Brita Hardeberg / Øystein Bjørdal, editors

Pilgrimage to Nidaros

A practical pilgrimage theology
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INTRODUCTION

Almost at the same time as a large part of the world is celebrating the Millennium 2000 AD, the Church of Norway, together with some other countries, is celebrating 1000 years of Christianity. Russia officially celebrated this a few years ago and in Norway it took place in 1995, while Iceland, among others, will celebrate its millennium of Christianity this summer.

At the turn of the first millennium after Christ, Europe was almost in her present form. The Roman Empire had come to an end and Charlemagne had established a new political reality north of the Alps. Borders emerged which established European core-states, and the Church was soon rooted in all parts of the European continent. Christianity became the spiritual foundation for many countries, almost as a logical consequence of Emperor Constantine’s initiative for the State Church. Today Norway has a Lutheran State Church, just like Denmark, Iceland, and Finland.

During the 11th century an ecclesial reform-movement became very influential in the Roman Catholic Church. A new relationship developed between church and state because the church no longer wanted to be a subordinate servant to the state. The church called people to a more spiritual life, monasteries were built, and gradually church institutions became stronger. However, the tensions between state and church, king and bishop, prevailed, and Norway was no exception to this situation.

Olav Haraldson, St. Olav, was King of Norway from 1015 to 1030. During his reign the Christian gospel and ethics were officially implemented among the people. English missionaries had already paved the way. The rule of the country was established on a Christian basis at the Mosterting of 1025. With the death of King Olav at the Battle of Stiklestad (1030), an effort to unite the people under Chris-
tian rule caused a powerful symbol to be raised over his remains. The royal saint and his shrine became the foundation of the unique cathedral of Nidaros, and of the rare and very dangerous pilgrimage to *ultima Thule* in the northern hemisphere.

Holy kings or royal saints represent a special category in hagiographic tradition. They are royal patron saints, and St. Olav is, among others, followed by King Stefan of Hungary (d. 1038), King Knut of Denmark (d. 1086), and King Erik of Sweden (d. 1160).

St. Olav was killed in 1030 AD on July 29th. Special services and masses dedicated to the saint soon became a tradition on this date. *Olsok* is the official name for this day in the calendar, meaning *Olavsvaka* (St. Olav’s vigil). Today the St. Olav Festival in Trondheim has become a significant and influential feast in the Church of Norway, in our ecumenical efforts, and in the cultural life of the country.

The importance of St. Olav’s tradition is seen in many European churches, chapels and sculptures dedicated to the saint. The St. Olav liturgy set a standard of liturgical celebrations in the region. The fact that the Pope established an archdiocese at Nidaros as early as 1153, which had a great impact on the wider region, speaks for itself. The Olav-legend, *Passio et Miracula Olavi*, was compiled and presented by the Norwegian church-builder of the Middle Ages, Archbishop Eystein (1161-88).

This book, *Pilgrimage to Nidaros*, has its background in the studies made by five ministers from The Association of Ministers of the Church of Norway. They have all been involved in pilgrimage work and have been tutored by Liturgical Centre for this study. Brita Hardeberg, co-editor, initiated the process and has co-ordinated the group.

The impulse to make a pilgrimage can be traced to the simple and fundamental experience that the road is raised to meet you as you walk it. This is also a spiritual reality which in biblical language it is expressed in this manner: *O taste and see that the Lord is good!* (Psalm 34,8); *..if any man’s will is to do his will, he shall know*
whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority (John 7,17).

There are close connections between the inner and the outer journey in a human life. Not in the sense that the more we travel the smarter and more pious we become. On the contrary, to be constantly “on the go” may be an escape and a repression of everyday problems that are too hard to cope with. To “take it easy” and be steady at one place (cf. the stabilitas loci of some spiritual orders) may have qualities that the pilgrim is longing for in his or her pilgrimage, a longing for the oneness and unity of the inner and the outer journey of life. Throughout history many writers have been concerned that the real meaning of travelling is not to “get there”, but to return home. If the pilgrimage and the aim of the journey changes me a little as a human being and as a Christian, so that the homecoming has made me a better person, then that is the intention of the journey: to be renewed and confirmed in the fact that incarnation is the heart of the spirituality of the pilgrimage, and the final goal of any Christian pilgrimage is the heavenly homecoming in the eternal Kingdom of God.

To be a pilgrim is to dwell in my own body and to be present in my own life in such a way that Christ also dwells within me (cf. St. Paul in Gal. 2, 20). And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; (John 1,14). And when we speak biblically about our lives, we are not only incarnated souls, but also soul-minded bodies. Bodies which are temples for God. Practical pilgrimage theology thus confirms the words of the philosopher Nietzsche about walking our thoughts, in that we think best with our feet, when we are walking.

In Pilgrimage to Nidaros you will find many ways of initiating this spirituality of the pilgrimage. You will read about old signs and symbols and their new meaning for our times (Brita Hardeberg), about holy places and saints (Berit Lånke), about casual services and liturgical elements for pilgrimages in our times (Dagfinn Slungård). You may read about the form of the service of worship and dramatical perspective of the celebration (Rolv Piene Halvorsen), and about pilgrim-
age as a theological and ecclesiological programme (Thore Nome). The opening chapter, *Linking the past and the present*, is concerned with tradition and continuity of the pilgrimage idea, and reflects on pilgrimage as a phenomenon in our time. We have also had the pleasure of collaborating with Professor Paolo Giuriati of the Centro Ricerche Socio Religiose in Padova, Italy. His contribution is a comparative study of different shrines and holy places for pilgrimage.

Special gratitude is extended to the two who translated this book, Margot Tønseth and Priscilla Beck. Geir Larsen, assistant at the Liturgical Centre, has been of the greatest help in the word-processing and final preparation of the book. We are also grateful to The Association of Ministers of the Church of Norway for the support of this publication, hoping that *Pilgrimage to Nidaros* will increase our understanding and experience of pilgrimage.

*May the road rise to meet you;*
*May the wind be always at your back;*
*May the rain fall softly upon your fields;*
*May God hold you in the hollow of his hand.*

A Gaelic blessing
LINKING THE PAST AND THE PRESENT

An increase in the popularity of both old and new pilgrimage destinations has been reported in many parts of the world. People seek out places where God has revealed himself in earlier times, such as Mecca or Jerusalem. They visit ancient graves of the saints, (Santiago de Compostela) the places where Mary has revealed herself, (Madjugorje in Herzegovina) and also the grave of an American rock star (Jim Morrison in Paris) (see Giuriati, 1996 and Ingebrigtsen, 1996). New customs, such as leaving lighted candles and flowers at places along a roadside where there has been a fatal accident, or the urge to leave flowers outside the house of someone famous who has died suddenly, can be seen as related phenomenon. Pilgrimages to different destinations are, for a variety of reasons, as far as we can see, a typical sign of our own era.

An increased number of visitors to Nidaros Cathedral in Trondheim, where St. Olav’s shrine was once situated, has been observed. As clergy within the Church of Norway, serving near the historical religious centre of Norway, we find ourselves involved in a variety of different ways. We have observed that pilgrimages and the tradition of St. Olav contribute genuine and important values to many people, and we wish to use this potential in our ministry. There is a need for further study and meditation, and the application of the results of these in our ministry. Our experience shows that there are sources we cannot afford to ignore. At the same time, we can see that the experiences are not necessarily linked to just one place or tradition. We believe that this book will serve to clarify these perspectives.

As an introduction, we would like to give a short description of the phenomenon of the pilgrim and pilgrimages, which here are
largely dealt with in relation to the history of the Christian church. We will report on how this interest has grown in the Church of Norway in recent times, providing a background for the other articles in this book. Lastly, we would like to suggest some of the reasons behind the renewed interest in pilgrimages in our own time. A description of the use of pilgrim metaphors in religious thinking may be found in Dagfinn Slungård’s article.

The pilgrim - a religious partnership
Researchers state that pilgrims and pilgrimages are one of the oldest and most fundamental forms of individual and collective religion. Within all known historic religions there is some form of pilgrimage. Examples can be found in religions, which worship nature, Buddhism, Islam, and in ancient-Israelite religion (Halvorsen, 1996, p. 9f). Religion historian Julian Ries has maintained that the paintings in the grottos at Lascaux and Rouffignac represent the remains of ancient rites, and show traces of pilgrimage to holy places some 20,000 years ago (Giuriati and Karlsaune, 1996, p.14ff). The image of the pilgrim appears as a historic and religious partnership: The main rule for the pilgrim is in fact that there are special elements that form a transition between sacred and profane reality. How such elements manifest themselves and which religious reality they lead to, varies from epoch to epoch, from religion to religion. Natural phenomena, buildings, cult objects and chosen people can become such intermediary points. By visiting the manifestations of saints people have themselves been able to approach or to communicate with their god’s world (Larsen, 1996, p. 9f).

Pilgrimages and the church’s history
Within Christendom the first pilgrimages were to the Holy Land. The pilgrims wanted to see the holy places with their own eyes. We hear about journeys to the Holy Land in the second and third centuries, but it is not clear if these can be called pilgrimages. Eusebius tells us about how local Christians in Jerusalem had begun to visit places out-
side the city that had a connection with Jesus’ life. It is said about the great theologian Origenes (ca. 186-252) that he came to Palestine looking for traces of Jesus, his disciples and the prophets (Rian, 1996, p. 89f; Halvorsen, 1996, p. 11).

In the fourth century, important changes increased the pilgrim traffic. Emperor Constantine became ruler of the Orient during the year 324 AD, and the year after he was responsible for having Jesus’ grave opened. This resulted in the start of a stream of pilgrims to Jerusalem. About the year 326 the Emperor’s mother, Helena, came to Palestine, and this led to the building of the Church of Nativity in Bethlehem, the Church of the Mount of Olives and the first part of what was later to become the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem (Rian, 1996, p. 89f). According to tradition Helena found remains of the Holy Cross, this reflects the development of relic cult.

According to Stephen Platten there is an understanding that the passion stories in the Gospels have taken shape because they first and foremost have been a pilgrimage liturgy, and have been read in connection with processions between the holy places in Jerusalem. The theory is debatable, but it is a fact that towards the end of the fourth century there were liturgical processions in Jerusalem associated with different celebrations (Platten, 1996, p. 8). An example of this is Egerias: Diary of a Pilgrimage (available in English in the series Ancient Christian writers, 1970, and in Norwegian in the series Torleif Dahls kulturbibliotek, Gyldendal). The work is a diary, an eyewitness account told by the Spanish abbess Egeria who undertook many pilgrimages around the year 380. The original text manuscript was found by the archaeologist G. F. Gamurrini in 1884, and dates back to the time between the years 394 and 404 (according to the English publisher’s preface; Egeria, 1970). Egeria describes her travels to important biblical places such as Sinai and Nebo, but most attention has been given to the pilgrims’ liturgy in Jerusalem in connection with Easter celebrations. She describes how large numbers of children and adults walk in procession. The Danish researcher N. H. Petersen comments on the processions as Egeria describes them, and says that
they are immediately understandable as religious exercises in identifying with and involvement in, Jesus’ last days; his passion and death (Petersen, 1995, p. i).

Further development of pilgrimages is connected to the development of views about holy men and women and holy places in early Christendom. A dramatic change for Christians began with Emperor Constantine. Christians changed from being a persecuted group to becoming an integrated part of society. But how could they, in this situation, uphold the church’s universal identity, that is to say the continuity between the martyr church and the established church in this post-Constantine period? The answer was to honour the martyrs. This was also done before Constantine, but now there was a new reason to demonstrate continuity with the old church (Markus, 1993, p. 99). Furthermore, the church’s new status in society meant that they could now begin to build churches in towns. So, the practice of bringing the martyr’s remains into the churches began, something that made it possible for the church to control the martyr cult. In turn, these churches became established as holy places within towns. Earlier places of assembly were not classified or considered holy, only the congregation that had gathered there (Markus, 1993, p. 151). At this time there was also a change in the way martyrs were honoured. This can be illustrated in the development of Augustine’s (354-430 AD) work. In an earlier phase he warned against worshipping martyrs as heroes or gods; however much they deserved honour. He was therefore at first reserved and unmoved by the cult surrounding martyrs in churches. Later, however, he became enthusiastic and defended the fact that miracles could happen in places near martyrs’ remains (Markus, 1993, pp. 97f, 149).

J. G. Davies writes at length about pilgrimages and pilgrimage routes such as they were in the late Middle Ages (Davies, 1987, p. 1-79). He describes the reasons for the pilgrimages, the different types of pilgrimages and the literary proof of the pilgrimages (see also Gad, 1991, p. 13ff). An important incentive for the journeys was to obtain relics. The acquisition of relics was connected to the belief that the
saint lived on in the relic. Davies also shows how the preparation and completion of a pilgrimage formed, in general, a traditional pattern: preparation, journey, the route or way, the destination and the return.

By establishing a network of holy places around the remains of saints, the foundation for further development was laid. Journeys and pilgrimages developed in order to fulfil many needs. The journey could be taken voluntarily to give thanks or to ask for help, or it could be compulsory, as in serving a sentence. After a time the element of punishment came to overshadow the sacrificial motive. The power of the church became clearer, and pilgrimages could be imposed as a penitential exercise. This resulted in stronger church control (Halvorsen, 1996, p. 9ff). At first the crusades were also seen as voluntary pilgrimages (Gad, 1991, p. 53). Here the motives were many and not necessarily holy!

Another interesting side to the origin of pilgrimages is the Celtic tradition. In the sixth century Irish monks had already begun to travel to foreign countries. The main reason for these journeys was to find places to establish monasteries and to live an ascetic life. Their great interest in travelling meant that they also played an important role in bringing Christianity to Europe (Platten, 1996, p. 45-50). This Celtic tradition formed a bridge to Norwegian history and after some time to Norwegian church history: One of the results of these pilgrimages was that Lindisfarne in the 7th century became established as England’s religious capital (Platten, 1996, p. 60), and it was Norwegian Vikings who went to Lindisfarne and plundered St. Aidan's monastery in 793.

In Norway, Nidaros Cathedral and St. Olav Haraldsons’s shrine came to play a dominant role in pilgrimages during the Middle Ages. St. Olav was canonised in 1031. A small wooden chapel was built on the place where he had been buried after he died in the Battle of Stiklestad in 1030. Pilgrimages to his grave began shortly after his death. An ever-increasing stream of pilgrims, and at the same time an increasing number of clergy, made it necessary to build a larger stone church on the site (1070), and later Nidaros Cathedral (the building of this cathedral commenced about 1140). The coffin, which held Olav’s
mortal remains, was laid in a beautifully decorated reliquary and placed on the high altar, at the very spot where St. Olav was buried in 1030. Before the black plague (in Norway dated to 1349), As mentioned in this book’s introductory chapter, Nidaros was the holiest place for pilgrims north of the Alps.

Many researchers write that there was marked increase in the number of pilgrimages in the late Middle Ages. New phenomena arose such as mass pilgrimages and vicarious pilgrimages. One could also buy oneself out of a pilgrim sentence at a fixed rate of payment (an indulgence). There were many complaints of immorality at hostels, violence and attacks along the routes. Criticism became strong, both internally (see for example St. Jakob’s book, Gad, 1991, p. 53), and ultimately externally. These criticisms reached a head during the reformation. Luther’s own words that all pilgrimages should be stopped, are well known. However, it was the misuse of the concept of the pilgrimage that was rejected by the reformers, not the idea. The criticisms resulted in the reduction in the number of pilgrimages of all types. Where the reformation took hold, most pilgrimages ceased.

Pilgrims also gradually disappeared from Nidaros (Trondheim). Olav’s shrine was removed in 1537, and pilgrimages were forbidden by royal command. It is not known where Olav’s mortal remains were placed. Norway, however, also had lesser pilgrimage destinations, such as holy places and springs (Luthen, 1992, pp. 102ff, 119ff). They did not have the same ecclesiastical or political significance, and were able to survive unthreatened. Many places kept up the old traditions until the nineteenth century. An important example of this is the crucifix at Røldals church that remained a place of pilgrimage until 1835, although not entirely without protest from the church (Hognestad, 1994, p. 50). Another example is Olav’s Spring near Sul where some families continue to collect water for baptismal purposes (information from a guide from Verdal Council).

In the meantime pilgrimages were enacted in a more spiritual form. A well-known example of this in found in The Pilgrim’s Progress a book by John Bunyan (1628-1688). We meet the pilgrim in
edifying words, spiritual songs and hymns; life’s journey ends at the heavenly destination.

The renaissance of pilgrimages in the reformed church started in the nineteenth century when Protestant Christians began to travel to the Holy Land (Davies, 1987, pp. 115ff; 140ff). Towards the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century local pilgrimage traditions were re-introduced by the Church of England and throughout Europe (Davies, 1987, p. 152ff). In the Roman Catholic Church we have seen a definite increase, especially since the 1970s (Giuriati, 1996). After the collapse of communism the Orthodox Church’s pilgrim traditions have also become revitalised.

Renewal of interest in pilgrimages in the Church of Norway
Many factors have played a part in the renewal of the pilgrim traditions in the Church of Norway in modern times. Pilgrimages to Nidaros have especially been connected to Olsok (the anniversary of the death St. Olav, held on the 29th of July), and the growth of the Olsok celebration has therefore created an important motivation.

A renewed interest in St. Olav began to emerge in the nineteenth century. To a great extent it was St. Olav’s position as a national symbol for a young nation, and the City of Trondheim’s function as the church capital that was the focus. Poets, politicians and bishops were strongly involved in this debate. As early as 1850, a clergyman with the initials L.T. wrote three articles in *Morgenbladet* (The Morning Paper) where he advocated that the religious St. Olav celebrations should be reinstated (Langslet, 1995, p. 207). The theologian Christopher Bruun wrote in an article in 1893 that the Church of Norway should reinstate Olsok as a religious celebration. Bruun received strong support from the very influential poet and novelist Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson. In 1897, during the 900th anniversary for the City of Trondheim, Bruun and Bjørnson organised a successful Olsok celebration on the 29th July at Ilevollen in Trondheim, which included a speech by Bjørnson. At first they had applied for permission to celebrate an Olsok service in Nidaros Cathedral, but this was denied; neither did
the arrangement receive any support from the Bishop of Nidaros, Johannes Nilssøn Skar. Bjørnson’s motives for the revival of Olsok were both of a religious and a nationalistic nature, and the unofficial arrangement in Trondheim received a great deal of attention (Langslet, 1995, p. 207ff; Østang, 1997, p. 58-65).

In 1923, contrary to the general opinion of the church, the government elected Jens Gran Gleditsch as Bishop of Nidaros. Gleditsch had a positive attitude towards Nidaros traditions, and he played an important part in reversing the attitude of the church. Gleditsch was instrumental in gathering support for the 900th anniversary of St. Olav’s death in 1030. Even though he became ill and could not complete the work, he played a big part in the preparations. Nidaros Cathedral was renovated and there was much energy used to collect St. Olav’s sequences and other church music from the Middle Ages. Gleditsch himself wrote the beautiful hymn *Da Olav bøyde hodet til dåpens bad i fremmed land* [*When Olav bowed his head, submitting to a baptismal immersion in a foreign land*] where he clearly shows understanding of St. Olav’s importance (Østang, 1997, pp. 91, 121-140). For the first time since the reformation, Olsok was celebrated as a feast in the Church of Norway in connection with the anniversary. Nidaros Cathedral’s nave with the Altar of the Cross, was consecrated at Olsok (Langslet, 1995, p. 111f). This made a foundation for the further development of Olsok celebrations throughout the twentieth century. A new climax was the 800th anniversary for the archdiocese in 1953. The *Spelet om Heilag Olav* [*The St. Olav Re-enactment*] at Stiklestad (the place where Olav was killed in 1030), has been performed annually since 1954, and has become an important event.

In the 1970s the Rev. Torgeir J. Havgar revitalised pilgrim traditions through pilgrimages. In 1973 Havgar produced the beautiful leaflet *Glassmaleriene i Nidarosdomen* [*The stained Glass in Nidaros Cathedral*], a meditational tour of the interior the cathedral, with special attention paid to the message in the stained glass. In connection with the Olsok celebrations in Trondheim, pilgrimages have now been arranged for many years.
In 1992 a project was established under the leadership of the Directorate of Cultural Heritage and the Directorate of Natural Resources for the purpose of restoring and marking the old pilgrimage routes to Nidaros (Prosjekt Pilegrimsleden). On the 28th of July 1997 the routes from Oslo to Trondheim, and from Skalstugan in Sweden via Stiklestad to Trondheim, were officially opened by Crown Prince Haakon Magnus in the square in front of the west end of Nidaros Cathedral. Pilgrimages had however, been arranged along both these routes prior to the official opening. Work with this project has shown that there are many groups of people interested in the pilgrimage tradition, and this has opened up a wider co-operation between the church and agricultural authorities, local historians, highway authorities, counties, town councils, and others. Part of this wide co-operation is also reflected in the participants in the pilgrimages. Such an involvement in pilgrimage traditions is interesting both for cultural and historical reasons as well from a religious perspective. Thus many of the participants would not normally be active in the church’s traditional arrangements.

Also in 1992 the Bishop of Nidaros, Finn Wagle, established a separate committee to work on the renewal of pilgrim traditions. The committee issued Pilegrimshåndboka [The pilgrim’s handbook] in 1997. The Bishop of Nidaros and the diocesan council established a pilgrimage project in 1994 with a substantial donation from the Directorate of Natural Resources. Arne Bakken was engaged as project leader and minister to pilgrims (1994-1997). Bakken pioneered this work, and helped to put the pilgrims’ experiences into words in a way that had never previously been done in the Norwegian church. Books written by Bakken, not the least Nidarosdomen – en pilegrims-vandring [Nidaros Cathedral – a Pilgrimage] (1997), have had a clear impact on many of the articles in this book. The interest in the pilgrim in the Church of Norway increased during the 1990s, peaking provisionally during Olsok celebrations and the National Church Days of the Church of Norway in Trondheim, in July 1997.
A book which has also contributed to the increased interest in pilgrim traditions is *I pilegrimens fotspor til Nidaros* [*In the pilgrim’s footsteps to Nidaros*] by Eivind Luthen, 1992. Today we can confirm that the idea of pilgrimages has gained so much interest that the Church of Norway has funded two permanent positions as ministers to pilgrims in the dioceses of Hamar and Nidaros. From 1996 the environment around the Nidaros pilgrimages has been an important element in the project *European Pilgrimage 2000*. This project also seeks to arrange a meeting of the spirituality of pilgrimage with the various denominations.

