLL 10 señoritas and a señor

## Friday – September 27

Each pilgrimage group from Saint Joseph's has gathered at the St. Cuthbert statue amidst the ruins of Lindisfarne Priory for an outdoor Eucharist, where we specifically pray for all pilgrims from our church who have gone before us to this place, and for all who have made it possible for us to be at this place. This year's Eucharist was especially meaningful to the group.





The Priory opened up at 9:30am just for us, and then locked the gate so there was beautiful solitude for the group. Then, after the service, Mary Fleeson joined us for lunch for a follow-up session on Celtic artwork. After lunch, everyone took advantage of the time to do those last few things they had been unable to do so far on Lindisfarne: do the pilgrim's walk, visit St. Aidan's Church and Bamburgh Castle, pray on St. Cuthbert's Island, and walk through the quiet streets of the town.





We cooked up all the “goodies” we had left, and provided a celebration with all our Lindisfarne family: Andy and Anna Raine with Joel and Martha, and Mary and Mark Fleeson with Callum and Aurian. We started with a special Shabbat blessing and candle lighting service led by the ladies, and then, after Mark taught us a new blessing in the form of a sung round, we continued with the feast and fellowship.

After the party, all said much-too-hurried goodbyes as we started to pack up for our departure tomorrow morning.

LLL 10 rockers and a rabbi

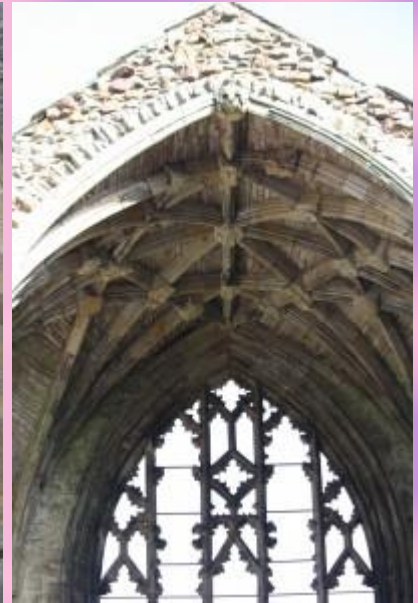
Saturday – September 28















Just when you thought it couldn't get any better. .. Our last day began with a glorious sunrise over Lindisfarne Castle. We cleaned up both houses and loaded up the luggage. We stopped on the causeway and each prayer partner gave back the stone that they had carried for their partner since Iona. Then each person threw his/her stone into the muddy water, symbolic of that which we will leave behind as we move on to the other side.

Because we had to leave the island before the tide came in, we had a whole day to get to Glasgow, so we made the most of it as we stopped at three of the Border Abbeys: Jedburgh, Dryburgh, and Melrose. The consensus is that if we were to choose to be monks in one of these three orders, most would choose to be in the quiet solitude of the Premonstratensian Monks at Dryburgh Abbey, where Sir Walter Scott is buried. In the midst of these Abbeys, we stopped at Scotts View for what turned out to be a surreal picnic lunch experience. This gorgeous view was being enjoyed by a group of bikers all dressed in black on their way to London. Then, Scottish TV personality Tony Robinson showed up with a film crew to do a segment on Cuthbert's Way. After that, a man all dressed in yellow on a yellow motorcycle showed up just as we started sharing cookies with the public. He took a biscuit and said, "No one ever says no to a biscuit," then he



drove off. In the midst of all that, an international group of college students from a branch of Edinburgh University showed up, who were enrolled in the textile research arm of the University based in nearby Galashiels. It was all like a Fellini movie with all of these different characters showing up one after the other. We would be in the midst of a conversation and a sandwich, and Tony Robinson's film crew would say, "Quiet Please," then they would film a 30-second bit and we'd go back to talking again.

We stopped at Melrose, but did the detour first to the Simply Delicious store for the Orkney ice cream that has become a tradition for our pilgrims. It was as good as ever if you ask Fr. Marty. After the long bus ride to Glasgow, we arrived at George Square and the Millennium Hotel for our last night and farewell banquet. Each pilgrim toasted their prayer partner, and each pilgrim read the collect each had written as they had reflected upon their experience. Tons of laughter, a few tears, and lots of fellowship. The group set the date of November 17 at the 9:30am service to celebrate their pilgrimage as a group, since that is the next weekend when all will be in town at the same time.

Everyone went to bed tired but joy-filled. Please note this will conclude our travel blog daily updates. We may add some additional photos down the road once we get home. Love to everyone who helped to make this pilgrimage a reality.

LLL 11 pilgrims

## Sunday – September 29

Everyone made it to the gate and even though the flight was delayed out of Glasgow, all returning pilgrims made it to their connecting flight in Newark. Here are Karen, Rochelle and Luann boarding their flight in Glasgow.