In Norway old pilgrimage routes have been re-opened in many places; and as a result, congregations, historical societies and others have arranged both long and short journeys. The destination for these journeys could be Nidaros Cathedral, the local church or, for example, a St. Olav wellspring. Many places have arranged journeys that do not follow historical pilgrim routes. It is usual that travellers gather for a service of worship at the completion of a journey. The beginning of the journey - the departure - is celebrated by meditation or worship. During the journey there may be meditations, talks and information about the landscape, cultural or historical elements, and periods of walking in silence. Pilgrimages have also become an excellent link in the work between schools and the church, kindergartens and the church, and during confirmation preparation.

**Why this renewed interest?**
The reasons for this renewed interest in pilgrimages, both in our country and others, are many. We would like to suggest one explanation by referring to the Italian priest and sociologist Paulo Giuriati, a researcher of modern day pilgrimages and who contributed the last chapter of this book. Giuriati believes that pilgrimages are an expression of a religiosity that is a response to post-modern society, marked as it is by instability and an uncertain future. Moreover, on a variety of levels, pilgrims are looking towards different holy places to find a
basis for their own identity, both on a personal and social level (Giuriati, 1996, p. 57f).

Giuriati believes that he can prove that the core of what is happening at the holy place is that the pilgrim finds a ‘unique person’ to communicate with, which can give new meaning to life. He concludes his findings thus: Pilgrimages are a religious and human experience with basis in the totality of the pilgrim’s life and being. Through this experience the pilgrim finds strength and rediscovers or finds for the first time access to a commonality with a ‘significant other’. As a result the pilgrim feels renewed. In retrospect, daily routines for the pilgrim take on a new meaning for him personally and inspire him to a life touched by fellowship, reconciliation, and solidarity with other people (Giuriati, 1996, p. 57).

The identity of this ‘unique person’ is clear from a Christian perspective. However, many wanderers may have felt that access to God and Christian belief has been inaccessible to them, either by feeling a distance from Christian environments or because of something in their own experience. Perhaps the tradition of pilgrimages can give pilgrims new opportunities of meeting God on their own terms, and thus find their way back to fellowship with God and the church.
Dagfinn Slungård:

LITURGICAL PILGRIMAGES
FROM PAST TO PRESENT

Pilgrimages – methodological perspectives

The question has been asked many times, but still must be repeated: what is it that makes many people continue to seek out the Church for baptism, confirmation, marriage and funerals, and why is attendance at ordinary services of worship so low? Is it possible to build on the attendance which we have at our rituals for the crises and highlights of life and from there lead people into attending a Sunday service? We wish to build bridges from the “occasional bench” to the “church bench”. We would like to lower the threshold between the folk church where baptism, confirmation, marriages, funerals and burials take place and the church where the congregation meet for services of worship (Gudstjenestevekst i folkekirken. Report from the group project appointed by the Bishop of Oslo, Spring 1989).

What is the relationship between the congregation who are present for the occasional offices and the Sunday service congregation? Is it possible to build a bridge between the two? In the practical everyday congregation we see time and again that there is no easy way from the occasional congregation and the Sunday service congregation (Okkenhaug and Skjevesland, 1997, p. 31).

It looks as if the church manages reasonably well to assist its members in celebrating the big events, and to help them through life’s crises. However, services of worship do not seem to touch people’s lives in the same way. We want to hold on to our vision of the meaning of worship. Our aim for Sunday mass must be that the congregation should be touched in the same manner as at a funeral, christening or marriage ceremony. With a positive starting point such
as better attendance at some of the special services and casual services, we should look for possible ways which would lead to Sunday services. In other words, we want to focus on throwing light on the pilgrim’s way. Where is the pilgrim’s motif in our liturgy? We need to focus on just that because this is something that touches people nowadays. Life as a pilgrimage is a total view of life which has clear biblical roots and is also relevant for modern people as we hasten through life.

The idea of pilgrimage is better understood nowadays. The pilgrim motif is something we can do physically as well as spiritually for our faith. Pilgrimages are, from the start, a definite physical step which in itself has meaning. As Arne Bakken expresses it: Life is a journey. It is constantly moving and changing. People have a physical journey to go on, progressing from the crib to the grave. This physical journey that people make through varying scenery, valleys, villages and towns, over mountains, through forests and deserted places - is a journey which gives different perspectives of low or high horizons. The outer physical landscape people wander through, is in the pilgrims’ tradition understood as a picture of the inner landscape every person carries with them. So the outward physical journey has given us a picture of the inward spiritual journey (Bakken, 1997a, p. 27f).

The idea of the pilgrim is the key to understanding the whole of our life. We are called to go forth, we are always on the journey, we are looking for a goal in life, we are looking for a new belonging. These are the factors which make us see life as a pilgrimage. To become a pilgrim is understood as a way of looking at life itself: constantly moving and willing to break away from fixed ideas about oneself and others, breaking away from lifestyles that do not respect the earth as a community for all living creatures. The pilgrim realises that there is a change to undergo, and afterwards to return home with extended faith - an understanding of life and a willingness to change (Bakken, 1994b, p.7).

Other elements may be added here. We find modern opinions about environmental protection, the abundance of different species
and respect for all living things, included in the old pilgrim ideas. *We know now that there must be a change in the way we live today. This challenges us to emphasise the quality of life more than a standard of living based on superficial values. We are forced to adopt a greater ethical responsibility for the sake of future generations. We are called to release ourselves from the bondage we all experience: the consumer society’s self-appointed right to decide the meaning and content of existence* (Bakken, 1994b, p. 16).

Primarily, however, we keep hold of the fundamental pilgrimage pattern: *setting forth* from home, a *journey* towards a *goal* and from there the *return home*. We also find this basic pattern in church buildings, from the entrance door to the altar and outside again (Bakken, 1997a, p. 8). In the same way that this basic pattern can be used to describe life and help us to understand the idea behind the cathedral’s architecture, we can also use it as a key to understanding worship both in the cathedral, as well as in all large parish churches and small chapels scattered around the country. In this way worship becomes the place in life where our everyday life is drawn towards the light of God. *The procession at the beginning of the service from west to east conveys a special idea about people and life: that people live in an ongoing process of creation. The service of worship creates a place for a new creation time and again. The procession from west to east demonstrates the will to leave the darkness of the west and walk towards the light in the east.*[...] *In the holy drama, which is the service of worship, everything that God gives us comes from the liturgical east, and everything that people bring with them, is from the west. The liturgical path, on the other hand, operates in both directions, simultaneously* (Bakken, 1997a, p. 136f).

Today the theme of the pilgrim is understood by the majority of people as being relevant. Interest in pilgrimages is without doubt a part of, or a result of, the new spirituality which we seem to experience in our time. We talk about a rediscovery, of the idea of life being a journey towards a goal. This has in fact come down to us from the time of the Old Testament. The motif is repeated in the scriptures, it is
contained in the liturgy and not least in the hymn books. It is very important to connect this awakening with the solid roots planted in the church’s own traditions. Here the pilgrim theme can prove to be a very useful concept in returning to the folk church as a perspective on life, which perhaps has been lost.

**Pilgrimages in the Bible**

**Return to Paradise**
From the time Adam and Eve got their marching orders from the garden, people have restlessly been wandering back to the lost Paradise. *Adam and Eve were the first to be thrown out of paradise. They, and every man and woman since then, have had a longing to return. Pilgrims wander in expectation of a goal outside of themselves, realising that they are “strangers and exiles on the earth”* (Hebr 11, 13) (Bakken, 1994b, p. 6).

Perhaps it is a glimpse of Paradise which we see when we celebrate open air services in peaceful surroundings in God’s nature - on a mountain top, in a meadow of flowers, beside the sea, in a beautiful grove of trees, or on the site of an old church. Here we can clearly see traces of God.

**Out into the unknown**
Was Abraham the first pilgrim? At any rate he left his safe surroundings and went off on a journey. *Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you* (Gen 12, 1). At God’s bidding and with His promise Abraham left for the unknown. And when he had got there he built an altar: *and there he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord. And Abram journeyed on* (v. 8-9). All the features of the pilgrimage are there: the setting off, the journey, the destination, and the continuation of the journey.

Islamic tradition also describes Abraham as the first pilgrim. All the rites connected to pilgrimages are initiated by Abraham. Long be-
fore the time of Muhammed pilgrims flocked to Ka’aba in Mecca. According to tradition this holy place was founded by Abraham and his son Ismael. Abraham and Isma’il built The Ka’ba as the house of God, And purified it, to be a centre of worship for all the world: (Koran, sure 11, 121). The Station of Abraham; Whoever enters it attains security: pilgrimage thereto is a duty men owe to God, -those who can afford the journey (Koran, sure 3, 97).

“Nearer, my God, to Thee”
In the hymn Nearer, my God, to Thee (“Nærmere deg, min Gud”) Jacob meets God on his wanderings, in a dream, with a stone as a pillow and the stars above. The Lord said to Jacob: “Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done that which I have spoken to you”. Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said; “Surely the Lord is in this place; and I did not know it” (Gen 28, 15-16). He lifted the stone he had used as a pillow, and stood it on edge and said: “and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar shall be God’s house” (v. 22). Thus Jacob the pilgrim raised an altar for the living God, for worship, but both Jacob and Solomon (1 Kings 8, 27) knew that God is not contained in any house built by human hands. Jacob’s stone is a place for worship just as much as Solomon’s temple. In this way we can worship the Creator both in church and in nature’s great cathedral.

A people on a journey
The great departure from Egypt we hear about in the Old Testament, was the exodus of a whole nation. The people break away from slavery (the departure), they are led through the Red Sea and wander through the desert where God provided water from the rock and manna from Heaven (the way). They arrive at the promised land after a strenuous journey through the desert (the destination), and the new life to be lived here (the homecoming). Both children and adults, young and old, are included in the Lord’s deliverance. The story of
Israel’s departure from Egypt and the journey into the desert can be found in the book of Exodus, and we can read about the arrival into “The Promised Land” in the book of Joshua.

“Let us go to the house of the Lord” (Psalm 122, 1)
My soul longs, yea, faints for the courts of the Lord; my heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God (Psalm 84, 2). The old pilgrims sang this psalm on their pilgrimage to the Temple in Jerusalem. To go up to Jerusalem for the great celebrations was one of life’s high points. It gave direction and meaning to the journey of life. For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand elsewhere (Psalm 84, 10). The expectation and longing for the festival in the Temple of Jerusalem was the power and motivation for the pilgrims on the way through the dry valley. As a deer longs for the flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and behold the face of God? (Psalm, 42, 1-3). The memory of the service and the celebration was something to live on for the rest of their lives for those who would not be able to return to Jerusalem. These things I remember as I pour out my soul: how I went with the throng and led them in procession to the house of God, with glad shouts and songs of thanksgiving, a multitude keeping festival. (Psalm 42, 4).

Pilgrims travelled through many different types of landscape. There was the dry desert, but there were also fertile valleys, they rested perhaps in a peaceful grove or in a meadow of flowers. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. (Psalm 23, 2). There were mountain tops with broad and distant views, also a basis for reflection. I lift up my eyes to the hills. From whence does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. (Psalm 121, 1-2). Yes, the mountain is the place where the Lord will call us all to the great celebration. On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of fat things, a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined. (Isaiah 25, 6). We are
on the way there, and we illustrate it by our physical wandering and by worshipping our Creator under the open skies.

In the book of Psalms we have a complete collection of songs for use during the journeys of celebration (Psalms 120-134). We must also mention King David’s pilgrimage psalm, Psalm 24. He begins by thinking about the creation. *The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world, and those who dwell therein* (v. 1). Then he goes on to ask: *Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord and who shall stand in his holy place?* (v. 3) when *the king of glory enters the gate.* The picture of the pilgrim flock on their way to the house of God is very old. And we still use the words from Psalm 121 at the baptismal font every time a baby marks the start of his life’s journey: *The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore* (v. 8).

**“The Lord is my shepherd”**
The idea of the shepherd is very similar to the pilgrim idea. We are strangers in the world, we do not always find our way by ourselves. If our earthly shepherds fail us, then the Lord will be our shepherd, and lead us safely through danger, amongst wild animals to green pastures. Psalm 23 has already been mentioned. *He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake* (v. 3). The whole of chapter 34 in the book of the prophet Ezekiel paints this picture for us. Because the people’s shepherd has failed, the Lord himself will be their shepherd.

Jesus took up this theme too and described himself as *the good shepherd* (John 10, 11-16).

**On the way to a better country**
We also find this illustration in the New Testament. Hebrews 11 reveals how our ancestors dared to leave the old and go towards a new goal: *These all died in faith, not having received what was promised, but having seen it and greeted it from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had*
been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he has prepared for them a city. (Hebrews 11, 13-16). The Vulgate translation in Heb. 11 uses peregrinus (“stranger”). The word pilgrim is derived from this. Peregrinus is also used in Psalm 39, 12: For I am thy passing guest, a sojourner, like all my fathers. To see oneself as a guest in the world, is in fact an Old Testament thought: ...for the land is mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with me (Lev. 25, 23). For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as all our fathers were (1 Chr. 29, 15). The people of the world are thus still wandering restlessly looking for the lost paradise.

“Another way home”
At the beginning of the New Testament we meet the wise men who came from the east to look for the Messiah, the King of the Jews (Mt. 2). By tradition, the three holy kings represent all people and all age groups. They found the Messiah but the meeting with both the power-greedy Herod and the defenceless baby in the crib became a turning point for them: ... they departed to their own country by another way (Mt. 2, 12). In the light of the revelation of Christ we have paid more attention to this. There is a new way for us now that Jesus has come.

“I am the way”
Jesus presented himself as the way, and the truth, and the life (John 14, 6), we are called to leave and follow Him as his disciples (Mt. 4, 19) and walk in his light (John 8, 12).

Jesus himself has a path to follow, from the crib to the cross. He is always on a journey. We hear of his entry into Jerusalem, in connection with the traditional pilgrims’ procession to the festivals (Mt. 21, 1-11). However the man who is being welcomed as an honoured king does not share this jubilation. He knows that the final
part of the journey will be of a different character, Via Dolorosa, a way of suffering to Golgotha.

**Christ as a pilgrim**

In Luke 24, 13-35 Christ is the stranger, an “alien or visitor” (Vulgate uses *peregrinus* here too). Jesus joins two wanderers on the road to Emmaus, and becomes their travelling companion. Even though they do not recognise him, it is Christ who walks by their side. At the end of the journey he breaks bread with them, and then they recognise him. In this way Christ becomes the destination for their journey.

Christ still meets us as a stranger in the world. It has always been a Christian duty to welcome and care for the pilgrim. *Beloved, it is a loyal thing you do when you render any service to the brethren, especially to strangers* (3 John, 5). Perhaps it is Christ we are welcoming? *...I was a stranger and you welcomed me* (Mt. 25, 35). This ethical challenge is also emphasised in the Old Testament. *Love the sojourner therefore; for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt* (Deut. 10, 19).

**The way continues**

After the resurrection Jesus told his disciples to go out and spread the gospel. The way goes everywhere in the world today, and Jesus promised to be alongside his evangelists. *And lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age* (Mt. 28, 20).

Later we meet them on the way: *Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word* (Acts 8, 4). In Acts the Christians are described as those who follow *God’s way* (9, 2). The Christian’s call in life is to be an alien. *Beloved, I beseech you as aliens and exiles...* (1 Pet. 2, 11). However they have found a shepherd who can lead them through the world: *For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls* (1 Pet. 2, 25). *So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God* (Eph. 2, 19).
The Middle Ages

The early Middle Ages
It is a big leap from Abraham and Mamre’s oaks to Olav’s grave at Nidaros, but the pilgrim motif can be seen the whole way. The Spanish pilgrim Egeria tells of her travels to the Holy Land in 380 AD. She was in Jerusalem at Easter and saw the Palm Sunday procession in to the city and Good Friday’s walk to Golgotha. She describes the Palm Sunday liturgy: All at once the Bishop and all the people stand up, and they walk all the way from the Mount of Olives. The people walk in front of the bishop singing hymns and antiphons, with the usual reply “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.” And there are so many children around, also those who cannot walk, because they are too small and whose parents carry them on their shoulders - carrying branches, some from the palm trees, others from the olive trees, and in this way the Bishop is accompanied in the same way as Jesus was (Petersen, 1995, p 1).

As Egeria described, the procession had a special meaning in the fact that there was a desire to copy Christ’s entry into Jerusalem. The same can also be said of the Good Friday procession. These processions are clearly understandable as religious experiences to identify with participation in Jesus’ last days and his suffering and death (Petersen, 1995, p. 1). Otherwise Petersen finds, in early literature from the Middle Ages, very little reflection about the practice of joining a procession. Most of what is written is descriptive and not interpretative. Petersen has suggested that the development of the custom of procession could not have been planned, rather a spontaneous feeling of how such a ceremony could best be performed, in other words as a deep connection between theory and practice, when everything felt so natural, that no explanation was needed or was necessary (Petersen, 1995, p. Y). This agrees with the experiences felt by many of today’s pilgrims. You begin to walk, and then perhaps reflection comes gradually, to a greater or lesser extent.
“Stations of worship”
A phenomenon which has to be named in this context is the stations of worship. In the early Middle Ages the Bishop’s services were held over a series of days in Rome’s many churches, not only in the Bishop’s residential church. There are rubrics (Ordo) describing how processions to these churches should be organised. According to Petersen Ordo I reflects the situation in Rome at the beginning of the 8th century. The system of station churches may have begun from the cult around the saints’ graves or places of death. Often a church or chapel was built over these places, where the local bishop or abbot led the celebration on the saint’s day, often the day they died (Petersen, 1995, s. L). The earliest description we have of these “stations” was under Pope Hilarius (451-468). It is possible that here we can see the commencement of pilgrimages in the Middle Ages to the burial places of saints. Perhaps we must also add our “stations of worship”, processional services and open-air services to this tradition.

Pilgrim processions in the Middle Ages
Later in the Middle Ages we meet the great pilgrimages of Christianity. We do not think only about the crusades to Jerusalem, but the multitudes on the way to saints’ burial places all around Europe. Many went to St Olav’s grave in the cathedral of Nidaros.

To go to Nidaros was not just a matter of going a little distance, an evening walk to the local church. Nidaros Cathedral with the Saint’s shrine was the destination, and the highlight was Olav’s day. It is not difficult to imagine the church full to the last standing place, of thousands and thousands of pilgrims. [...] With prayers for St. Olav on their lips and in their hearts, and a light touch of the holy shrine with their hands, even the unbelievable could become reality. If they were open-minded and receptive, the magnetic energy of grace from Olav’s remains could slide into their body and soul and repair all that was unwell and broken. On one condition - that one wished to live in faith and trust (Danbolt, 1997, p. 196-197). One looked here for healing and for forgiveness. Here one could experience services of worship
and join in prayer and praise. It was a place of healing for both body and soul. *My heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God* (Psalm 84, 2).

**An interpretation for life**

**Today’s pilgrimages**
The local church is still regarded by many people as a home. Every church is a pilgrimage goal, and in these days the interest in pilgrimages is increasing. One rediscovers old roads and tracks, and sets off. Gradually, one realises that the answer to life’s important questions cannot be found in material wealth.

*Science no longer functions as the study of life, we have long ago stopped believing in progress, and tradition is no longer regarded a thing of the past, but as a source for inspiration* (Danbolt, 1997, p. 343).

God is not dead, and the interest for religion is increasing as never before, but the church no longer has the monopoly on the religious answers. The modern religious pilgrim is not only seeking intellectual answers, but answers which engage a whole personality - both reason and feeling.

The modern pilgrims probably have more mixed and varied motives for their journey. It does not take a dramatic event today to move people out onto the roads. Walking has no doubt a great power in itself, when one is walking through beautiful countryside. It is a typically Norwegian thing to do, to go for a hike in natural surroundings. Research on Norwegian outdoor activities shows an almost religious feeling about walking in nature. The walk involves a lot more than physical effort. In this research four out of ten replied that the most important thing was to feel the opening of all the senses and the tuning of them (*Fjell og vidde*, 1/93).

The pilgrim, including the modern one, has plenty of time. He needs rest and takes time to admire creation. In this way he finds many resting places and stations along the way. The way is not flat
and boring, the landscape changes. In the same way, life is full of events, both large and small. Again, we can find these in the church’s many celebrations and rituals for important moments in life, stages on life’s way, and in the ordinary services of worship.

The physical journey is a symbol, a picture of the spiritual journey. A pilgrim is not a tourist who travels for the sake of travelling. The way is leading towards a goal. Thus people have used pilgrimage as a means of interpreting their own lives. *Maybe we now have discovered what the modern pilgrim can find in Nidaros Cathedral? Because in this church we are reminded of human condition and potential. We understand how great and infinite life really is, and are filled with the love of it. A love which can also encompass and accept the mysteries we feel so clearly under these high arches. But the love is not without humility, the humility which does not need to understand the mysteries, but instead is being moved by it* (Danbolt, 1997, p. 344).

**The new spirituality**
The interest in pilgrimages is one of many indications today showing a trend towards a new spirituality. But it cannot be assumed that people are looking to the church to find an answer to their spiritual searching. The church, however, must meet these people and link up with this new spirituality. The rituals for occasional services meet an increasing awareness of the meaning of rites among people of today. The new spirituality leaves plenty of room for mystery. Services of worship should therefore be able to give modern people a relevant interpretation of life. However, if the church is to do this, it is necessary to have a better understanding of the church’s own identity.

**God’s people**
Who are included in our understanding of the church? Is it only the faithful churchgoers who worship regularly, or are we thinking of a wider group of people, including all those who are baptised, using the services of the church at the crossroads of life, but who otherwise
seldom visit the church? Are those involved in the baptism a part of the congregation, or are they regarded as sporadic guests who are seeking something other than what the church has to offer?

The service of worship is the place where we meet God together. To allow people to meet God, must always be the aim of the service. On our way through life we are all in need of God’s constant help and leadership. In this respect we turn back to the people of the Old Testament. The people of Israel were freed from slavery in Egypt. Jesus has, in the power of his death and the resurrection, freed us from the slavery of sin and death. We are made one with Him at our baptism, he meets us in the eucharist and walks beside us each day. With Jesus we journey through life. In Jesus we are a new people of God. So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God (Eph. 2, 19).

With such thoughts in mind it becomes necessary to show the connection between occasional services and the Sunday Eucharist. If the church’s aim is to help people throughout their lives with new understanding and interpretation, then the casual services between stages and stations of the pilgrimage may be filled with God-given meaning. God is important to our everyday life, otherwise life is not complete and we cannot find the fulfillment which the pilgrims seek. God meets us, not only at the crossroads of our lives, or in church on special occasions, but He is also beside us throughout each day. And lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age (Mt. 28, 19).

The Church in the world
The church consists of people who are baptised and who serve God both in the church and throughout life at home and in society. This concept of life as service, has been described in Jan Bystrøm and Leif Norrgård’s book on liturgical theology and practice:

The Church is part of the world and consists of people with an intimate relationship to God who is the creator of the world. [...] It is in the worship service that these people, the people of God, are being
formed and then sent to serve the world. The people who make the liturgy are also formed by the liturgy. The Lord says “For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them” (Mt. 18, 20). He himself is present in them and their work becomes Christ’s liturgy in the world (Bystrøm and Norrgård, 1996, p. 22). The person who with an open mind meets the Lord in the eucharist, will live in the world in a eucharistic way. His or her work will be accomplished as a dedication to God (Bystrøm and Norrgård, 1996, p. 27).

Does this understanding of what the church is, and what worship services are, merge with a wider folk church perspective? If you look at the large number of members in the church of Norway there will be many who dispute this. Church members lack awareness of the relationship to the God who created the earth. Not many regular worshippers, and even fewer of the people who go to church sporadically, dare think so highly about their church attendance and their Christian belief; not to speak of their everyday life. One simply does not see the liturgical relationship and interchange between weekdays and holidays. (For further reflection on this question see Hegstad: *Folkekirke og trosfelleskap.*

**Sunday Eucharist as a code for life**

Far too few church members seem to experience the regular Sunday service as meaningful and as a natural starting point for everyday life. We should be bringing all our experiences in life into the church. More than in any other place we should be able to bring to God in the Sunday Eucharist all our joys and all our sorrows. In His house we receive forgiveness and healing for everything which has gone wrong in life. To come to church is to come home. Regular churchgoers will hopefully recognise this for themselves, but the Sunday Eucharist is not the code which ordinary church members use to influence their lives. They feel like strangers in the church, not knowing the hymns or the liturgy. While the pilgrim is really aware that he is a stranger in the world and has his home in God’s Kingdom, we can reverse the
pilgrim motif and say that for many they are strangers in church, but far more at home in the world.

**Week days and holidays**
Thus it has become a main undertaking for the church to give people the experience that the liturgy concerns and touches their lives. A church liturgy which is totally removed from the realities of life can never be existentially important, and will be experienced as remote and irrelevant. The service of worship tries to combine the holy with the ordinary, to give people an encounter with the Holy One and give them a Heaven over their lives. But the liturgies of the church are often accused of having little connection with everyday life. This is an important educational task to work on.

Daily life is a part of the liturgy. Sundays can never be holy before daily life becomes holy. Church life cannot become meaningful until we bring daily life into the church. Only then can our lives have a wholeness, and pilgrims can find healing for their torn souls. Maybe this liturgical renewal should begin on Monday instead of Sunday. The church must meet the pilgrims along the way, giving both their good and difficult experiences a godly dimension, leading them in to the church and its beliefs.

**Belonging**
The church consists of people with a close relationship to the God who is the Creator of the world. One can possibly say that there is an increasing consciousness for many people today. We are challenged in many ways. The shortcomings of materialism make us look for other values. Our new citizens from other religious and cultural backgrounds force us to acknowledge our own faith. Because of this more church members are becoming increasingly aware of their relationship to God and to the church. Perhaps it will be possible to talk of the church as a home once again. At life’s crossroads a multitude of pilgrims come to the church. In the church they meet language which is coloured by the pilgrim motif. We place our
children in the Lord’s hands at the baptismal font. It is our hope that God will walk with them and protect them on their way through life. In the face of God we exchange vows of lifelong fidelity to our life partner, and from the church we start the last journey towards the goal at home with God. Indeed, when it comes to life’s crises and high points people know where they belong. People seek meaning and direction for their lives.

**Ways we can go - occasional services**

It is therefore still important to build bridges between the many occasions for which people in fact do turn to the church, and the Sunday services of worship. We would like to look at the liturgy used at the crossroads and point to the themes which pilgrims will recognise. We want especially to find a way from occasional services to communion services.

The church has great faith in the importance of meeting people through the occasional service. In the book *Våre tider i Guds hånd* (Okkenhaug and Skjelvesland, 1997) an overall plan of occasional services is described. We see here a clear positive evaluation of the services of worship offered for people at the crossroads of life. It is a legitimate task for the church to serve people on special family occasions. In our time-line (chroNoS) between baptism and death, God gives us especially blessed moments (kairoi), special events where he meets us (Okkenhaug and Skjevesland, 1997, p. 27).

Many church members come to the church only on these occasions. The spiritual guidance and pastoral work then *is about going along the way - short or long - with a person, a couple, a family who has special need for presence and attention* (Skjevesland in Okkenhaug and Skjevesland, 1997, p. 22).

It is a good strategy to extend these occasions to become a little part of the road of life, by meetings beforehand and by offering the required help afterwards. One of the goals should be to develop occasional services to *integrated events, where the minister, and also the deacon and catechist, try to find a balanced integration of*
preaching, liturgy, spiritual guidance, pastoral care and teaching. The worshipping congregation forms the ecclesiastical framework around the services (Skjevesland in Okkenhaug and Skjevesland, 1997, p. 35).

**Baptism**

**The start of the pilgrimage**

*At baptism God shares his celebration with us, and takes us into his Christian church*, is what we proclaim at the beginning of our liturgy for baptism. This is a short and concise statement of the church’s understanding of baptism. Fellowship with Jesus and his congregation on earth are elements of our understanding of baptism which we share with others. *Through baptism, Christians are brought into union with Christ, with each other and with the Church of every time and place (The Lima Document, The Baptism, Pt. II, 6.) This (baptism) is the basic sacrament and the very gate to life in Christ and his church* (Skjevesland in Okkenhaug and Skjevesland, 1997, p. 12).

How much do the parents and godparents understand about the meaning of baptism? Possibly there is often a lack of knowledge and understanding, however, they still carry their children through this gate. *Baptism is a union with Christ and an incorporation to the church, the beginning of an exciting journey of faith through yet unknown landscape* (Nordhaug in Okkenhaug and Skjevesland, 1997, p. 81). Parents are perhaps unable to express clear thoughts during the baptismal preparation, but the pilgrim theme with the gate to life into God’s kingdom and the beginning of life’s journey with Jesus, is easily understood. The pilgrim theme also wins approval from parents and godparents who only have a peripheral contact with the church.

More and more the pilgrim perspective is experienced either by joining the initial liturgical procession, or by making a baptismal procession at a proper place in the service of worship. In many churches the placement of the baptismal font within the sacristy makes this difficult. But the baptismal procession is an important part of the
pilgrim’s way through life, and leads us directly into the worship space. *The procession is a symbolic expression of the coming together of God’s people. It demonstrates a service of worship as being a communal act and manifests the church as a people journeying together* (Bystrøm and Norrgård, 1996, p. 96).

There is a pilgrim reference also in the signing of the cross on the child, when we quote from Psalm 121: *The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and for evermore.*

**Motives for baptism**

What is it that still motivates parents to bring their children to baptism? Certainly many thoughts and motives could be mentioned and can exist. However, we do not regard all of them as being of equal importance:

- **A tradition**
  For many it is simply a tradition with roots going back in time. Most people like to follow and keep up traditions. This is a trend of our time. No longer do we speak condescendingly about it being “just a tradition”. Pressure from society is not so strong anymore and it is not a scandal if the child is not baptised. Most people think that it is a nice tradition and wish to carry it on. There is no reason to take this experience away from parents.

- **The child must have a name**
  The child as a rule already has a name when it is taken to be baptised. But the idea of giving the child a name has been tied to baptism in our culture. This is something different from the giving of an additional or new name which happens in some cultures when the baptised receive a new Christian name at baptism. There can be clear objections to this practice (see *The Lima Document* in Comments on Baptism, pt. IV, 14). Most ministers have stopped correcting parents who come with this notion. It would be better to say the name together with Christ’s name at baptism. We are named after Christ. It was in Antioch that the
disciples were first called “Christians” (Acts 11, 26). *Vi etter deg dem kristne kaller* (NOS 613, v. 2). *It was on that day I was baptised and received my Christian name - Det var den dag eg døyptest og fekk mitt kristennamn* (NOS 357, v. 3).

- The pilgrim’s motive – the journey outward
  Along with the feeling most parents have of great happiness for the little child entrusted to them, is the feeling of anxiety for the child’s future. No one knows what joys and sorrows life will bring. It is not by chance that Svein Ellingsen’s hymn, *Fylt av glede over livets under* (NoS 618) has become very popular amongst parents. They are filled with happiness over life’s miracle and yet uneasy because they are facing an unknown future. These mixed feelings make many wish to baptise their children to give them protection, safety and a sense of belonging. As parents we cannot always protect our children against everything in life. It is safer then to have placed the child in God’s hands, and know that one who is stronger than us walks with them on the way through life.

  Now the child has become God’s child. The Heavenly Father reaches further than us. He is there when we are absent: *Når jeg skal ut i verden, aldri jeg alene er. Farer truer oss på ferden, men jeg vet at du er nær*” (NoS 354, v. 3). This is why many parents find their way to church to baptise their children. They have an honest wish for their child to belong to the church even though they themselves have not allowed this to happen in their own lives to any great extent. It gives a good and safe feeling to have the child baptised. *Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, at thy altars, O Lord of hosts, my king and my God* (Psalm 84, 3). This is a perfect text to use at the baptismal font.

**Baptism in the worship service**
If the people involved in the baptism are to find their way back to the church on a later occasion, they must feel included in the service and the fellowship. If one wants to build a bridge from baptism to taking
an active part in the services of worship, it is not a good idea to take baptism out of the Sunday Eucharist. This question is often debated. Bystrøm and Norrgård say: *In large gatherings one can, through encouraging baptism in the main service, have an unacceptable situation where there is a baptism nearly every Sunday. This cannot be desired from the congregation’s point of view. It is however, perhaps desirable for church statistics* (Bystrøm and Norrgård, 1997, p. 87).

It is often recommended that baptism should have its own service where the congregation can be represented by hosts, for example. But this cannot be the right way to go. *Since baptism is intimately connected with the corporate life and worship of the Church, it should normally be administered during public worship, so that the members of the congregation may be reminded of their own baptism and may welcome into their fellowship those who are baptised and whom they are committed to nurture in the Christian faith* (*The Lima Document*, The Baptism, pt. V. 23). If the length of the service is a problem, then this should be solved in another way.

The suggestion that perhaps it is with regard to church statistics that baptism is included in the Sunday Eucharist shows some disregard for the people involved in the baptism and see them as inferior church members. “Today there were only 20 people at church. However we had two baptisms, so with the people involved in the baptism it was 50 all together.” Sadly one can hear this being said now and then. Thus it is not only the attitude shown by parents and godparents on which we should focus. Do we take seriously the expectations of parents, godparents, family and friends? This question is asked by the committee for worship and mission services in the Nidaros diocese, in an article about baptism in the life of the congregation. It is a relevant question for self examination. The committee also comments: *Sometimes we can experience that the people involved with the baptism regard themselves as being visiting guests, and the others present also agree by looking at the baptismal participation as a guest appearance. It is important to negate these*
ideas by showing that we all are equal members of the worshipping community (Committee for worship and mission in the Nidaros diocese: *Baptism in the life of the congregation*, p. 6).

The committee focuses on the ways the church carries out the act of baptism, and comes with many ideas as to how families involved in baptism can be included in the worship. This is something that all congregations can work on. The challenges are probably greatest in the larger congregations. In smaller congregations, where baptisms do not happen so often, baptism may be a special occasion for the whole church, and a variation to the normal Sunday service.

**The baptismal candle**

Many congregations give a candle for the newly baptised child, as a light on his or her way. The symbolism is easy for the parents and godparents to understand. The procedure with baptismal candle has been very well received where it has been used. The theme of the pilgrim is evident in the presentation: *Christ is the light of the world. He will also be this child’s light*. Or as in this quote from John 8, 12: *I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.*

**Confirmation**

After baptism, we meet the pilgrim again 14 years later, as a youngster about to be confirmed. This is too big a jump but nevertheless a necessary limit for this article. During latter years pilgrimages have been arranged for school classes and kindergartens (see Brita Hardeberg’s article). We also meet most 4-year olds in church when they come to receive their “church book”. This tradition sometimes is as well attended as confirmation, but it still has no fixed form, and no special liturgy. It has been suggested that this should be done (Ola Rypdal in *Luthersk kirketidende*, 21/97). We suspect there will be the development of a new rite for small children on their way to the pre-
school stage. The pilgrim’s motif, with the procession into the church, should be appropriate here.

In any case, a procession is absolutely necessary as a commencement to confirmation services. The confirmation period is understood as an important point on the pilgrim’s way. We find a strong theme of pilgrimage in the liturgy. The service book for confirmation reads: *Lord, they are going through a difficult world, lead them by your Spirit. They will face many temptations, strengthen them with your power.*

Also the seven prayers of intercession for each candidate highlight the goal for our pilgrimage: *Help him/her with your Spirit to fight the good fight and reach the eternal goal in heaven.* There have been objections to this strong emphasis on the heavenly goal, and that the world the confirmation candidates are wandering through is described too often as a valley of tears. It is a question of passing through in safety, and Halvor Nordhaug points out that this perspective comes from the liturgy’s basis. It sees *confirmation as an act of intercessory prayers with its basis in baptism, and where we pray that the baptised should receive everlasting life* (Nordhaug in Okkenhaug and Skjevesland, 1997, p. 110).

However, the congregation who attend the ceremony of confirmation have also experienced the service of confirmation as *a blessing which takes the whole human life into account. Most of those who pray to God this day, and there are many of them, pray for a good life for the young candidate. They pray for a bright future, someone to love and something meaningful to do, and that they will not be hurt by evil forces - in truth a prayer according to the will of God!* (Nordhaug in Okkenhaug and Skjevesland, 1997, p. 110).

Nordhaug points out that little by little there has been a more creative approach to confirmation. Instead of the confirmation of baptism and preparation for communion, we speak more about the blessing on life’s way. This is more compatible with, and gives more emphasis on, the pilgrimage perspective of life. The way is not only
over steep hills and slippery stones (NoS 663 v. 2), but also through beautiful scenery and exciting landscape.

Even the hymns in the Norwegian Hymnal (NoS) for confirmation suggest the same seriousness and sadness. Paul Erik Wirgenes points out these key themes for confirmation:

a. Celebration
b. Intercessory prayers
c. Baptismal link
d. New stage of life - transition

He would like to have a revision of the hymn book with respect to these themes (Okkenhaug and Skjevesland, 1997, p. 108). One hymn which has eventually become well known in many congregation is by Petter Dass: Om alle mine lemmer var fylt av bare sang (NoS 529). Here we find the idea of the pilgrim in brighter and more positive pictures and expressions, but without forgetting the seriousness of life.

**Holy Matrimony**

Can we find the pilgrim motif in the church’s marriage ritual? It does not stand out strongly, but the thought of life as a journey which the two will walk together is close to the introductory words to the bridal couple about supporting each other in good and bad days and faithfully standing beside each other throughout life. In the same way it is repeated in the intercessory prayer for the couple: ....so they in good and bad days trust one another, remain faithful and support each other towards eternal life.

The goal is the same as in the confirmation liturgy. But the colours are brighter, and the emphasis on the good life is stronger: Marriage is the gift of God. Our willingness to share happiness and sorrow, to give and to receive, to understand and to forgive, is put to the test. Here man and woman are to grow nearer to each other and in faith and hope look for all that God has to give.

The most obvious pilgrim symbol is the wedding-procession in and out of the Church. It is a very important part of the ceremony.
Perhaps it is not only the romantic idea about the white-painted country church which makes so few bridal couples want to be married in modern church buildings? The old Basilican-structure suggests the pilgrim symbol much better. When the bride is escorted up the aisle by her father and down the aisle by the bridegroom, it is a strong indication that one phase in life is exchanged for another. Despite the fact that the bridal couple often have lived together either for a short or a long period, it is a decisive change in life, an important crossroad. The processing in and out of the church is in this way significant to the wedding ceremony. Sometimes there may be more attention to this than what is happening at the altar. Øystein Bjørdal shows that liturgically, the processions could be seen as a worship procession where the cross bearer, candle bearers and the minister have their place (Bjørdal in Okkenhaug and Skjevesland, 1997, p. 153). But, as Bjørdal also suggests, there might be strong objections to this, and local traditions need to be upheld together with liturgical orders.

**Funerals**

Pilgrimage terminology is very obvious in our way of talking about death. The human being has come to the end of the road. All the different ways we use to describe death are witness to this. We say that the deceased has passed away or gone home (2 Cor 5, 6-8), left us, or gone on ahead (1 Tess 4, 15). Life’s journey is fulfilled (2 Tim 4, 7), to press on towards the goal (Phil. 3, 14). We sometimes say that “he has wandered away”, or “put down his pilgrim staff” etc. Many of these sayings have their origins in the Bible. We “follow” a funeral procession. We “follow after a fellow traveller” to the grave, literally. We walk in procession behind the coffin out of the church and across the churchyard, right to the edge of the grave. The last walk is an important element in funeral liturgy and in the mourning process. It is a matter of pastoral care that we can follow our dear one only so far, but when the coffin is lowered, we must go our separate ways. Jesus then takes over and leads the person we have said farewell to, the last
bit of the way home. We have come to a crossroad. Those left behind have to travel on alone. Therefore the moments at the graveside, the letting go, are often experienced as the saddest moments of the funeral service. The following memorial gathering takes on another tone. Here we may focus more on our way forward. We greet one another, share a meal, express sympathy with other mourners and include them in future fellowship.

In the funeral ritual and the texts which are used we do not see a strong emphasis on the pilgrim theme. One of the alternatives to the opening prayer is Psalm 130, which is also a celebration song for travellers. But this psalm does not contain much of the idea of the pilgrim, and this is also the case with the suggested scripture readings.

On the other hand, the final prayer directs our thoughts towards life being a journey with God: "...we pray, lead us by your Holy Spirit, so that we never leave you, but live our lives in faith in your Son and one day reach your eternal kingdom, with Jesus Christ, our Lord.

The same is true of the introductory prayer said with the family at the little devotional ceremony beside the coffin. Death is here described as the departure for the last journey: ..."Help us to live in fellowship with you, so we one day can depart in peace... Many of the readings for the “service by the coffin” do have a pilgrimage theme. Psalm 23, Psalm 121 and John 14 are all recommended readings, and one could also consider using these texts in the actual funeral service.

When it comes to the burial hymns, they are full of pilgrim symbolism. Our hymn book does not have a special chapter for burials, but pilgrim hymns can be found through the whole book and many of these are widely used. We cannot go into all the details here, but among the most frequently used hymns are Leid, milde ljos; O, Bli hos meg; Gud, når du til oppbrudd kaller (NoS 838); Eg veit i Himmerik ei borg (NoS 843); Nærmere deg, min Gud; Så ta da mine hender (NoS 608); Alltid freidig (NoS 416), and Deilig er jorden (NoS 56). We meet the pilgrim in all these hymns. We sing about walking through thorns, but also daisies along the roadside. Our way through
the world can be hard going and full of adversity, but we also sing of
the soul’s joyful pilgrimage through earthly abundance.

When we are looking for possible links between occasional
services and the Sunday Eucharist we cannot avoid mentioning the
tradition of remembering those who have died since the congregation
was last gathered. In many congregations this has become a ritual
during the announcements. Often families of the deceased attend the
service when they know that their loved one is to be remembered.

**Holy Communion**

I find it natural to finish with some reflections about the celebration of
Holy Communion. In a way we are at the goal, where *God’s
congregation in heaven and on earth praise his name with universal
jubilation*. We walk up to the altar to receive the food we need for our
life’s journey. However, it cannot be denied that in our churches only
a few of those who start the journey at the baptismal font see the need
for “travelling provisions” on the way.

Until recently the normal liturgical structure in the Church of
Norway has indicated holy communion after baptismal liturgy. These
two sacraments fit together naturally. Parents and godparents are
encouraged to teach the child to pray, and *help him/her to live
according to the word of God and to receive the holy communion, so
that he/she can be with Christ when he/she grows up, just as at the
baptism he/she was made one with Christ*. In the sacrament of baptism
we are also made one with Christ. The other sacrament, communion,
is first and foremost the place for participation and fellowship with
Christ. A natural clarification of the responsibility taken by parents
and godparents would be to join in the congregation’s Holy
Communion after the baptism, preferably with the newly baptised
child in their arms. When the child is saved through the water, as with
the Israelites through the Red Sea, there is an immediate need for
sustenance for the pilgrim journey through the desert. Therefore, in
principle, the child should take part in the gift of communion straight
away, but it would probably be difficult to do in practice. There is no longer an age barrier for going to communion, but we still hear arguments against communion for children, not to mention babies. In 1993 the Synod said: *Children who have been baptised, and who have received instruction about Communion, can take part in the Eucharist together with their parents, godparents or others who share responsibility for the child’s Christian upbringing.*

In the rubrics it is also indicated that the *baptism should take place preferably during Sunday’s Eucharist, so that the one baptised can take part in Holy Communion.* There is a certain inconsistency in this. Is this possibly due to intellectualising of the Holy Communion that has been a tradition in our church? A while ago we abolished the requirement of being confirmed before receiving communion but perhaps we have not completely freed ourselves from the reflection behind this requirement. *If baptism, as incorporation into the body of Christ, points by its very nature to the eucharistic sharing of Christ’s body and blood, the question arises as to how a further and separate rite can be interposed between baptism and admission to communion* (*The Lima document*, in commentary on baptism § 14).

The one who is saved through water will as part of life’s natural process also need food (manna) in the desert. The one who at baptism has become a part of Christ’s body is naturally at home at the communion table. It is therefore not easy to understand what instruction is necessary before the meal. *The eucharist is precious food for missionaries, bread and wine for pilgrims on their apostolic journey* (*The Lima Document*, Eucharist § 26). The idea of receiving communion as food for travel is an old one. In Norway one has usually received communion after confirmation (like something to eat on the journey?), but later on perhaps one did not receive the sacrament before the last rites at the time of death. *Already about the time of the church council in Nicaea (year 325) it was an established custom to give communion to the dying as “food for the journey” (viaticum)* (Bjørdal in Okkenhaug and Skjevesland, 1997, p. 199).
**Nourishment on the way**

Following the good attendance at baptism in our church, there is a disturbing decline with regard to participation in Holy Communion. This is a large and difficult subject. There are certainly many reasons for this and we will not investigate them further at this point. An example of the great drop in attendance at Communion is documented by Harald Hegstad in his book *Folkekirke og Trosfellesskap*. From the congregation of Mære it has been documented that communion attendance dropped by the fact that everyone went to communion in the 1880s, to very few some 30-40 years later (Hegstad, 1996, p. 60ff). In 1950 there was no communion service in Mære, except for the special service in connection with confirmation.

What is important in this connection is to try to get all those who start on life’s pilgrimage with baptism to receive nourishment on the way. Much can be done and is done to open the communion-table and remove feelings of fear about participating in communion. Perhaps the pilgrimage perspective is a good support in this direction. It may give us a different approach to Holy Communion. By moving faith from the head down into the feet more people will join us on the pilgrimage. We can always decide to break away and go with others even if we do not understand. But to go to the table of the Lord to receive communion is in our church not always a joyful pilgrimage, but a feeling of being scrutinised by others. It requires courage and strong faith to withstand this. On the other hand, if one joins the ranks of the pilgrims who are looking to the church for nourishment on the way, it may very well happen that hunger becomes stronger than human fear.

This can be illustrated by another example from Mære: *In 1991 a new practice was introduced for Holy Communion, when a “rotating Eucharist” was arranged i.e. the communicants go in procession around the altar and those who wish can receive communion in passing. The first time this was tried was in connection with Egil Hovland’s “Pilgrim’s Mass” All Saints’ Day 1991. Of the 350 present, 300 took communion. “A rotating Eucharist” (continous communion – instead of the traditional kneeling benches for 10 to 15 people at a*
time) has now become a somewhat annual phenomenon, in 1992 at a youth service and in 1993 again in connection with a the pilgrim’s mass. On these occasions the majority also took communion (1992: 144 of 159, 1993: 300 of 400) (Hegstad, 1996, p. 62).

One can perhaps find objections to this way of re-introducing the annual so-called “habitual communion”, but happily these circumstances have also resulted in a definite increase in ordinary communion services. Can it be that our form of celebrating communion is an obstacle for many? Is it perhaps more the form than the content that keeps people away from Holy Communion? Walking up the centre aisle and round the altar in Mære Church has been a pilgrimage from the folk church situation and into the deepest meaning of liturgy. Fellowship with Christ at the communion table, a liturgical pilgrimage to our time.

Fruit of the earth and people’s work
Another way from people’s daily lives into the eucharistic mystery is the traditional harvest festival service. In many congregations it has become usual to have this service in the autumn. This is a good occasion to bring people’s every day life into the church, to take their joys and sorrows seriously. It is good to give thanks to God for his gifts, for a good harvest to sustain life. Harvest festival services are celebrated both in villages and towns for it is not only agricultural workers who need to present their work to God. We all live from the Creator’s earth, and we are still dependant on God to send sun and rain.

So the Farmers’ Union are invited to decorate the church, farmers’ wives to serve lunch and coffee and 4H (head, heart, hands and health) Youth Club to process with the abundance of fruit and vegetables. The link from carrying the year’s harvest with thanks to God for his gifts, and to Holy Communion where God gives himself to us through the same gifts seems obvious.

Øystein Bjørdal points to the “thin walls” between creation and the message of salvation. Without bread and wine there is no Eucha-
rist. Without grapes from the vineyard and corn from the fields there is no Holy Communion with gifts of salvation (Bjørdal, 1996, p. 9).

The Lima document speaks of Holy Communion as a thanks-giving: The bread and wine, fruits of the earth and of human labour, are presented to the Father, in faith and thanksgiving (The Lima Document, Eucharist, pt II, 4).

The procession into the church could include the bread and the wine for communion. At any rate we should, at the beginning of the procession, carry in a dish with the grapes and a bowl of corn. If these things are placed on the altar, and the potatoes, carrots, apples and plums are placed in another part of the chancel, there will be no doubt about the symbolism.

The offertory

_Yours is the earth and all that is in it. All that we own is yours._ This is the prayer after the thanks offering is brought forward to the altar. The offertory is thus a crossroad in the service where the gifts of God and the work of our hands meet each other. (This is especially evident during the harvest festival service). Some people will perhaps find it difficult to celebrate holy communion during this service since in our tradition it has the character of a family service, where many people are not used to receiving communion. Why not then choose an alternative way of celebrating communion? The newest order of _Familie-messen_ [Family Eucharist] can be of help to us to find a good liturgical framework for such occasions.

One way of approaching this can be that 4 H’s young people who also lead the procession out, stand at the church door or arrange a table with apples and carrots, vegetables and plums. Thus the congregation can enjoy the fruit that God has given us and that we have brought to Him as a thank offering. The idea of extending this towards a celebration of Holy Communion should not be too far off. One can also continue the pilgrim’s procession out of the church and on to an old people’s or convalescent home; distribute fruit and vegetables together with the young people in the procession, and also celebrate
Holy Communion for the old and the sick as in the oldest traditions of the church. *The Sacraments are taken by the deacons to the sick who cannot be present* (Justin c.150 A.D.).

Thus the offertory can be experienced as *a ceremony where creation, salvation and deaconry are united* (Bjørdal, 1996, p. 10). This is the fourth aspect of the pilgrimage, the return home. Perhaps we can call this the pilgrimage’s deaconal perspective. Just as the gift of communion give us salvation, so we are called to follow Christ in his care for fellow humans. In this way the service of worship is brought further into our daily lives out in the world, and it becomes a vital connection between holidays and weekdays.

**Conclusion**

Focusing on pilgrim traditions and reflection on the themes of pilgrimage show a holistic view of life. This is interesting when we think about the service of worship. Life in the world of God brings so many good experiences. Our journeying is rich with blessings. At the same time it is clear to us that we are foreigners on this earth and are heading for the heavenly Kingdom. These aspects are united in the pilgrimage idea.

We have seen that the pilgrim motif is not very strong in our liturgy. It is almost absent in the baptismal rite, and in the confirmation liturgy it has a mostly negative aspect. In these situations, the pilgrim perspective could enrich the church in this world. Children who are at the start of their journey through life, and the young people who are about to go out into an exciting and challenging world on their own, need to be guided on the way and to the goal. They need the instructions of Christ and we hope and pray that he will walk with them, watch over them like a shepherd watches his flock, and bless them with a good life.
A stronger focus on a creational aspect will find an echo with most people and can therefore be a bridge from the occasional services to the Sunday Eucharist. The pilgrimage perspective is well rooted in biblical material. If our church wishes to be a church of pilgrimage she must make room for this perspective in the liturgical orders. This will be an on-going challenge for liturgical development.
NEW SHOOTS FROM OLD ROOTS

A modern picture of pilgrimage revival

At the start of a new millennium, western culture seems divided and pluralistic. Many feel unwanted and lonely in a society where things change quickly, where the stream of information is never ending, and where bureaucracy and divisions make it difficult to function. The authorities disagree and each person must find their own truth and their own identity.

The social anthropologist Arne Martin Klausen (1995) points out the main trends in our cultural development: the development of increasing complexity and a fast rate of change. Earlier societies had a greater degree of stability. When one thinks of our earlier understanding of life and ethical norms, these have changed slowly in comparison to the life span of each person, so that they barely noticed them. However, in our time everything changes incredibly quickly. The experiences of the older generation are no longer valid, the extended family is no longer found, mobility and change make it difficult to keep up larger social units, and natural resources are being exploited and destroyed. Modernisation makes all values relative and society has become pluralistic with respect to values and views of life. The breaking of boundaries is the highest goal of modernism (Klausen, 1995, p. 21-25). Child research confirms this picture, and stresses that mobility and sudden changes in society have made childhood more unstable during the recent past (Frønes, 1994, p. 32f; Jensen, 1993, p. 111 and Jensen, 1994). Many researchers of youth culture point out that in western capitalistic society young people of today live in a void without value. Many of them have to try things out for themselves until they find a basis for living. They have to find
their own values because society is no longer able to communicate official and collective values. Many also feel the future is uncertain (Imsen, 1995, p. 314ff). One positive aspect of this picture is that because of the big change in family patterns there is better dialogue and more respect between adults and children (Frønes, 1994, p. 35; Lindhardt, 1993, p. 119ff).

One of the reasons for fast change is the growth of new technology. Television, video, and the Internet have changed both the content and the way information is spread. An American, Neil Postman, has shown interest in one of these aspects. He thinks that television is an egalitarian communication medium, which gives everyone the same information. This changes our culture. Postman interprets this as a negative cultural development in that children and adults get the same information (Postman, 1984, p. 99ff). Others, like the Dane, Jan Lindhardt, share the description of the changes, but look differently at the situation and think that the new media can help develop a less divided culture, with the possibility of a more humane society (Lindhardt, 1993, p. 131). He points out that the new media have given us better training in receiving visual information. At the same time we are less able than earlier generations, to receive information through reading and listening to lengthy speeches.

Children communicate the information they get from the media to each other. The impressions they receive are often not worked through together with adults in order that the whole meaning may be understood (Sætersdal and Ørjasæter, 1981, p. 11). In the long term this causes fragmentation.

The change between the modern and the post-modern is a challenge, not least for the message of the church. It is important to explain the overall picture, the continuity, and the deep roots of our faith to the post-modern human being.

But how can we do this? Pictures and creative use of visual materials in the wider sense are keys to a comprehensive message for our time. In earlier times, not least in the Middle Ages, people made clever use of visual symbolism. Some researchers claim there is a
meeting point between the feeling of life and visualisation in the Middle Ages, and the challenges and media experience of our time. This is the direction taken in this article.

We are convinced that the pilgrim traditions of the Middle Ages used pictures and symbols which have great potential. These pictures are meaningful and can still give a framework for life’s experiences. Through working as a minister in the Nidaros diocese during the 1990s I have had close contact with pilgrim activities linked to Nidaros Cathedral. I have also had experience using pilgrim traditions in day-to-day parish work, not the least in relation to children and young people. In connection with liturgical studies I have had the opportunity of going into greater depth with the material which some of the questions bring up.

This article reflects and describes my own experiences and in addition material from history, religious psychology, liturgy, pedagogical theory of teaching and from the research done on communicating the story of faith. Further, I will look at a series of pilgrim symbols, keeping in mind the influence they made in the Middle Ages, and the possibility of using them again today. Finally, I will give examples of how I have been able to use these symbols myself, first and foremost in church services and pilgrimages for school children. I refer also to parts of my own research on how in retrospect children remember what they have experienced, and how these pictures are integrated into their understanding of their own lives.

To create meaning

The Church’s need for an integrated holistic message
There are many nowadays who turn to religion to look for help in finding the whole truth. Apropos this development, the art historian Gunnar Danbolt describes the relation between society and art in the development from pre-modernism to post-modernism. He concludes that: Post-modernism is a reality which mirrors a new time and a new society, a society where there is a need for something permanent on
which to hold. However, we do not find this permanency in post-modern times. It is not found here on earth, because here there are only cultural and historical myths and constructions. Perhaps it is not so strange that God has become popular again. We need him more than ever (Danbolt, 1989, p. 348).

However, those who are seeking religious experiences do not necessarily come to established church communities. Numbers of those attending church in the Church of Norway have, for example, decreased since the end of the war, even if there has been a slight increase during the past years. The church still does not appeal as a place where meaning and truth can be found, she is also a child of her time. The church historian Geir Hellemo has described the situation. He maintains that the modern understanding of Christianity in our part of the world has lost contact between religious practice and reflection. A development in society towards a stronger individualism and subjectivism has created a situation where the church does not naturally find its place. This causes problems for the life of the church and Christianity: Some like to define their theology scientifically and isolate it more or less from their belief; others keep their childhood faith which obviously will decline, since it is not suited to an adult’s belief, and which therefore in the end is replaced by disillusionment or artistic experience or a flirt with eastern mysticism; again others are involved with liturgy and become extreme ritualists, where liturgical ceremony and liturgical trappings overshadow everything and become the goal instead of a means to the goal. Most become, by unidentified pressure from the modern way of life, practising atheists (Hellemo, 1995, p. 102).

Hellemo maintains that the greatest challenge for the church will be to create a new integrated process so that wholeness can be re-established: Integration of theology, liturgy and personal spirituality, including a feeling for life in the more normal sense. He seeks to find some impulses in religious practice which can help to repair the divisions. He emphasises the way pictorial language and pictorial rituals work, because pictures can bring us closer to God (ibid).
Hellemo’s description of the situation and his emphasis on pictorial creativity is an interesting co-ordination with the time scheme above. We also notice that his search for a vital integrated process is similar to a pedagogical learning definition (p. 53ff). However the situation is not nearly as bad as Hellemo’s description suggests. The growth of the new pilgrimage spirituality can be seen as an example of what Hellemo is looking for: an integrated and pictorial movement in our time. This is backed by a finding made by the Italian pilgrimage researcher, Paolo Giuriati (Giuriati, 1996, p. 57). If Giuriati is correct, it will be important for the church to look closer at pilgrimage revival as a possible link to give continuity and roots. Arne Bakken, former pilgrimage minister at Nidaros Cathedral, also points this out (Bakken, 1994b, p. 15ff and 1996, p. 148ff).

It seems that we in the pilgrim’s spirituality receive signals from two directions: an individual searching for and a collective need to find life’s interpretive symbols. Both are a challenge for the church.

When a meaning should be given.
Theoretical input and liturgical relevance.
What insight can the church learn from pedagogical psychology, psychology of religion and liturgical reflection, when should meaning be taught? I will try to refer to the different theories on the learning process and the teaching of religious instruction, which may give us material from experience.

School pedagogics defines learning as both receiving knowledge and understanding it at a deeper level. Knowledge must be integrated with the student’s understanding of reality, so that there is structure and meaning. This does not happen just by accident. Educational psychology stresses that the student must be helped to an active, personal constructive-process, where knowledge can be gained through personal experience. Here pedagogics is completely on a par with what Hellemo calls an integrated process.

There are many theories about what happens inside the head of a learner and how the long-term memory and short-term memory func-
tion, whether the knowledge is presented visually or verbally in the brain and how aesthetical working methods stimulate the brain. We will put aside lengthy discussion here, but will include some observations which have relevance to our questions. The short presentation of educational theory principles which is quoted in this chapter, are built on educationalist Gunn Imsen’s theories who has described cognitive development and learning in her critical development of Jean Piaget’s theories (Imsen, 1991, especially p. 177-284).

Before anything at all can happen with the pupils it is essential to catch their attention. Gunn Imsen writes: *If the purpose is to have a meaningful communication, it can be worthwhile catching the pupil’s attention where it is and build up a dialogue in the context of where the pupil feels at home* (ibid). Furthermore there is no doubt that memory-function in the brain is tied to visual form representations: pictures and symbols. The concrete things give the words meaning and are important for the basic language development of the child. Little by little the ability to think in the abstract develops. Cognitive educational theory says that this happens gradually from 11 years of age (p. 196ff). In teaching, visual aids are very important for learning, and both pictorial language and concrete illustrations help pupils of all ages to consolidate their own concept of learning. The more new material there is to be learnt, the more important it is to open visual imaginations and open research activities where the child can join in, so that the material can be understood (ibid).

On the whole a series of researchers show the importance of using the whole register of the senses when a lesson is to be taught and understood. The more senses are used, the more is remembered afterwards. Sight is, in fact, the most important of these (a wide range of background material is referred to by Bjørdal, 1997, p. 70).

Other educational traditions, which we only refer to here by way of suggestion, strengthen this picture when they stress the meaning of play and of aesthetical subjects, in this case drama. It is common for different traditions to think play and aesthetical subjects help children integrate feelings and intellect. Psychoanalytic theories, for example,
emphasise play as a method for working through inner conflict and as training for mastering reality. Theories about environment emphasise that play allows children to gain knowledge and become a part of the related culture. A shortened version of a register of different theories is to be found in Knudsen, 1997, p. 5ff.

Learning always happens in a complex context where the children’s social relationships, family, playing environment, the physical situation in the class room etc. all play a part. Good learning is dependent on the relationship between the child and the child’s surroundings. It is important that there is good preparation for successful communication both in language and non-verbal, so that children can construct their own realism (Imsen, 1991, p. 277ff).

Among educationalists we also note Jorunn Fougner who points out that there is a similarity between the language of children and religious language: Both are drama stylised in cult or play. She wishes that adults could learn from the children to use their body in association with religion, and she thinks that only verbal religiousness does not function where children are involved (Fougner, 1988).

Related thoughts are found in Sigmund Harbo’s research on the relationship between religious instruction in childhood and later appreciation of religion (Harbo, 1987). Harbo shows that the extent of practices used in Christian upbringing (evening prayers, grace at table, attending church etc.), and the way parents themselves reveal the way they practise their religion, is of great importance if the children are going to carry on their parents’ faith. Where children have often been to religious celebrations with their parents during their childhood, and where the parents’ faith is visible in their lives and in this way is a living faith, then there is a good correlation between the parents’ faith and the children’s attitudes later. In homes where the parents’ faith is only expressed verbally and does not have any noticeable consequences, children will often lose their childhood beliefs. Research also shows the importance of contact with others who are not their parents. A shortened report about Harbo’s findings can be found in Harbo, 1988, p. 88ff.
The Swedish psychologist of religion, Owe Wikström, stresses that pictures, symbols and rituals are important in creating a religious experience. In his book *Om heligheten [About Holiness]* (Wikström, 1993, pp. 20, 149ff) he agrees with the descriptive tradition from the religious historian Mircea Eliade, and emphasises that symbols are necessary when one talks about matters that can’t be explained and at the same time can’t be kept secret. Both here and in other places he discusses symbols both as general, psychological and religious phenomena, and makes important contributions to the understanding of how holiness can be understood and how it can be described to others (Bergstrand, 1990).

Liturgists are also aware of the importance of interaction, the use of symbols and the senses when we approach the divine. Briefly, here are a few newer examples: in a description of a new family mass for the Church of Norway, Øystein Bjørdal writes about the importance of the visual word in the liturgy: *In our liturgical practice it is important that children’s and family services are not only teaching about prayer, worship and faith, but that we in fact pray, praise and believe - not just with the head and the heart, but with the whole body and all the senses. Therefore it is important that services for and with children are not “childish”, but simple, comprehensible words and actions. By “simple” we mean that the service should not be overloaded with words, but characterised by movement and action* (Bjørdal, 1997, p. 73). Holger Lissner, the Danish clergyman, has talked of his experiences of liturgical experiments with children’s and family services. Lissner refers both to modern educational theory, to the example shown by Jesus and the ancient prophets’ practice in emphasising that all the senses must be used in services (Lissner, 1995, p. 6f). The Norwegian clergyman, Jan Oskar Utnem, points out that human behaviour is to do with the body and so he refers to the liturgy and the liturgical room. The body has a rich experience register and the ability to understand through senses and movement. He maintains that it knows more than consciousness knows, and challenges the Kant/Descartes tradition, where thought organises life: *The meaning*
of life is always shown through a bodily action. Utnem is interested in symbols and illustrations which extend our experience and open up growth in understanding. (Utnem, 1998, pp. 22-24, 45ff, 62).

What is interesting in this relation is also the liturgical idea which is connected to children’s play. Arne Bakken has, for example, found that both in play and in the church service there is a merging of reality and fantasy leading to a greater and wider understanding of reality (Bakken, 1994a, p. 9). Close to this concept is the liturgist who uses drama theory to assist understanding (see Rolf Piene Halvorsen’s article in this book).

We see that experience in drama and play, educational theory and the psychology of religion are important for the church’s communication process. The educational ideal of learning as a personal construction-process has a lot in common with the ideals of good church service practice.

School, theatre or church?
What are we doing when we dress up as pilgrims and walk along the old routes? Is this an educational presentation of life in old times, is it theatre where we are playing the part of others, or is it a church service where the participants bring their lives to God? Put another way: is there any difference between educational methods, theatrical props and liturgical symbols? These and similar questions are often discussed in connection with the growth of the new pilgrimage spirituality.

The theoretical discussion in the preceding chapter is not concerned with the different ways of using images and symbols. These questions are not covered in Lutheran liturgical literature either, where interest is often concentrated on the sacraments, baptism and holy communion, which are visible words (symbols). The sacraments are often placed in a special position in relation to other liturgical symbols, since they were initiated by Jesus (see e.g. Jenson, 1978).

In the book *Mer än ord - liturgisk teologi och praxis [More Than Words – Liturgical Theology and Practice]* (Byström and Norrgård,
the authors attempt to describe the difference between a liturgical symbol and an educational remedy. A liturgical symbol has a deep-seated function and opens up to a deeper reality than that which can be expressed verbally. It is assumed that the symbol is repeated and that it is the same for many. It has developed over a long period of time and is constant in use. An educational remedy on the other hand, has the feature of being able to function only on a specific occasion. Liturgical symbols can change their character and become theatrical props when for example one tries to reproduce a service of worship from another era. Byström and Norrgård also refer to the orthodox theologian Alexander Schmemann who emphasised that Christian symbols represent more than an invisible reality. Such a symbol could be reduced to an educational remedy which, if simply and easily understood, leads the congregation’s attention in a specific direction. In contrast with Schmemann, Byström and Norrgård see symbols and symbolic movements as the reality and presence of God’s kingdom; the symbols are reality in themselves (ibid).

Similar reasoning is found with other liturgists, such as David W. Fagerberg (1992) who also have been inspired by Schmemann. He underlines that the point of the liturgy is that it is celebrated. This way of looking at symbols is similar to the eastern church’s view of the icon. It is the same idea as in the western church’s use of the anamnesis in the eucharistic liturgy, where recalling the historical past as a present reality is an important element (see Davies, 1986, p. 18). Gunnar Danbolt (1996) gives an instructive overall view of the meaning of images and symbols both in eastern and western spirituality. In the western mass there is a tension between the service of the Word and Holy Communion. While the service of the Word is de-mythologising, Communion is re-mythologising. In the tension between these two, Danbolt says that western spirituality goes all the way back to Augustine’s time.

The approach of Byström and Norrgård give us an important view. I take the liberty of cautiously asking whether it is possible or even necessary to make so sharp a division. Later I give examples of pilgrimages and pilgrim services. Pilgrim attributes and symbols, having the pilgrimage tradition as a background, are here used in all three ways (educational method, theatrical prop, liturgical symbol), without, in fact, being separated from each other.
If we look back in history we will see that education, theatre and art have been an integrated part of church life. It is well documented that the church’s need to share God’s presence, biblical history and ethics, created school, drama, mystery plays, liturgies, symbols and pictures (see Bjørdal, 1997, p. 70).

Examples of this are the church decorations of the Middle Ages, which illustrated Bible stories. Pope Gregory I (d. 604) felt that art should explain the gospel stories for those who could not read. The pictures were the poor people’s bible - *Biblia Pauporum* (Lindhardt, 1993, p. 23). The rich use of drama in the church during the Middle Ages, is good reason to call the contact between the church and theatre a mother/daughter relationship in that period (Middle Ages mass as a religious drama, see Hagen, 1988, p. 3). Another illustrative example is the pilgrim’s staff that was more than just practical help on the way, and which was often blessed by the priest before the pilgrim left on the pilgrimage, discusses below.

After a while, drama, education and pictures in our part of the world lost their traditional function and became modern and independent, as with art and science. Danbolt gives a good summary of this development, in the case of art. He establishes the period of art having its own place in society, as being in the 18th Century. Up to then people were used to seeing art either as religious or political pictures, pictures that could tell them something important. The idea was more important than the means (Danbolt, 1987, p. 125ff).

The world picture in the Middle Ages was different to ours; it was not segmented and soulless as it became later. Perhaps it is our modern world picture which gives us the need to divide things from each other? There are many indications that the question looks different in the sphere of post-modernism, where it is again possible to think of the divine as being omnipresent.

In any case it has to be underlined that education, drama and liturgy have similar means and almost a common goal: to create a personal construction-process where both intellect and feeling are included, a process which can give cohesion and meaning. At the same time the church has a further aim: the church should provide for the processes needed to give each person a meeting with the triune God.
The church is perpetuating myths and bible stories connected to the symbols. This gives the church material to enable it to reach its wider goal.

The church believes that the incarnate God comes near people through all the senses we have been given, by all the methods we know and in whatever place we might find ourselves. It is the church’s task to find the symbols, pictures and rituals needed here and now and which can function according to this aim.

**The world view and the use of symbols in the Middle Ages**

In this chapter we will mainly be repeating some general observations of importance for our theme, as described by the Danish historian of ideas Jan Lindhardt (Lindhardt, 1993). This will be elaborated with an interesting example of the verbal use of symbol during Middle Ages, as demonstrated by Peter Abelard (d. 1142).

In accordance with many researchers (e.g. Danbolt and Postmann), Lindhardt begins with the fact that the experience of time and space was different in the Christian Middle Ages than it is for modern people in our culture: We have a feel for time as if it was an unending long period and that one event follows another, separated from each other. This gives us a starting point from which we can begin to see a developing perspective in history and the basis for historical research. In the Middle Ages the concept of time was less dynamic, yet at the same time it contained more. Time was not linear in the same way.

Different eras could be connected through stories; the protagonists were close to the listeners. There was no feeling of distance from the past. Time came when one was active. When one was inactive time stood still. However, time was also defined and limited in the Christian Middle Ages. People lived in the church’s time, the period between incarnation and judgement of the world (Lindhardt, 1993).

In the same way the concept of space was different. The idea of the emptiness of space did not exist. All space was filled with dead things and living creatures. Living creatures could be both visible and invisible, good and bad and all joined in controlling existence. The
visible and invisible inhabitants of space had a permanent ranking position under God. This space was a comfortable and safe world. Then there was not such a great difference between children and adults, men and women, animals and humans, such as we experience in later times (ibid).

The world of ideas and the understanding of life during the Middle Ages was symbolic and realistic. The outer visible signs, sacraments, events and celebrations were important. Colours, numbers, things, animals etc. all had their symbolic meaning. *Augustine claimed, for instance, that what was created in the end pointed towards its creator and can therefore only be understood if it is looked upon in this way* (ibid). Pictures actually represented what was depicted.

An example of this is the worship of Marian-pictures, which came about because people believed that Mary was present in the church when there was a picture of her. This caused a theological problem during the Middle Ages. Indication of this can be found in the iconoclasm in the Eastern Church during the 8th and the 9th century when images were smashed so that no one could worship them. In the later Middle Ages there was a similar problem in the western church which was borne out in the struggle between realism and nominalism (see further Hägglund, 1981, p. 139-184). Iconoclasm during the Reformation should be seen against this background. Another example of pictures being thought of as real, is the sale of indulgences where the heavenly coins (value of the Saints’ good deeds) could be exchanged for earthly coins. It is not far from symbolism to the world of magic (Lindhardt, 1993, p. 24ff).

The culture described above, is typical in an oral society. The Middle Ages were a mixed culture, a predominantly oral culture which tended towards becoming a literary culture. Reading and writing skills were not widespread. Communication in an oral culture is known for its more active use of memory (rhetoric, word usage, storytelling), use of speech expression and word pictures, opposites (black/white, big/little etc), personification of things (to give things proper names), and personalising all sorts of relationships (employment, oath to the king etc.) (Lindhardt, 1993, p. 36-43).

We can find good examples of an oral culture’s communication in Peter Abelard’s poems. Abelard can be placed theologically and
historically between realism and nominalism, and his theories have become generally accepted (Hägglund, 1981, p. 139ff). He regarded his work ethically and wanted to create life in faith, hope, love, and good deeds (Jussila, 1995, p. 174ff). Abelard was active at a time when the presentation of theological argument was in the process of changing from oral to written presentation. This development can be studied in his writings, and makes him especially interesting for our discussion. His thoughts, in many ways, seem surprisingly up-to-date. Abelard used symbols extensively: in teaching, in hymns and in liturgical texts. His approach was pedagogical; people must understand. The symbols were therefore simple and easily accessible and often already known to his followers. It was therefore important for Abelard that language could be both heard and seen – in this way his followers could visualise in their head what they heard. He thought that with the use of symbols, it would be possible to make connections between ideas, clarifying thoughts, stimulating fantasy, and communicating mysteries and hidden secrets which cannot be taught (Jussila, 1995, pp. 10ff, 201, 174ff).

Abelard’s theological starting point is that the human language after the Fall is not able to express the heavenly truth. However through analogy of visible earthly things, knowledge of God can be revealed. He thinks that the biblical symbols function in a special way as a link between experience of God and experience of being a human in the world. Abelard found material for the symbols in the Bible but re-interpreted them, let them have many meanings and let many of them appear together. In that way he meant to bring many thoughts to the listeners thereby creating a space that is bigger than the various elements, i.e. opening a whole new relation (Jussila, 1995, pp. 111ff, 196ff).

Meeting points between the Middle Ages and our time
Lindhardt says that the comfortable and safe world was destroyed during the renaissance: Between us and the Middle Ages is a literary epoch which gave crucial impulses for the development of modern so-
The change to the written culture resulted in a series of consequences. In the time after the Middle Ages the world had become secularised. *It is only us, who are thinking and speaking creatures* (Lindhardt, 1993, p. 20, see also p. 98ff). A world view where God dominates and everything reflects God, has gone. The concept of time has changed. Childhood is long and divorced from adult life. Men and women are given different roles. A private sphere and a core family have developed, which the Middle Ages did not have. Modernism is built on the thought that each individual is self-sufficient in relation to their surroundings. The world is structured into disconnected space elements (fragmentation, separation in space and time). Such a collected description can easily be shown in the alienation and division that we have covered earlier.

However, Lindhardt’s theory is based on the fact that the new media, first and foremost television and video, are in the process of giving important new impulses to cultural development: The electronic media introduces again an oral culture which is mixed with a modern written culture. Lindhardt thinks that the present tendency is moving towards the domination of oral expression, and that a series of the oral culture’s signs have returned. This brings us to a certain degree back to the Middle Ages.

This does not mean that belief in a stable world where everything has its God-given place is back. But we again have a cultural situation where separated space is taken over by a community space: children and adults are together, men and women have the same arena, feeling and rationalisation are seen together. This gives us new possibilities. In the new space there is again place for ethics and rituals (Lindhardt, 1993, pp. 101ff, 157, 170ff, 218ff, 231). Other recurring phenomena are the personalising and animation of animals and things. One example is an advertisement which epitomises goods with a quality of life: the car gives comfort and transport and at the same time power. *It is possible that one does not believe it but one acts as if one does, and that is enough for the advertising people* (Lindhardt,
Another sign that reminds us of the Middle Ages, is that television usually does not strive to highlight objective information but is good at storytelling. Between us and reality there is always a named person who carries the story, either a scientist in a nature programme, a newsreader or sport’s commentator. The material is presented with a personal bias, which gives credibility and the opportunity for us to identify ourselves with persons and events. Television tones down non-contemporary impressions and our awareness of differences with which modernism has been so concerned. History is presented on the basis that we are humans and just the same as those who lived long ago. In the USA, where television has existed longer than here, a new type of TV-preaching has made use of this opportunity. Preaching is borne by the predicant and his/her personal life’s story and authenticity. The same is true of politicians who are dependent on building up a personal trust in relation to their electors. The ones who manage best are those who master the television media (pp. 143ff, 172ff, 191ff).

Lindhardt describes a development and the description raises questions. In my opinion there is no reason to advocate American TV-preaching as the ideal or that we should begin to celebrate communion via the television screen. The screen separates people physically from each other and this has consequences in what the media can be used for. But as Lindhardt observes, the new direction in future development is impossible to ignore.

Lindhardt has pointed out similarities between the Middle Ages and our time, which in my opinion can partly explain why pilgrim traditions seem to correspond to post-modernism. Furthermore, his analysis provides a basis of seeing what opportunities and means the new situation will give. We can guess that the damping down of non-contemporary feelings and awareness of differences, makes it easier to teach important Christian truths: that Jesus is present here and now, that God is present always and in all places and that humans belong together and have a responsibility for a common earth; or that a pil-
grimage to an old shrine can have a meaning for one’s life. Furthermore the new media is developing the ability of collecting information from pictures and stories. This emphasises the need to use symbols, symbolic actions, stories and narrative preaching. Television media makes greater demands on the intermediary’s personal authenticity. This underlines, for the liturgist and the preacher, how important it is to be present in everything one does, and feel moved by the text which is presented. The leader’s face, body and hands are an important part of the message being given.

Reading through different approaches in this chapter we have seen that the pilgrimage symbolism of the Middle Ages can be meaningful in our time. In the history of ideas it looks like there is a correspondence between us and people from the Middle Ages, in that their way of communicating is popular once again. The Middle Ages emphasise that a language of symbols is necessary when the mystery is to be explained. Psychologists of religion and the liturgists of today support this. Pilgrim symbols of the Middle Ages make use of all the senses, which is what the educationists of today think is important. Pilgrims’ symbols can give an holistic experience in a divided world. People flock to pilgrim places regardless, because they hope to find something they need there, individually or collectively. In the next chapter we will look at the different symbols and see whether there is any value in using them again.

**Current pilgrim symbols with the idea of reusing them**

**The pilgrim - the symbol which has been there all the time**

The pilgrim as a symbol is connected to biblical language and storytelling, like most of the pilgrims’ symbols. Biblical roots are strongly emphasised in pilgrimage preaching of the Middle Ages. We find an interesting example in *The great pilgrim’s sermon* in St. James’ book from the 12th century (reference in the Danish translation of Gad, 1991, pp. 13ff and pp. 49ff). It is interesting to see that parts of the
biblical material are also carried on into the Muslim tradition that counts Abraham as the founder of pilgrimages (*Koran*, 22: 26-30, see Glassé, 1991, p. 313).

In the earliest times an important reason why pilgrims made a pilgrimage was to be able to see the holy places with their own eyes. Their biblical model was Peter who went to the grave on Easter morning to verify if the grave really was empty (Luke 24, 10-12) (Halvorsen, 1996, p. 11).

The idea of pilgrimages was important in the theology of the Middle Ages, both for the laity and as a key to understanding monastic life (Grün, 1983, p. 12ff). Pilgrimages became a picture of life itself, on the way to the heavenly goal. Monks and nuns understood themselves to be “peregrini” (Latin - stranger) in this world (this was true of both the wandering monks and those settled in one place). They had left their homes and families in a special way and set off into the unknown. They wandered Christ’s way, the way of love. They already shared in the goal, in Christ’s redemption. Grün points out that there was a difference in the Middle Ages between being a pilgrim (lasting the whole life with heaven as the goal) and being on a journey (to a goal on earth and then home again). As far as I can see the expressions are used interchangeably nowadays, both in concrete terms and symbolic meaning.

The classic pilgrim pattern is as follows: the preparation, the journey/the way, the destination and the return home. This can be found again and again. Each part had its own special rituals that had to be carried out so that the pilgrimage could be successful. In St. James’ book it is presented in this way: Before leaving, all wrongs must be put right and quarrels put aside. The pilgrim must also apply for the necessary permission to leave, from his employer, spouse and priest. On the journey the pilgrim has to share with others, behave well and attend mass on Sundays. On his return he must continue his good behaviour (Gad, 1991, p. 52). This is also the pattern used by Arne Bakken in his book *Nidaros Cathedral - A Pilgrim’s Wandering* (1997a), where the classical pattern is the disposition for his symbolic
wandering in the cathedral. With Peter Abelard the *peregrinus/peregrinatio* are the main symbols, usually in the Middle Ages together with the thought of exile and of following Christ (*imitatio Christi*) on the way to the cross (*via crucis*) (Jussila, 1995, p. 56ff). Actually we know *Imitatio Christi* - the metaphor - through the mystical Thomas à Kempis (15th century). His book, *De imitazione Christi* (The Imitation of Christ), is one of the widest published books in world literature (Hägglund, 1981, p. 184). St. James’ book and other sources from the Middle Ages emphasise Jesus as a pilgrim in that the Latin translation of Luke 24, 18 is understood literally: *Tu solus peregrinus est in Jerusalem* (Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem) (Gad, 1991, p. 51).

We find many memories of pilgrims and pilgrim traditions from the Middle Ages in our culture today: in language, folk tales and novels from the Middle Ages, in hymns and inspirational literature, in names of places and historical traces.

In our language we find many pictures that can be connected with the pilgrim’s route towards his or her goal. It may be illustrated by the following sentence (based on German/Norwegian words): it is important to have a good *vandel* (‘conduct’) – from *vandre* (‘wander/walk’) - and to focus on those who want to progress and get *erfaring* (‘experience’) – from *fare* (‘to go/to travel’) – along the way on a life’s pilgrimage (from German, Grün, 1983, p. 7ff).

Pilgrim ideas can be recognised in Norwegian folk tales, as in *Espen Askeladd*. He has an open mind and an eye on the goal even if it is both ‘long and longer than long’ before he arrives there. Eivind Luthen mentions the folk tale *Kjetta på Dovre* [*Cat on the Dovre Mountains*] that may very well be associated with pious pilgrims (Luthen, 1992, p. 71ff). Folk songs get us started on a journey – *Jeg gikk meg over sjø og land* [*I journeyed over sea and land*] – and bring us home again – *Kjerringa med staven* [*The old woman with the staff*]. In the European connection it has been suggested that the models for the great novels of the Middle Ages have come out of the pilgrim journeys. The heroes start walking because they yearn to reach their goal, such as finding the Holy Grail (Gad, 1991, p 126ff).
Our collection of hymns has a number of old and new texts with pilgrimage motifs, from both land and water. Examples are Med Jesus vil eg fara (NoS 418 – [I will walk with Jesus]) and Jeg er en seiler på livets hav (NoS 862 – [I am a sailor on the sea of life]). Often we can find elements of the classical structure of the pilgrimage with the decision to turn away, the journey itself with challenges and dangers, the goal, and sometimes also the way back home. Pilgrims- hånbooken 1997 [The Pilgrim’s Handbook 1997] p. 145ff gives several examples.

In the spiritual literature we often find the motif of life’s pilgrimage on the way to the Promised Land. Who is not familiar with John Bunyan’s book A Pilgrim’s Progress? Also newly written novels such as Pilgrimage to Nidaros [Pilgrimage to Nidaros] written for young people by Knut Ingar Hansen (1997) and the children’s book Tre vandrere [Three Wanderers] by Bente Lohne (1997) make use of these kinds of motif.

The name of certain places reflects the pilgrim traffic (Anmarksrud og Vehusheia, 1997, p. 42). Moreover we find definite tracks left by the pilgrims in old roads, bridges and places where they have stayed overnight (see Luthen 1992). The opening of the pilgrim routes in 1997 has its basis in this knowledge.

The pilgrim’s deep roots in our culture again make the picture easier to use. The church should utilise this. In this connection it is worth remembering the classic statement that if a ritual is to be successful, it must be known. A ritual that is not socially evident and acceptable, does not work (Borchrevink, 1995, pp. 75-94). Others discovered the value of the pilgrimage tradition long ago: We have observed the pilgrim motive used in advertisements for both flatbread and smoked salmon! The commercial use should not hinder the church in carrying on its own heritage.

It is a fundamental idea to use the pilgrim as a symbol for living and being a Christian in the world. It is a symbol that tells of continuity, meaning and belonging to life. It also contains elements of courage and positive curiosity. As a metaphor the pilgrim is flexible and can have a personal meaning. It is not difficult to see that this symbol can be used today (for good examples, see Davies, 1997, p. 168-213).
The way

We have already seen that the way or the path is an important element of the classic pilgrim pattern. *St. James’ Book* describes the pilgrim’s way, that it is the narrow way that gives people life, because its hardships and privation cleanse the soul (Gad, 1991, p. 51). The way is very important as a universal and religious metaphor, both in Christianity and other religions - eastern and western. In the experiential world of the Middle Ages the way passed from safe homely surroundings, out into the unknown and dangerous; home pastures to the wilderness. Anything could go wrong in the unknown, but great gains were also possible (Keller, 1996, p. 35ff).

There are many biblical references to choose from in understanding the ‘way’ as a metaphor, both in the Old and New Testament. The story of Abraham is particularly important (Gen. 12, 1ff), about the exodus from Egypt (Ex. 2ff), about the celebrations in the Temple (Psalms 120-134 refer to the festival processions), the gospel according to John and the theology of the letter to the Hebrews (Davies, 1987, p. 206ff; Grün, 1983, p. 37ff). Jesus says of himself that *I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but by me* (John 14, 6). The first description of Christians was that they belonged to *the Way* (Acts 9, 2). Traditionally the three wise men have been considered the first Christian pilgrims, when they left for their own country by *another way* (Mt. 2, 12). The way motif is important for the development of procession liturgies during the Middle Ages. Nils Holger Petersen says that the processions showed the life of the community as a pilgrimage in a choreographic way. Wandering and stopping at special places became a symbolic link between day-to-day life and biblical events or the heavenly world. The lives of the participants were connected to the original event, so that time and space came together. Petersen refers in his report to anthropologist Clifford Geerts’ understanding of the meaning of rituals: *In a ritual, the world as lived and the world as imagined, merge through the help of the symbols, and turn out to be the same world* (Petersen, 1995, and an unpublished article).
The ‘way’ motif is evident in the Advent season of the Church of Norway’s calendar (the way to Bethlehem and to heaven) and in the Lent season (Jesus’ way of passion – via Dolorosa - to Golgotha). We would also suggest the use of an underlying metaphor of the way of life in the church’s ‘milestones’ or ‘rites of passage’ (baptism/ the life of baptism as Via sacra, confirmation, marriage and funerals, see Slungård’s article), and in the difference between work and free time, weekday and holiday (pauses are needed on the way).

The ‘way’ metaphor is useful because everyone knows what a way is, and can easily visualise the word-pictures for themselves. The metaphor holds a series of sub-elements which adds to the contents of the pictures: corners, crossings, up-hills and down-hills, bad roads and good roads, sweat and struggle along the road, pleasant experiences, happy times on the roadside, walk, wander, run, stumble, fall, hurt oneself, become tired, not there yet, give up, dangers along the way, fall, bandits, wild animals, fellow wanderers, milestones, Fæginsbrekke (this is an expression from Sverre’s Saga describing the place where one can see the goal of the pilgrimage, Nidaros and the Christ church. Similar viewpoints are known from several old sacred places, see Davies, 1988, p. 55). The metaphor is also valid because we can walk a short road and connect the pictures and the practical experience together. There are a number of opportunities for flexible and creative usage.

Pilgrim attributes
The most known pilgrim attributes are the staff, knapsack and cloak. We often find pictures with these details in art from the Middle Ages. In addition we find the hat, water bottle and other details in many illustrations. In the Middle Ages the attributes were given more importance than the practical use (Davies, 1987, p. 42ff).

St James’ Book gives examples on how the attributes were interpreted: the knapsack should be small, because pilgrims took little with them. It was made of fur from a dead animal, because pilgrims had to suppress the needs of the flesh with hunger and thirst, frost and
nakedness, adversity and hardship. It had no lock and was always open, so that the pilgrim was prepared to give and to receive. The cloak was the usual symbol of the pilgrim showing consideration and love. The story of St. Martin of Tours (d. 11.11.397) is well known he cut his cloak into two pieces and gave the one half to a freezing beggar (Ursin, 1975, p. 179). St. James does not mention the cloak especially, but stresses that the pilgrim had to show consideration. It was a great sin if one pilgrim was hungry when another was satisfied. The pilgrims were responsible for each other. The staff was the support for a long and difficult way. It was their protection against wolves and dogs, and it reminded the pilgrim that he should defend himself against sin by confessions (Gad, 1991, p. 51-52).

It was usual that the pilgrim was prayed for and received a blessing in the local church before leaving. The staff and knapsack were also blessed (Davies, 1987, p. 44-45). There is a papal decree concerning the appearance of the staff. We can assume that the staff functioned as a sort of identity card (Luthen, 1992, p. 47ff). In church art sometimes the Christian’s life cycle is symbolised by a belt, staff or a pair of sandals, and the church is depicted as a woman with a staff (Ursin, 1975, pp. 120, 152).

The pilgrim attributes are visual depictions of Biblical images. God’s stick and staff are a comfort and a picture of God’s care (Psalm 24). Jesus sent out the disciples with a staff in hand (Mark 6, 8). Jesus admonishes us to share our cloak with whoever needs it (Mt. 5, 40), etc.

In the section below, ‘Pilgrimages and pilgrim services for children’, examples are given of the re-use of these pilgrim attributes. See Anmarkrud and Vehusheia (1997) for additional examples. The attributes are particularly appropriate because they provide us with an opportunity of imitating pilgrims. One can, in a way, ‘wrap’ oneself in the pilgrims’ tradition. At the same time the symbolism is rich and flexible.
Stone and twig heaps

It is believed that the penitential pilgrims of the Middle Ages could carry a stone with them to remind themselves of their guilt (Luthen, 1992, p. 18). It is also thought that they threw down the stone on special stone heaps to wish for something or to mark the way (Luthen, 1992, p. 37, see also Anmarkrud and Vehusheia, 1997, p. 42). In any case there are many old stone cairns and heaps of stone to be found along the pilgrim routes, both in Norway and in other countries. Arne Bakken knows of such a tradition in the Faeroe Islands at *Kyriebrekka*, the place where you could see the church. *Kyrie* (prayer for God’s mercy) was sung in this place and shoes were changed before they entered the church. Many of these places also had a mound of stones (information from an oral source). We do not know, however, for certain why pilgrims left stones along the way, other than that some of the cairns might have been road markers (Smedstad, 1996, p. 26).

With relationship to the stone traditions, it is in my opinion interesting to make a comparison with Islamic pilgrimages. As is known the pilgrimage to Mecca is one of the 5 pillars of Islam, and must be made by all who can (*can do the way, Koran* 3: 97). There is a series of traditions connected to Mecca that have parallels in Christian traditions. On arrival at Mecca the pilgrims walk around Ka’aba 7 times, they kiss the black stone, pray, drink holy water, etc. (Glassé, 1991, pp. 313-316). One of the pilgrim rituals which is still practised when visiting Mecca, is an obligatory stone throwing ritual at Mina on the day of offering (3\textsuperscript{rd} day). The pilgrims throw 7 stones at a pillar that represents temptations from Satan. Additional stoning follows in the course of the final days in Mecca (Glassé, 1991, pp. 115 and 116). It would have been strange if such rituals were not also practised by Christian pilgrims in the Middle Ages, as it is known that the Christian and the Muslim traditions are related to one another.

Biblical pictures can be linked to the stones. Jesus takes away the sin of the world (John 1, 29) and Peter encourages us to cast all our anxieties on him (1 Pet 5, 7). Galations 6, 2 is also relevant - bear
one another’s burdens. *The pilgrim’s handbook* (1997) gives an example of the newly constructed liturgy linked to a stone cairn or heap (p. 92ff).

We assume there to have been piles of branches left along the route, the place where the travellers placed a twig as a symbol for hope. There are traces of one of these to be found at Gardermoen in Hedmark. The sources of research are more uncertain when it comes to piles of twigs.

On the other hand we do know a great deal about how green twigs were used as religious symbols in the Middle Ages. From Nordic mythology we know of the tree of the world, Yggdrasil, an evergreen ash that reached up to heaven. This symbol was changed to a Christian symbol in the Middle Ages. We find Yggdrasil presented in the portal of stave churches, as a vine tree, Christ (John 15, 1-8). From the Bible we know of the tree of life as a victory symbol and symbol of life (Gen. 2, 9; Rev. 22, 2). In art we often see the cross has leaves and branches (Ursin, 1975, pp. 99, 191 and 192). We can imagine that the Christmas tree is a continuation of the same symbolic content. It is also the tree of life, including the evergreen as a symbol for hope. In the same way the evergreen holly is a Christmas symbol (Ursin, 1975, p. 207ff). In the Bible the olive leaf is a sign of hope (Gen. 8, 11), and the dove with the olive branch in its beak is a symbol of peace in art (Ursin, 1975, pp. 20, 135). Palm branches are a sign of victory (Rev. 7, 9) and are used in art (Ursin, 1975, pp. 120, 175, 238). A palm branch was in addition a pilgrim’s symbol for those who had been to the Holy Land.

The use of twigs and stone in our services of worship is more an example of innovation inspired by the use of symbols from the Middle Ages, than a direct re-use (see below). The symbolism we have used is simple and easily accessible; it is connected with the Kyrie and the Gloria sections in the Mass liturgy. The stone symbolises something sad, heavy, something we regret, something we have done wrong. Everybody can feel for themselves the hardness and heaviness of a stone and find their own interpretation. The branch or twig is a symbol
for something that we are happy about, look forward to, hope for, for mercy and forgiveness. The green is alive and has to be looked after if it is not to die.

I myself have good experience in extending the symbolism. The stone can be round (has been lying long and become scoured), it can be new and angular, little or big, have different colours, be a crystal formed by the laws implied in the nature of stone (inheritance), or contain prints from the past (fossils can symbolise earlier experiences, environments). The stone that was moved from Jesus’ grave on Easter morning is an exciting link with Jesus’ act of redemption. The twig and all that is green is dependant on light from heaven and becomes alive through the miracle of photosynthesis. Earth (which together with organic material also consists of finely ground stone!) and water nourishes the miracle – God’s mercy in our lives.

The goal
The pilgrimage goal can always be a symbol of life’s goal, heaven. Or for something for which one has been longing, such as ‘a unique person to talk to’ (Giuriati, 1996, p. 57-58). The goal is a part of the classic pilgrim pattern. From the old days pilgrims have approached the goal with reverence. Traditionally they walked three times around Nidaros Cathedral (and other pilgrim’s goals) on arrival (Luthen, 1992, p. 132). It was like children waiting a little while before opening an exciting present! Often they kissed the ground or the building (see the earlier section on Muslim pilgrimage traditions).

In this section we will briefly point out two important inspirational sources which can be re-instated: the tradition of the saints and the architecture of the pilgrimage churches.

Many of the pilgrimage goals have their history in connection to a saint, such as Nidaros Cathedral. The tradition of saints can again be a source of inspiration for us. In their lives we can find models of vital importance for personal and religious growth. Models are important to create identity and a feeling of life’s continuity. The model function can inspire the choice of values in life. To learn to retrieve this poten-
tial is a challenge. (For more about saints in the Lutheran context, see Lånke's article).

Every ‘long-naved church’ has its pilgrimage way and goal reflected in the very architecture consisting of a long aisle and sanctuary. The churches and cathedrals of the Middle Ages reflect in their architecture, art and music a totality that people could relate to in their life situation (Schumacher, 1989). Many of the pilgrim churches of the Middle Ages, including Nidaros Cathedral, contain an architectural pilgrimage way. The pilgrims are led into the church’s northwest entrance, along the north side of the nave, around the high altar where the shrine or the grave of the saint was placed, further on down the south side of the church and out the southwest door. In the Middle Ages the chancel was reserved for the priests, but the pilgrimage way gave the pilgrims the possibility of getting close to the holy place (see e.g. the pilgrim’s church in Santiago de Compostela, described by Davies, 1987, p. 37). Bakken uses much of this in his book about Nidaros Cathedral (Bakken, 1997a). We also know about the symbolism of the dangerous and evil forces in the north and the good forces in the south. This is usable and concrete symbolic language.

In our pilgrim service examples we have actively used the procession around the pilgrimage-goal, at the arrival, the symbol reflecting the pilgrim’s way in the cathedral/church and the symbolism of the church’s south and north side.

The way home
In the Middle Ages it was emphasised that when one had returned home, one should continue to live in the same manner as earlier, as a pilgrim. The way home is to continue the pilgrimage right to the everlasting goal. Here is a challenge when pilgrim traditions are to be reinstated. In a divided and pluralistic time, it is easy to keep a "happening" separate from the rest of life. This can also happen with the pilgrim experience. It is important to counteract this (see Henriksen, 1995). The meeting both with oneself and God through the pilgrimage and at the holy place, can bring something new for the person who is
open to receive it. It has been said about pilgrims: *They never return to their country and their home parish without losing a prejudice and gaining a new idea* (Anmarksrud and Vehusheia, 1996, p. 28).

Pilgrim researchers claim that this often happens and this is gratifying. Giuriati says: *After his return home the pilgrim sees his daily routines in a new light. They now have a new meaning for him personally and inspire him to a more socially conscious life, reconciliation and solidarity with other people* (Giuriati, 1996, p. 57).

**Other important symbols**

There are other symbols to be found in connection with pilgrim traditions that I have not used to any great extent in the examples given in this presentation. In short the most important ones are as follows: holy water and holy springs which are both important subjects. Water as a symbol is used in many different ways in biblical connections. Jesus is the focus as the living water, the baptism in water gives life and fellowship, and Jesus washes the disciples’ feet. This has been very important for pilgrimage tradition; it is enough to mention the many natural springs along the old routes in connection with St. Olav or the other saints (Luthen, 1992). Water gives life and is necessary for the pilgrim. Many of the springs are said to have healing power. In this respect older traditions have been continued into Christianity (see Anmarkrud and Vehusheia, 1997, p. 39ff; Bakken, 1997a, pp. 93 and 150).

Crosses are found along roads in Norway, both inland and along the coast, and also along the pilgrim routes all over Europe. They are either carved into the rock or built up of stones. These places have been places for devotion, and the crosses could in themselves be items for worship (Riksantikvaren, 1996, p. 27ff). A cross marked on clothes was said to be a typical pilgrim attribute in the Middle Ages (Davies, 1987, p. 42ff). At the holy places there could also be a kissing cross, a place where the pilgrim kissed the cross thus acknowledging the holy place and expressing respect (Davies, 1987, pp. 55
and 56; Bakken, 1997, p. 30). The pilgrimage has from long ago been understood as a crossroad (Mt. 10, 38; see Davies, 1987, p. 187).

Many modern pilgrim arrangements have made use of the customs of pilgrim’s marks and pilgrim’s passports (Anmarkrud and Vehusheia, 1997, pp. 21, 22 and 33). It was common practice in the Middle Ages that one was given a passport or a letter from the priest at home to be able to identify oneself. Also one took home again a mark or proof that one had been to the holy place. The mark could have been a shell (Santiago de Compostela), a palm branch (The Holy Land) or a symbol cast in metal (many places) (Davies, 1987, p. 75; Luthen, 1992, p. 49ff). The shell, moreover, should be given special attention, as it functioned as a drinking cup in many places, and therefore is also tied to the water metaphor.

Pilgrimages and pilgrim services for children

Pilgrim programs with or without ‘pilgrimage routes’ or ancient holy places

In this chapter I will present two pilgrimages with services of worship for school children, carried out at two different schools in Trondheim, Ila and Nyborg schools. The events have given us valuable experience in connection with the restoration of the use of pilgrim symbolism under different circumstances. The ideas are developed in co-operation with Arne Bakken.

The two arrangements represented have similar methods but a different framework. Common to both are that all the children of primary school level took part. In both cases the different pilgrim symbols were used in different ways, as teaching aids, theatrical props and liturgical elements. Also the contents and planning of the worship services were almost identical. At the same time the framework of the work, the use of time and preparation were very different. Nyborg School used a whole day on the arrangement and much time on preparation. Ila School’s arrangement was fairly short, 75 minutes in total,
and there were few resources used for preparation. Nyborg’s arrange-
ment was strongly linked to historical places; we walked along the old
pilgrim’s way to Nidaros Cathedral and celebrated the worship service
there, inside the best-known pilgrim’s goal in Northern Europe in the
Middle Ages. Ila’s arrangement used the local church, and could
therefore have been done anywhere.

I have described the two arrangements as examples of how pil-
grim traditions can be reinstated. I have also reported briefly how I
have been able to use the same idea in other instances.

Afterwards I tried to correlate what the children from both
schools remembered nine months after the arrangements had taken
place. Approximately 300 children were involved in the research. The
results are given only in summary form. The experience is that the
pilgrim elements can be reinstated and give meaning, even if the
arrangement is not so extensive or connected to historical pilgrim
places. The research also confirmed the importance of teaching using
all our senses.

**Co-operation between parents, church and school**

The two arrangements are examples of differing types of collaboration
projects with schools. Both took place in the spring of 1997, in co-
ordination with the directions found in the Norwegian school curricu-
lum of 1987. Since then a new school curriculum has been decided.
The reform programme of 1997 strengthens the opportunity for
schools to cooperate on a range of subjects and on project work, and
authorises and emphasises the importance of cooperation between
school and parents and between school and institutions in the
neighbourhood, including the local congregation.

The pilgrim’s day at Nyborg School was initiated as an idea
from the teachers as a part of the celebration of Trondheim’s 1000th
year Jubilee. The day was carried out as a school/parent cooperation,
including many different subjects. I was contacted in my role as
mother/class representative having special qualifications to help the
school find a method to fulfil a pilgrimage. The school was not situ-
ated in my parish. Other parents also became involved in the plans (musicians, cake baking....), and all parents were welcome to take part with their children. On my initiative, the pilgrim minister at that time, Arne Bakken, was also invited.

The Pilgrim church service at Ila School took place as part of a planned school/church cooperation between the school and Iløn parish. In this case the school is placed within my parish and I have a responsibility on behalf of the church. The worship service and the short pilgrimage were the ordinary summer celebration that year.

**Pilgrim program for Nyborg Primary School May 1997**

**Idea and planning**
The plan and framework for the day were discussed at meetings between all the teachers, myself, and later also with the pilgrim minister, Bakken. The contents and details were decided on. The school provided accessible reference literature for the teachers.

The teachers introduced pilgrimage traditions adjusted to the appropriate interest for each class level. The hymns to be sung during the worship service were introduced and practised and the day was well prepared. Parents received information by letter about the program and were invited to take part. Most of the pupils were assembled to learn about pilgrim traditions, and the pilgrim minister and I took part in this. The children received information about the equipment used by the pilgrims in the Middle Ages: cloak, staff and knapsack and the symbolism connected to them (Replicas of these from the Middle Ages were shown), and also the traditions of heaps of twigs and stone cairns.

We tried to specify the information about traditions and to place it in relation to the children’s every day experiences. The cloak represented care for others. During the pilgrimage, therefore, the older children should help the younger children. The knapsack should always be without a fastener so that the pilgrim could always receive and give. Therefore the older children were to have bags with them, filled with the buns for themselves and the younger children they had responsibility for. Parents of the older children baked buns. The pupils also made a staff to carry with them and to help
steady them on the way. Those who wanted could dress up like pilgrims from the Middle Ages, but we did not make too much of this. On the contrary we stressed that we can be pilgrims in our time too, without dressing up as if we belonged to the past. Most of the children decided not to dress up. All of them were asked to find and bring with them a green twig and a little stone on the way. The symbolism was explained, and the pupils were asked to think about what the “stone” and the “twig” meant to them.

Framework
The program took a whole school day but with a delayed start (12 noon) so that most of the parents could take part. Pupils and parents met in the playground for a short information session. The pilgrimage followed the old pilgrim’s way, which passes the school, to Nidaros Cathedral’s west front. The 6-year olds came by cars the first part of the walk. There was a stop at Utsikten (the first view of the Cathedral: Fæginsbrekke from the Middle Ages is found in this area) with hymns, information about the city and the view towards the Cathedral. At Ilen Church they rested and heard music from the Middle Ages played on instruments also from the Middle Ages. They listened to a new short historical talk about the pilgrims, and there was an explanation about the food they had carried with them, about sharing and about fair division of food in the world. After that they ate the food outside the church. When this was finished the children danced a ring dance from the Middle Ages on the grass outside. The journey continued to Olav’s wellspring by the side of the river near Nidaros Cathedral, where the children had a short informative talk about the importance of the spring. When they arrived at the west front of the Cathedral they were met and welcomed by the pilgrim minister. The whole procession walked around the Cathedral according to the tradition, before entering the northern door. I wore vestments during the whole pilgrimage.

The Worship Service
The pilgrimage continued, led by the ministers, as a procession into the Cathedral. Everyone walked the pilgrim’s way along the north aisle (the dark side), in the west, through the base of the tower and up the middle aisle in the chancel. Everybody solemnly put their stone in a basket placed
just in front of the steps up to the high altar, and continued around the high
altar where Olav’s shrine once stood (octagon ambulatory), before all were
seated in front of the high altar in the east. During the whole procession the
organist played. The liturgy was built up with the stone and the twig as the
central elements, along with other pilgrim symbols. The two ministers
alternated the leadership of the service. The service had no sermon as such,
in the traditional sense. The main factor in the liturgy was that everyone
took part and had the opportunity of giving their innermost thoughts to an
outer visible picture.

Programme for the worship service (45 minutes)
• Short introduction about pilgrims then and now.
• Words about the symbolism of the stones, refering to the large basket
  with stones: different colour, form, size - all were put down near the
  altar - in the way that pilgrims have always carried their burdens to the
  holy place.
• All sing Kyrie (from holy communion liturgy, celebration melody,
  Service book, p. 28). Kyrie is the stone’s song.
• Words about forgiveness and God who is always near.
• Hymn: Herre Gud ditt dyre navn og ære (NoS 268) [Lord God your
  precious name and honour].
• Words about the symbolism of the bag, cloak and staff as an expression
  for life’s philosophy and of the green twig for life’s hope.
• All come forward with their twigs and place them on top of the stones.
• Words about the green twigs, which now cover the stones: Hope and
  longing, happiness, faith, future - also these are put down at the altar of
  the Cathedral.
• Hymn: Deg være ære (1st verse and choir) (NoS 187) [Thine is the
  glory].
• Lighting of the candles and prayer for what burdens us and for what
  uplifts us, for the family, the children in the world, for the city we live
  in, the nature, the future. The pupils read the prayer texts and light the
  candles.
• The Lord’s Prayer is read.
• The benediction by the minister.
• Procession out, singing the hymn: *La oss vandre i lyset* (NoS 871) [*Let us walk in the light*].

• The children leave the Cathedral while they are singing and processing out along the south side (the sunny side) and exit the south door in the west front.

**Pilgrimage and worship service for Ila Primary School - June 1997**

**Idea and preparation**

The idea and the plan for the worship service were agreed upon between the minister and the teachers, using the normal cooperation routines. The hymns and Kyrie were practised by all classes, and the teachers reminded the children to bring a stone and a green twig. The minister worked for 20 minutes in each class giving information about pilgrim traditions and the symbolism of the staff, cloak and knapsack (showing these things in a modern example), and about the two symbols, stone and green twig. The City of Trondheim’s jubilee was to use the pilgrim with the classic attributes as symbols for December, and everyone in the city received information about this. We borrowed a flag with pilgrim emblem on it.

According to the usual school/church cooperation agreement, the 5th class were responsible for being the hosts for the worship service. This class received more information and prepared the prayers and the lighting of candles. They also went to the church and practised details for the liturgy. They were to walk first in the short pilgrimage from the school to the church and lead the other children through the service, they should carry the flag with the pilgrim emblem, a staff, a knapsack and a cloak at the front of the procession. According to the same school/church agreement, the 1st class contributed to the service by singing a song. All this was integrated into the planning.

**Framework**

Preparation for the procession, the walk and the worship service lasted about 75 minutes altogether. The children walked from the school to the church, round the church and entered the main door. The minister in vestments and the 5th class with the pilgrim symbols led the procession.
The worship service

The main structure was the same as the service for Nyborg School, but the plan was shortened as most of the children were to leave their twig as they processed out of the church. The organ played both for the processing in and the recessional.

Programme for the worship service (40 minutes)

- All enter the main door and walk along the north side of the nave, up to the altar where the stones were placed, round the altar and to the front pews. All sit down.
- Welcome speech and words about the pilgrim, in connection with the flag, staff, cloak and knapsack.
- Talk about the stones and the symbolism of the north side of the church.
- All sing Kyrie.
- Words about forgiveness and God who always listens.
- Hymn: *Herre Gud ditt dyre navn og ære* (NoS 268) [*Lord God your precious name and honour*].
- Words about joy in life.
- 1st class sing their songs.
- 1st class put their green twigs over the stones.
- Words about the twigs, hope and joy.
- Hymn: *Deg være ære* (1st verse and choir) [*Thine is the glory*].
- Lighting of candles and prayers written and presented by the 5th class.
- The Lord’s Prayer – in unison, led by the minister together with the 5th class.
- The Benediction by the minister.
- Hymn: *La oss vandre i lyset* (Nos 871) [*Let us walk in the light*].
- Words about the symbolism of leaving the church on the south side.
- All take their twigs and put them down on the stones, and continue out of the church on the south side of the nave. The 5th class walk out first and carry the pilgrim symbols with them. They line up in the porch and wish the other children a happy summer as they walk past on their way out of the church.
- The pupils walk together back to the school.
Other arrangements based on the same idea

Several of the ideas for repetition which are shown above have been tried in many pilgrim arrangements. I have been especially interested in the symbolism connected with the branch and the stone. They seem to help explain and illustrate Kyrie and Gloria, sin and forgiveness, depression and hope. We need material for new metaphors to be able to teach this. I have tried out the symbolism in many ways and in relation to different groups, confirmation candidates, elderly people, mission groups, clergy, etc. I have used them as a part of the liturgy where all have carried with them both branch and stone, and during the service when I have shown the branch and the stone and linked thoughts to them. Symbolism is easily combined with Evening Prayer. It is also a good illustration for practising special hymns with the confirmation classes (NoS 414, 579, etc).

Can meaning be measured?

Were the arrangements at Nyborg and Ila Schools meaningful for those who took part? Did it create new understanding in relation to life, belief, God? It is not easy to measure the meaning of life and belief. However, signals have been intercepted on the way and afterwards.

The atmosphere around the arrangements was good at both schools. It was fairly quiet during both of the worship services, no noticeable nonsense or joking with the stone or the branches. Several teachers reported that finding the stone and branches became very personal for some of the pupils. Many teachers, parents and children have expressed their feelings of a good experience.

Naturally, the response from Nyborg School was more varied than that from Ila School. The principal at Nyborg says about the pilgrim’s day: At the end of the school year we have taken time to think about the significance of the activities connected to the 1000th year celebrations. One of them was the pilgrimage from Nyborg to Nidaros Cathedral. This made a deep impression on both children and adults.
(Thank you note, dated 03.07.97). From the short essays the children have written shortly after the pilgrim’s day at Nyborg, we can observe that the pupils noticed different things. The point about the older children looking after the smaller ones has been remembered: *It was really good that we walked together with the smaller children for whom we were responsible, because the pilgrims also looked after the younger ones and warmed them if they were cold or something* (Line Marie, 4th class). Also the point of sharing the buns: *and so we had two buns with us which we were to eat but we had to be sure that there was no one who didn’t have any food* (Steffen, 3rd class). It looked as if the children had been surprised and had in fact enjoyed themselves: *It was great fun to join the pilgrimage. Bjørn Sverre had a good time and so did I. It was a bit of a long way to walk but I did not mind. But why couldn’t we walk three times around the church? But I feel sorry for the pilgrims from long ago. Just imagine, they travelled all the way from Spain. But teacher, is there really a monk who haunts Nidaros Cathedral?* (Morten, 4th class – quote from the school’s newsletter, *Nyborgnytt*, No 2, 1997).

At Ila School, straight after the service I was able to take a short summing up session with pupils from the 5th class who were the hosts. The discussion became meaningful and unusually open. Among other things we talked about the problems of suicide: Those who carry such heavy stones that they cannot see any hope. I had a new project with the same class half a year later in the connection that they were to be the hosts for the Christmas service. A couple of new pupils had joined the class in that time and they needed to be informed about what the others had done earlier. It was obvious that the class remembered everything with pleasure and enthusiasm and they eagerly recounted many details.

My questionnaire nine months later given to all 300 pupils gave clear results. The arrangements had made an impression and were still remembered. Naturally, Nyborg pupils remembered more than the others, there the programme had been most comprehensive. However also at Ila, where the arrangement had the character of a normal
school service, 60 % remembered the day with pleasure such a long
time afterwards. Otherwise, as expected the questionnaire showed that
the host class at Ila remembered more than the other pupils.

Nearly 100 % of pupils from both schools could pick out pilgrim
attributes, the staff, rucksack and cloak amongst the 10 drawings of
suggested attributes. This result can be explained by the focus on pil-
grim traditions in other connections associated with Trondheim’s
1000th year celebrations. Branches and stones were also well remem-
bered, despite the fact that we can be sure that the pupils have not met
these symbols in other connections (Nyborg 70 %, Ila 65 %). Sur-
prisingly many remembered what the stone and the branch symbol-
ised, but here the figures are clearly higher for Nyborg than for Ila.
The impressions, which the children remembered and integrated into
their lives, were fascinating. I include a handful of replies: I remember
best the branch and the stone. Otherwise I do not remember much
(girl, Ila, 10 years old). We used the branch to get something light and
good out of us. We used the stone to get rid of sad and heavy feelings
(boy, Nyborg, 9 years old). They were a symbol of sorrow and happi-
ness (girl, Nyborg, 10 years old). The stone was a reminder of all the
bad memories. It was to be put in a pile and so we put the branch on
top. The branch was all the good memories (boy, Ila, 12 years old).
On the walk we stopped. The children for whom we were responsible
got some juice and buns. It was really good and we danced around the
church four times. It was fun to go together with the older ones. In
church we put down a stone and a branch and I had a stone with glit-
ter in it (girl, Nyborg, 9 years old). The compositions are illustrated
with drawings of Ila Church where the children shared their buns.

Many fine drawings were made which showed understanding,
some of them to a surprising degree. The drawings show different
situations from the arrangements. Many had drawn the stone cairn
with branches on top; many had drawn pilgrims and churches or pil-
grim attributes, or scenes from the walks. There was great variety.

With reference to the different reports and responses there is rea-
son to believe that the pilgrim arrangements for both Ila and Nyborg
schools have caught the attention of the pupils and given a good framework for learning and for personal processes. Both oral and written reports, and not least some of the drawings, were most impressive. It is likely that some pupils added new dimensions to their understanding of life.

At the same time it is clear that the amount of time and preparation invested by Nyborg, has given good results. Nyborg pupils have retained more. In the same way there was a difference between the host class and the other classes at Ila school.

It was surprising how positive the children were to the worship service. This was true of both schools. School services are known as not being the easiest, and especially when one has to organise a service, which covers the range from 6 to 13 years. It is easy to see that the positive reports were because the worship services were well prepared. The hymns and the liturgy were fairly well known; the pupils had prepared their own thoughts around the stone and the branch and had walked to the church. What is just as important is that all the pupils actively took part in many ways in the services. The arrangement used the whole register of senses: eyes and ears, body and thought are being used. Pilgrim traditions show that they are suitable for successful communication with small and older children. There is good reason to further investigate the potential in these traditions, both in relation to the school’s teaching, worship services and other occasions.

Summary and conclusion:

**New shoots from old roots**
The church’s preaching is challenged by modern life experience. In a time where there is much division and disintegration, the church needs to create integrated processes and give help to find wholeness and meaning.

I have pointed out changes in our culture that have connection with the new media situation, domination by television, etc. Our mod-
ern written culture is mixed with a strong element of oral culture. This creates a situation that has many similarities to the Middle Ages: awareness of differences and non-contemporariness are subdued, objective information loses ground to the good story presented with personal bias, things are personalised and ethics and rituals become important. Cultural changes give the life and thought from the Middle Ages new meaning as a source for inspiration and revival. In my opinion we find in these changes an important explanation of the growth of the new pilgrim interest.

The new input of oral culture creates an exciting teaching situation. We are now to a greater degree than before trained to receive information through pictures. This makes it natural to use symbols, symbolic events and storytelling in teaching and in liturgical work. Input from educational psychology and psychology of religion underline the importance of using pictures and symbols in teaching. The more senses are used the better it is. The aim is to create an active, personal process, which can give continuity and meaning to the participants, both intellectually and emotionally. Pictorial language is vital when teaching about the sacred. We have tried to show how the Middle Ages used symbols and symbolic events connected to pilgrim traditions. We have presented some important symbols that we think are suitable for re-introduction in our time, and shown how many of them have been in fact continuously used throughout the history of Christianity. These symbols are easily linked to practical experiences; they have great flexibility and rich associations both for general practice and for biblical material.

Pilgrimages and pilgrim services provide a good opportunity to integrate movement, senses, feelings, different symbols and events, friendship with fellow pilgrims and interaction generally, in such a way that it can be an opening for new learning, new insight and new wholeness.

We have suggested that perhaps it is not so important to separate the church’s, theatre’s and the school’s use of the pilgrim symbols. However the church must be conscious of its broad aim: to help indi-
viduals to integrate faith in God and experience of faith in his/her perception of wholeness.

In two specific pilgrim projects for pupils we have shown how pilgrim symbols from the Middle Ages can be an inspiration and can be re-used. Immediate reactions and results of my findings among pupils about nine months later seem to confirm that the projects caught the pupils’ interest. They learnt much that they remembered long afterwards, they had a good experience and many had integrated what they had learnt into their own understanding of life. The experiences underline the importance of emphasising participation and teaching through all the senses. It is a good illustration of the usefulness of pilgrim symbols and confirms that the pilgrim symbols can be meaningful in our time. There is reason to be happy about new shoots from the old root.

For my own part reflection and experience associated with pilgrim traditions have given me important impulses for further work. First and foremost it has given me an awareness of the necessity of continuing work with religious imagery. Peter Abelard’s understanding that imagery is able to open up associations, to elucidate thoughts and stimulate imagination, and to pass on mysteries and hidden secrets that cannot be taught, is of greatest inspiration.
PILGRIMAGE – A JOURNEY TOWARDS THE HOLY

Pilgrimages of today

A renewed interest in pilgrimages
Pilgrims are on the move again; not only in the places where we have become accustomed to see and hear of them, but along new paths, and those old long-unused paths which are being rediscovered. This is happening all over Europe. The churches in Eastern Europe are experiencing a stream of pilgrims to holy places, now that the pressure from communism is gone and it is again legal to walk these paths. The Roman Catholic Church is sending out a large publication about *The Pilgrimages in the Great Jubilee* in connection with the celebration of the year 2000. In protestant churches there is an explosive interest in these old pilgrim routes, and as part of the celebration of 2000 years after the birth of Christ, a large network has developed with branches all over Europe; in Protestant, Orthodox and Catholic churches. One publication after another comes out with reflections about what is happening.

Are we experiencing a re-catholicisation of protestant churches or is a New Age movement developing inside the churches? Could it be nostalgia for old traditions on the threshold of a new millennium or a sanctification of nature and environment? Are we to expect a romanticising of religious expression that can easily be misused and commercialised in many ways?

Perhaps it is all of these and much more that comes bursting forth. No matter what reason people have of finding this way to the church, this form of fellowship with others and this expression of their
faith, it has to be taken seriously by the church. It is an exceptional opportunity to start a dialogue with many of those who left the church where they felt themselves to be strangers.

It is without doubt a longing for the holy that drives people to seek the church in this manner; a longing for what makes life complete; a longing for God. Therefore a pilgrimage is a form of worship, a confession, an expression of a spirituality that has belonged to the church from its very beginning. A tradition inherited from God's chosen people, Israel, which is described by the most beautiful words in the Bible's Book of Psalms. Psalm 84 is the pilgrim psalm which most clearly expresses this longing and the joy of being able to leave for a journey towards God's sanctuary: *As they go through the valley of Baca they make it a place of springs; the early rain also covers it with pools. They go from strength to strength; the God of gods will be seen in Zion* (v. 6-7).

Some of the protestant churches are sceptical about pilgrimages, and the question is, is this only because of the reform fathers' prohibition against salvation through penance, of which pilgrimages can be a part? It is difficult to rid ourselves of old suspicions about what one has been used to regard as wrong and understood as fanaticism. There is also a large amount of protestant insecurity connected to the pilgrim's goal itself which in many cases is a saint's grave or a reliquary, something which it may be feared could develop into focusing on the saints or miracles.

However, within the protestant tradition many have found value in pilgrimages, and feel that these are an important religious tool that makes it possible for us to use more of our senses and perceptions in worship. Our Norwegian Lutheran worship and Christian life lacks forms of expression that include the whole person with all his/her senses. Pilgrimages can give us other experiences in relation to God, fellow humans and ourselves. At the same time, many experience a longing for inclusion into the communion of saints, the holy men and women who have walked before us, who have brought the gospel of the Lord to us. They were willing to sacrifice their lives and health for
the call from God. These were faithful believers who looked upon themselves as strangers and pilgrims in the world, but had the heavenly goal in sight.

*The way to the holy places*
It is an enormous challenge for all churches to prepare the conditions for pilgrimages, so that the many people who wish to use this tradition may be assisted. It is important that each church does this in a way that is compatible with the culture and tradition that is appropriate for the area and the local church. At the same time one must be aware of an ecumenical heritage. People of all faiths must feel welcome to meet the holy where the old pilgrimage routes and goals are situated.

The roads to parish churches around Europe have made a network that connects parts of the world together. Along these European "veins" lie many small holy places where people have for many generations prayed and worshipped. This network makes the church a physical entity and underlines the message that Christ is everything to all and our eternal goal. Accordingly we must arrangement it so that this network of roads and holy places in our time can also bear witness to the unity of the Church across all boundaries. These paths take people of different beliefs and understanding to the holy. Along these roads there are people walking who are searching for fellowship with God and their fellow travellers.

**The pilgrimage is a service of worship**
In an article about the year 2000 as a special pilgrimage year, *The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee* underlines *The Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People* The Roman Catholic church's view on pilgrimages as worship:

*Lived as a celebration of one's faith, for the Christian, a pilgrimage is a manifestation of worship to be accomplished faithfully according to tradition, with an intense religious sentiment and as a fulfilment of his paschal existence.*
The very dynamics of pilgrimages clearly reveals some steps that pilgrims take. They become a paradigm of the whole life of faith: departure reveals the decision of pilgrims to go forward to the destination and achieve the spiritual objectives of their baptismal vocation; walking leads them to solidarity with their brothers and sisters and to the necessary preparation for the meeting with the Lord; the visit to the shrine invites them to listen to the Word of God and to sacramental celebration; the return, in the end, reminds them of their mission in the world, as witnesses of salvation and builders of peace. It is important that these steps in a pilgrimage, lived in groups or individually, are marked by acts of worship, which would reveal their authentic dimension, with the use of texts recommended in liturgical books for this purpose.

The Pontifical Council for Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People stresses the importance of taking into account the culture and tradition which all people and every country have, and to take into consideration the social circumstances surrounding each pilgrim, while at the same time the whole church must become involved:

The aspects that each pilgrimage must necessarily include are to be harmoniously designed with just respect for the traditions of each people and adequately harmonised with the conditions of the pilgrims. It is the duty of the Episcopal Conference of every country to lay out the pastoral directives that are most appropriate to the various situations and institute the pastoral structures necessary to realise them. In the diocesan pastoral care of pilgrimages, a distinct role of Shrines is recognised. Yet, parishes and other ecclesial groups must also be represented in these pastoral structures since they are directly involved and are points of departure of the largest number of pilgrimages.

Pastoral activity must make it such that through the peculiar characteristics of each pilgrimage, the believer would essentially accomplish a journey of faith. Through an appropriate catechesis and an attentive accompaniment on the part of the pastoral agents, the presentation of the fundamental aspects of Christian pilgrimages opens new perspectives for its practice in the life of the Church.
This is also a challenge to the Lutheran Church in today's situation, and especially those who have a pilgrim's route and a pilgrim's goal within their area of responsibility. Of course one can leave the responsibility to the churches that have an unbroken tradition, and in this way save oneself from the theological challenges and the large amount of work required to take seriously the awakening interest in pilgrimages. At the same time there is a challenge in the text from *The Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People* to adjust the pilgrimage's content to the church tradition it belongs to, in line with the church's liturgy.

We know from old traditions that worship during the journey was important and was often connected to special places like churches, chapels, prayer crosses, holy springs, prayer stones, and finally - near the goal - the vantage point where the pilgrim could see his or her goal for the first time. Today's pilgrimages should contain prayers connected to the church traditions, which are simple to carry out along the way and which not the least, can help the pilgrims to meet the Holy on the way. It is important for pilgrims that the journey is taken seriously and that the arrangement of a ritual marks the goal. Even those who call themselves 'secular pilgrims' or 'non religious pilgrims' express the need for this.

This is especially important where the goal is a holy place with significant meaning for the church and history of a given country or area. The local church must open up so that Christians of different faiths can feel at home in the holy place and express themselves in the services of worship and worship in a way that feels right in relation to their tradition. It is a great responsibility and challenge to administer a heritage that belongs to the whole church.
Wandering with the holy towards the holy place

Places for meeting with the holy
The book of Hebrews tells us of the religious leaders who have gone before us, those who kept going for the entire journey. They are an incentive to us: *Therefore since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith* (Hebr. 12, 1-2).

The places where believers have congregated for worship and prayer have had both greater and lesser importance for the history of the church. Because of certain, special events some places have a particular meaning for the whole church, such as Jerusalem, Rome, Santiago de Compostela, among others. The revelation of God has been connected especially to these places. Perhaps there was a martyr who was killed or was buried there. Perhaps it is a cloak or a relic that had belonged to a holy person and is considered to contain special power, as did the cloak that belonged to Jesus (Mt. 9, 20). It could be a holy spring with healing water. It could be a place where a hermit or a prophet had lived which attracted people. The holy men were often kings who had an important meaning for a nation or a people, and who therefore became national symbols. In such cases it is also a challenge for the local church to hinder a nationalistic effect, and the resulting political implications that can be problematic.

In the same way that the pilgrimages themselves can have different meanings and structures, the pilgrim centres are also very different. What they all have in common, however, is a meeting with the holy. The great old pilgrim centres are the places where people have worshipped God for generations. They have come with their pain and their sicknesses, sin and sorrow; they have come with gratitude and joy. Many generations of meeting with God have made these places holy places with a special spiritual power. For that reason they have a special meaning for the whole of Christianity.
The ways are parts of the goal, they are a meeting with the holy, and they are wanderings with the Lord. Thus the old tradition, right from Abraham and Jacob's time is to build altars along the way, at the places where the pilgrims feel the need for it. Jesus himself experienced this need to withdraw and pray. Where the pilgrims stop to worship God, that is a holy place, there the goal is to be found along the way. Water along the roadside was also important, and at the same time we can find stones that functioned as prayer altars. Perhaps many of the cairns we find in the mountains are places where people have left a stone as a sign of penance, or as a symbol of burdens and prayers.

When the goal is the grave of a saint
For two thousand years believers have flocked to these places, which in a special way witness about Jesus' life, his death and his resurrection. In the description by the pilgrim woman Egeria we hear about the celebrations, processions and pilgrimages to goals in the Holy Land. Egeria is a woman from the west who travelled to the Holy Land and the bordering areas towards the end of the fourth century (Egeria, p. 9).

Gradually, as more were martyred for the church, places connected to their lives and death became important goals for pilgrimages. It was especially important to be at these places during the great festivals or preferably during the celebration for the local saint. Then the mass was at its most impressive and spiritually uplifting.

At Nidaros it was in the shortened week between the two great Olav's Feasts – Olsok, 29th July and Translatio Olavi, 3rd August - that pilgrims especially flocked to the Cathedral. It was then that Olav's mass was carried out and the whole town was involved in the long processions around the narrow streets.

Why did pilgrims come such a long way to Nidaros? Many sick and weak people came in the hope of being cured of their pain. But mostly they came because they were burdened with sin and shame and longed to have their torn souls made whole. We can imagine this from
the many prayers heard at St. Olav's grave during Olsok festivals from 1030 AD. In one of the oldest of Olav's liturgies, found in England, some of the prayers are as follows:

Antiphon: O, Olav the Holy, the martyrs' honoured compatriot, you who search for the heavenly secrets and who sinless stand by our side at the highest judgement seat, we beg you: free our frail bodies from immeasurably grave sins.

Antiphon: Let us rejoice in our God of salvation who has remembered in his mercy and has taken St. Olav into the company of martyrs. Let us all pray to him that he must pray for us to the king of kings, Jesus Christ.

Collective response: King of kings and the martyrs' conqueror, let us experience the blessed king and martyr Olav's pious protection by You, so that we in your greatness, whom we praise by His suffering, must receive the crown of life that is promised those who love You (Christ) (Danbolt, 1997, pp. 195, 196).

The descriptions of the liturgies for Olsok - both the earliest and later ones - are very beautiful. It is important to underline that although the people loved their saint, he was not in any way the goal of their faith. Pope Gregory VII was insistent that belief in Jesus Christ was necessary to be able to draw near to the saint. The effect of Olav's body could only be experienced by pilgrims through the desire to live in faith in Christ Jesus, he like God, his eternal Father, according to his promise and in union with the Holy Spirit became incarnate to save the world. He was born of a virgin, reconciled the world with God by his death, removed our sins by redeeming us with his own blood, by his death conquered death and thereby gave us life and called us to living hope and to an heritage that will never perish, can never be reversed and never destroyed - as it says in a letter from 1079 from Pope Gregory VII to King Olav Kyrre (Danbolt, 1997, pp. 197, 198).

The Reformation's repudiation of pilgrimage
Little by little, as the doctrine of purgatory emerged and selling of indulgences began to flourish, even holy sanctuaries and church services lost some of their spiritual power. They became focused on the possi-
bility of obtaining an indulgence, and in this way shorten the suffer-
ing in purgatory. It was precisely this custom that Luther was react-
ing to when he warned against everything to do with pilgrimages and indulgences. Scholars in the 13th and 14th century worked out how large an indulgence was needed to avoid all or part of purgatory. Therefore it was these later misuses that were especially affected by the reformers' repudiation (Danbolt, 1997, p. 198ff).

At the same time it is important to emphasise that the saints still held a strong position with the reformers and that the thought of a person as a pilgrim in the world was not attacked. All the same, pilgrimages are especially inclined to provoke strong reactions through the Lutheran confessional script: In the Augsburg Confessions (CA) art. XX, about faith and good works, there is talk of childish and unnecessary works such as certain holy days, certain fastings, brotherhood, pilgrimages, worships of saints, rosaries, monasticism and such like (Mæland, 1985, p. 37).

In the Apology of the Augsburg Confessions the tone is sharper in art. XII about penance... (Mæland, 1985, p. 140ff), where it says: They [The Church of Rome, ed.] imagine that eternal punishments are changed into the punishments of purgatory, that of these one part are forgiven by the power of the keys and another part is redeemed by satisfactions. They add further that satisfactions ought to be works of supererogation, and these consist of inane observances like pilgrimages, rosaries, or similar observances that do not have divine command (Apology of the Augsburg Confession, art. XII, §§ 13-14). Further in the same article: Some works, like pilgrimages, depart even further from God's commands; of these there is a great variety, with one making a trip in armour and another going barefoot. Christ calls these useless acts of worship, and so they do not serve to placate God's displeasure, as our opponents claim (Apology of the Augsburg Confession, art. XII, § 144). In De Schmalkaldiske Artikler (Mæland, 1985, p. 234ff) the tone becomes really sharp, for there the pilgrimages are mentioned amongst 'poisonous idolatry': The third are pil-
grimages [...] It is certain that we have not been commanded to make
pilgrimages, nor are they necessary, because we may obtain forgiveness and grace in a better way and may omit pilgrimages without sin and danger. Why do they neglect their own parishes, the Word of God, their wives and children, etc. and pursue these unnecessary, uncertain, harmful will-o’-the-wisps of the devil? (De Schmalkaldiske Artikler, part II, art. II, § 18).

Despite all the angry utterances it is worthwhile noticing that - like in so many other connections - it is not the church's old practice and belief that is attacked, but the misuse. Pilgrimages are always linked to the elements in the church's faith and practice that the reformers find have been misrepresented and have thereby damaged people's relationship to the church and the Lord of the church. It seems difficult to read this as an attack on the Biblical and old traditions where people are strangers and exiles on earth (Hebr. 11, 13), and thereby a pilgrim on the way towards the holy. They desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one (Hebr. 11, 16). The very thought that the saints are companions on this journey and an encouragement for believers, is not to be denied.

Reformers' relationship to the saints
In the fight against misrepresentation in the church, the reformers would use words that we today would consider as being unduly strong. It was important for them that the gospel was not obscured and that people's ideas and commands did not get in the way of God's grace. Thus it is easy to understand that worship of the saints was rejected as well as "specialised" saints who could be of help in different situations.

Just as worship of the saints was what the reformers reacted sharply against, so the saints themselves have received a negative image in our Norwegian Lutheran tradition. They are not recognised as being important for fellowship in the communion of saints. Even if the apostles and others are remembered with gladness and can be good examples for edification, their existence is a non-issue. Seemingly the holy ones who have gone before us have disappeared into nothing-
ness. This does not fit in with what the reformers said and did. For them the saints were important both as examples and for strengthening the congregation's faith, and as members of the communion of saints who had already reached the goal. Both the Old and the New Testament continually describe the holy ones without differentiating between the living and the dead. The reformers considered this to be a problem. At the same time they were anxious not to break with the church's traditions. Therefore it is important to read their warnings against misuse in such a way that the church can again come to the right way. With this in mind, the Evangelical Lutheran churches' confessional script makes interesting reading.

In CA XXI it says: Our churches teach that the remembrance of saints may be commended to us so that we imitate their faith and good works according to our calling [...] However, it cannot be proved from the Scriptures that we are to invoke saints or seek help from them. “and there is one mediator between God and men,...Christ Jesus” (1 Tim. 2:5), who is the only saviour, the only high priest, advocate, and intercessor before God (Rom. 8:34). He alone has promised to hear our prayers (CA XXI, §1ff).

In the Apology we again find a distinct warning against all misuse, but correct use is also emphasised: Our Confession approves giving honour to the saints. This honour is threefold. The first is thanksgiving: we should thank God for showing examples of his mercy, revealing his will to save men, and giving teachers and other gifts to the church. Since these are his greatest gifts, we should extol them very highly; we should also praise the saints themselves for using these gifts, just as Christ praises faithful businessmen (Matt. 25:21, 23). The second honour is the strengthening of our faith: when we see Peter forgiven after his denial, we are encouraged to believe that grace does indeed abound more than sin (Rom. 5:20). The third honour is the imitation, first of their faith and then of their other virtues, which each should imitate in accordance with his calling. Our opponents do not require these real honours; they only argue about
invocation, which, even if it were not dangerous, is certainly unneces-
sary (Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Art. XXI §§ 4-7).

It is interesting to note how far one can go in spite of warnings. Perhaps supplication is not so dangerous. The danger lies certainly more in that attention is removed from the most important issue - be-
lief in Jesus Christ as our saviour - and that the faithful can put their trust in less worthwhile theology. One wants to get rid of what may be harmful.

And what may be harmful is obviously not the thought that the saints who are dead and are in heaven, pray for us: Besides, we grant that the angels pray for us. This is attested to by Zech. 1:12, where the angel prays, “O Lord of hosts, how long wilt thou have no mercy on Jerusalem?” We also grant that the saints in heaven pray for the church in general, as they prayed for the church universal while they were on earth. Nevertheless, there is no passage in Scripture about the dead praying, except for the dream recorded in the Second Book of the Maccabees (15:14).

Even if the saints do pray fervently for the church, it does not follow that they should be invoked. But our confession affirms only this much; that Scripture does not teach us to invoke the saints or to ask their help. Neither a command nor a promise nor an example can be shown from Scripture for the invocation of the saints; from this it follows that consciences cannot be sure about such invocation (Apology of the Augsburg Confession, art. XXI §§ 8-10).

In De Schmalkaldiske Artikler, Part II, Art. II there is also a sec-
tion on prayers to the saints (Mæland, 1985, p. 242). There again we hear that even if the angels in heaven pray for us (as Christ also does) and also the holy ones on earth or perhaps in heaven too, it does not follow that we should call on the angels and the holy ones.

We can compare the relationship to the faithful who have died with the relationship between the faithful in Christ's church here on earth: As a Christian and a saint on earth, you can pray for me, not in one particular necessity only, but in every kind of need. However, I should not on this account pray to you, invoke me, keep fasts and fes-
tivals and say Masses and offer sacrifices in your honour, or trust in you for my salvation. There are other ways in which I can honour, love, and thank you in Christ (De Schmalkaldiske Artikler, Part II, Art. II, § 27).

It seems rather clear that even if misuse has made the relationship to the saints complicated, and even if the words in the Scriptures are missing, it is not the saints as such, the reformers want to deny but their misuse in the form of worship and the many strange characteristics they are allowed. Even the theologians hold to the error that each saint has a special sphere of activity assigned to him. Thus Anne grants riches, Sebastian wards off pestilence, Valentine heals epilepsy, and George protects knights. Such notions are obviously of pagan origin (Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Art. XXI § 32).

At the same time it means that if someone belongs among the saints in heaven, then it has little meaning for the individual believer. Thus it is believed that if we stop calling upon them, and wait for help from them, then they will soon be forgotten: If such idolatrous honour is withdrawn from angels and dead saints, the honour that remains will do no harm and will quickly be forgotten. When spiritual and physical benefit and help are no longer expected, the saints will cease to be molested in their graves and in heaven, for no one will long remember, esteem, or honour them out of love when there is no expectation of return (De Schmalkaldiske Artikler, Part II, Art. II, § 28).

It may be that the reformers made a mistake in this. It may be that not all of them are so quickly forgotten and that some will be important to remember for the sake of the congregation. The necessary three-fold honour that is applied to the holy ones according to the confessional script, can be a sound educational move in the church today as it was during the Reformation. The point is, that the reformers themselves made much use of saints in their preaching and thereby in their church services.
The reformers' use of hagiography

Prof. Robert Kolb of Concordia College, USA has, in his article *Festival of the Saints in late Reformation Lutheran Preaching* (Kolbe, 1990, p. 613ff) given an account of an interesting study of late reformation preaching. The article shows that these reformers look at saints as important intermediaries who are teaching Christian faith and morals at the same time as they are giving the congregations support and help in their daily life. This does not now happen through the worship of the saints or by miracles performed by them, but through the honour which is due to them: To thank God for them, be strengthened in faith because God can use weak people and follow their example because they allow themselves to be used by God and endure in faith.

Prof. Kolbe shows that the view during the Middle Ages of the holy ones is not no longer current. But just the same, this does not necessarily mean a denial of all memorial days for the saints and other festive days in the church year. Quite the opposite, the reformers wanted to give some meaning to these days and to move the focus from worship of the saints or prayers for them to preaching, where they became examples for the congregation. The sermon was thus one of the main instruments in the Lutheran Reformation and therefore played an important part in the service of worship. It was important that both priests and heads of families received the necessary assistance to be educated in the spirit of the Reformation, and so the Lutheran theologians published many books with sermons for Sundays and festivals in the church year. These could be read from the pulpit or used as guidelines for the preparation of sermons. These collections of sermons were an aid in exchanging the faith in the power of the saints for faith in God's care, and in Christ as the only mediator between God and human beings. They used the saints as examples of human piety in preference to the holy of holiness.

Most of the collections of sermons were intended for priests while some of them were meant for reading aloud at home and some were written for children. Most of them were concerned with the festivals of the 12 apostles and other biblical saints, but often non-
biblical saints were used in addition to celebrating All Saints’ Day, All Souls’ Day, Mary's birth, Mary's ascension and the Body of Christ's feast day. This could vary from congregation to congregation in that some saints' feasts were abolished while others were retained because of the understanding of that particular feast in certain congregations, who were able to decide for themselves.

Prof. Kolbe emphasises that the collections of sermons were not polemic against the practice of honouring the saints during the Middle Ages. They were clearly not seen as any great threat to the congregations of that time. There was in fact very little said about the relationship with the saints in earlier times, instead God's care and people's virtues and call were emphasised. Just the same, it was clear that every form of worship of the saints was rejected.

Certain festivals, especially those connected to Mary, were criticised for the form they took, independent of who the saint was. It was not really the saints themselves the Lutherans wanted to deny. On the contrary, they were important for the church - but the use of them in the papal church was considered heathen. The saints could not help in crisis or danger and they could not heal or save anyone. Therefore, they should not be called on as helpers in a time of crisis, but their example could encourage believers to hold on in sickness, crisis or danger. These stories were not just examples, they also remind listeners about the church's history, God's care and the uniting of all God's people in heaven. At the same time it should be encouraging to hear about examples of the saints' sinfulness and weakness and know that God showed mercy towards the faithful heroes even when they had problems or sinned.

For Lutheran preachers these faithful ones were not the only holy ones. The holy ones are those who believe they are saved for Jesus Christ's sake. Thus for a Lutheran Church all believers are holy. Those who had earlier shown divine power could therefore be used as good examples of the saintly life. Without the tremendous task of helping and healing people, the saints could again take back their
human form and perspective and serve as models for a life according to God's will.

Lutheran preachers were also realistic with relation to sin and the act of sinning. This did not only apply to damnation, but also to consolation and encouragement. They knew that holiness and piety are fragile. The biblical authors told unflattering stories about themselves, not because they did not want honour, but to give other Christians examples of the problems they had, of their repentance and their conversion and of God's mercy. In the same way as believers should try and copy the saints' virtues, they should also use their weaknesses as a mirror and learn from them.

Prof. Kolbe shows that the saints were not strangers, but belonged together with the holy ones who were still living in the faith in Christ. Thus the Lutheran reformers were not interested in removing the memory of them in the church service and the church's life. On the other hand, it was important to change the understanding of the martyrs and the saints. The faithful heroes were still necessary for the congregation and the communion of saints, but in another way from the way that had developed through the Middle Ages.

**To dare to walk the way with the holy ones – also today**

When we see what is happening around the time of the Reformation - both with strong words from the reformers and similar crass words from the counter-reformers - would it not have been better to let the interest in saints and pilgrimages disappear? Is it at all possible for a Lutheran church to take this form of worship of God seriously, and let it be a means once more for a meeting between people and the Holy?

There is little doubt that the Reformation's strong front created a situation where one stood in danger of removing or diminishing elements that are not completely necessary for salvation, but could nevertheless be a valuable means of showing God's love and holiness. It seems as if the relationship to the saints and the pilgrims as a conscious pilgrimage towards a heavenly goal can have suffered such a fate. Many feel therefore, that an important dimension has been lost
and that it would be worthwhile putting it back into the life of the church and into worship. The church should always be alert to what can bring people to Christ. Therefore it seems completely wrong to let the work with pilgrimages, and the aim of them, be handed over to commercial authorities in the form of tourist-oriented pilgrimage offices. In Norway the Lutheran Church has to take the lead in this work. This church has congregations everywhere, and pilgrims’ goals are mainly churches used by congregations of the Lutheran Church of Norway. This is an exciting challenge for the Church - to further develop the work with the traditions of pilgrims and saints, traditions that we have observed developing over several years. Just as important is to organise ecumenical co-operation (see section An Ecumenical Approach to the Saints' and Pilgrims' Traditions).

Even though several Lutheran churches have kept many of the saints' days and feasts in their calendars, the Lutheran fellowship has had little involvement in including pilgrims and saints' traditions in the church's life and teaching. This is not the least due to our own Nordic, pietistic, low-church heritage and tradition which has brought with it a deep scepticism to all that might be suspected of being catholic and therefore, by definition, takes attention away from salvation by faith alone.

Here then is a situation where many are seeking the church by going on old pilgrimage routes towards various goals, especially to St. Olav's grave, and this surely is a challenge for the Lutheran Church in Norway. It is not easy to renew our church's relationship with the saints and to see them as members of God's congregation in heaven and on earth. Therefore it could be a good idea to look at other churches that have preserved these traditions in a good and natural way.

The Anglican Church's fellowship with the holy
The Church of Norway is now, through the Porvoo Agreement, in a church fellowship with the Anglican Church in England, Ireland, the Lutheran Church in the Nordic countries (except for Denmark) and the
Baltic States. The churches in this fellowship have promised to study together, to learn more about each other's faith and traditions. A common course of study about the place of the saints in the church's life could be fruitful in a situation where the northern Lutheran churches work actively with pilgrimage traditions; especially those associated with their national saints.

The Anglican Church has an unbroken, if not always so active, pilgrimage tradition, and the saints have always had a natural place in the church's life. Breaking away from the Pope in Rome did not change the church's calendar. The former saints kept their significance and place, and new "saints" were commemorated in the local congregations without being prominent in the church's liturgy.

*The Book of Common Prayer* uses two categories of commemorations that are often called "red-letter" and "black-letter" saints, because of the colour of the first letter in the calendar. The "red" saints are highest in the liturgical order and have therefore a collect, an epistle and a gospel in the liturgy for their day.

*The Book of Common Prayer* is originally from 1662 with thorough revisions in the 1960s. Many were dissatisfied with the changes and further editing in the 1990s has attempted to correct this. The publication *The Renewal of Common Prayer* in 1993 is an important contribution to the continual editing of the Anglican Church's liturgies. Work is going on towards a new comprehensive *Book of Common Prayer* from the year 2000.

A basic document for understanding the Anglican Church's view on saints is the report *The Commemoration of Saints and Heroes of the Faith in the Anglican Communion*, which was produced in 1957 by a commission appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury. There have been changes since that time, but they deal mainly with the practice that is found in different parts of the Anglican Church. The saints are not canonized as they are in the Roman Catholic Church, and it is openly accepted that local saints can be commemorated.

In the 1970s the Anglican Church's liturgy commission went through the list from 1662 and the fewer additions from 1928, in order
to add some new ‘lesser commemorations’. It was then decided that possible ‘new’ saints must have been dead for at least 50 years and that their example really would incite people to holiness. It was also suggested that dioceses should celebrate their own ‘holy ones’, and thus recommend their commemoration to the rest of the church.

The celebrations for different categories of holy ones have a different status and are commemorated in different ways. There are four categories of celebration: principle feasts, festivals, lesser festivals, as well as the fourth and new category, commemorations.

St. George's day was not designated as a festival in the Commission's original proposals, but the Revision Committee added him, declaring: although we did not want to embrace a narrow sort of nationalism, we were convinced that the patron saint of England ought to be celebrated as a festival by the Church of England (Perham, 1997, p. 93-94).

Having gone through many names that were to a greater or lesser extent possible saints, and with The Church of England's new Calendar, Lectionary and Collects (CLC), a list has been made that tries to create a balance. It includes several women, lay people, and ‘modern’ saints. It kept to the ‘fifty-year rule’, that no one should have a place amongst the ‘lesser festivals’ before they had been dead for fifty years, but exceptions were made for martyrs. Their witness of Christ is not connected with their lives but with their deaths. Thus the Church of England on 9th July 1998 could declare ten persons who had been killed for their faith between 1918 and 1980 to be martyrs. Their statues decorate the west front of Westminster Abbey and include people from the whole world, among them are well-known names such as Maximilian Kolbe, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martin Luther King and Oscar Romero. It is also worth noting that these martyrs represent a wide range of different churches and denominations.

In all this work it was important for the liturgical commission to hold on to the richness that the fellowship with the saints and the heroes of the faith mean for the church. Therefore, they made use of a document written by Canon Brian Hardy from the Scottish Episcopal
When a Church decides on a list of those whom it wishes to commemorate in its worship, it is in fact making a statement about the way in which it understands its relationship to the universal Church, to the particular Communion of which it is part, and to the country or culture in which it is set. Brian Hardy mentions a few important aspects to such a statement (Perham, 1997, p. 102).

1. Communion
A recognition of the universal nature of the Body of Christ, and of the living fellowship of that divided Body across all frontiers of space, time and denomination.

2. Inspiration
Those who are commemorated stir us to renewed fellowship in the faith. They may be people for whom significant events have taken place in the story of the Church. They may be people in whose lives the light of Christ has shone, and who renew in us the sense of God's holiness.

3. Reconciliation
Commemorations may witness to the past and to the continuing rifts and divisions within the community of faith, and to the prayer that may overcome divisions and tensions.

4. Celebration
Particular Christian communities will wish to have in remembrance those who are honoured in their locality as ‘heroes’ of faith (Perham, 1997, p. 102-103).

All this creates celebration and happiness, and at the same time there is a legal formula for a common reminder of those who have gone before us and shown us the way. The idea of remembering the holy ones who are nearer our own time is a useful way of emphasising that this is not something far removed from the Middle Ages. It is also much easier to identify with people of our own time.

There is certainly much which may be discussed with the Anglican Church in their teaching about saints. However, it all looks very similar to the relationship the reformers thought we could have to the departed holy ones.
**Holy one, saint, martyr, mediator**

When one works with a theme like the communion of saints and the relationship to the saints, ideas can become confused. Words such as holy one, saint and martyr easily get mixed up. The confusion is probably unavoidable because different churches have a different understanding of the meaning of certain words. A theological run through of these words will be necessary to show agreement and disagreement in the view of saints. The following is not a satisfactory clarification of certain expressions, but says a little about the saints as members of the heavenly communion.

In certain traditions one would absolutely refuse to use the word holy about people, living or dead. There is only one who is holy and that is God. In other places there is a tradition of seeking a ‘holy’ man or woman to ask for help and guidance. Some church leaders have ‘holy’ in their title, for example The Holy Father for the Pope in Rome, His Holiness the Patriarch... about certain patriarchs. However, it is not that these living people are considered to be saints or sinless. The title is rather an expression of respect for the office they have, the spirituality that enfolds their lives and that they are part of a holy fellowship.

As members of Christ's body, all believers are holy and belong to a holy fellowship (2 Cor. 1, 1). This applies to both the living and the dead. All belong together in a close fellowship, and are dependent on each other. Eph. 3, 14-21 says that it is only with all the saints you are able to comprehend what is the breadth and length and height and depth and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. This is an important ecumenical text because it expresses the boundless and unlimited fellowship between those who believe in Jesus Christ. In spite of all the differences there is an inner bond of fellowship between them that cannot be broken, a unity nothing can sever because Jesus is the one who holds them together. There are no limits here as to confession, time or space.
We belong to the holy fellowship solely with God's grace, because this holy fellowship is a fellowship of sinners. Thus no one is holy because of their lack of sin, but by justification for Jesus Christ's sake. This applies to the living as well as the dead.

There is no human presiding judge that can differentiate between saints and other holy people. However, a certain few become more influential for the church as a whole and are therefore remembered and commemorated. This is made obvious in the Anglican Church practice where the saints are commemorated, but where there is no form for canonisation. This is also the case in the Orthodox Church where a saint emerges through ‘democratic rules and processes’. People quite simply begin to consider someone who has died to be a saint. This was the situation earlier for the church as a whole because the saints' cult grew out of the martyrs' cult. The martyr who died because of his Christian faith was for a long time an archetype or a model for a saint, and what ‘made’ the martyr into a saint was the cult that grew around the particular martyr's grave. Eventually, other faithful witnesses than the martyrs appeared, and the cult of the saints increased (Schumacher, 1997, p. 1-2). An example of this is the cult of Olav. Everything that happened round the dead king convinced people that he was a holy man and he was declared a local saint. Not until the fourteenth century did canonisation become usual from the central body of the Roman Catholic Church. Today it is the Pope who recommends the selection of a saint - usually this is a very long process where the particular person's life is thoroughly investigated, including their teaching and how they led their lives (Schumacher, 1997, p. 1-2).

Perhaps we could say that those who are appointed as saints, either through canonisation or through their status being developed within the church, belong to us all in a special way, because we have learnt to know them through the church's life and teaching. Saints and martyrs are thereby holy ones who have died and with whom we are in fellowship with through our faith in Jesus Christ. They have already arrived at the heavenly goal and see the Lord as he is. The idea that they pray for us there in front of God's throne, as referred to in the
section ‘When the goal is the grave of a saint’, is therefore not so strange.

Is it then so impossible and so non-evangelical to think that those who prayed continually for the church, the world, fellow human beings and - not least - fellow Christians, should be able to continue this prayer service face to face with the Lord? Is not this "cloud of witnesses", those who celebrate at God's throne, our mediators? It cannot only be martyrs who pray for vengeance (Rev. 6, 9ff) who lay their requests at God's feet? Amongst the prayers of the saints on the altar before the throne (Rev. 8, 3-9) are quite certainly prayers for Christ's Church and the saints who are still on the way. These, our mediators, have arrived; their pilgrimage has come to an end. They are not bothered any more by temptations, dangers and sin. They have arrived at the goal, justified in Christ they stand in front of God's throne. There they can be our intercessors.

At the sacred goal

The sacred goal - a steward responsibility
The Lutheran Church of Norway should dare to reconsider its relationship - not only to pilgrim traditions - but also to the saints, and in this way become more open to the positive aspects found at places associated with the saints, their lives, their faith and their witness to Christ. Arne Bakken, who was the first pilgrim minister in our church, tells us of a little boy in a kindergarten class who had been following him around on a tour of the Nidaros Cathedral, where amongst other things they had seen the beautiful stained-glass windows. At the end of the tour the little boy said enthusiastically: Now I know what a saint is. It is someone that the light shines through. In this way we too should be more open to including the saints, and the pilgrim places which are memorial to them. We should let the light shine through them so that people can see Christ. For they are this cloud of witnesses who themselves were strangers and exiles on the earth (Hebr. 11 and 12).
Each and every church that manages a holy place - such as the grave of a saint - has been given the responsibility of our common Christian heritage. Therefore these churches must take responsibility for arranging the use of the church so that everyone can experience the church as ‘their place’. This can be done by being open to many more traditions, lending the church to congregations of other denominations and not the least being aware of ecumenical services of worship. Of course work must be done for the best possible reception by the church, so that pilgrims from different confessions can feel at home. Work must also be done to create celebrations that suit our own culture and our church's tradition. The celebrations surrounding Olav's cult, Nidaros Cathedral and Stiklestad, are especially interesting and not just something that has appeared because of the new popularity that pilgrimages have gained lately. It is a development that had its beginnings in the time when Norway was trying to establish itself as an independent state in 1814 (Østang, 1997, p. 31ff). The greatest challenge therefore is to create traditions that are natural in relation to our church's faith and confession, as well as demonstrating generosity towards ecumenical fellowship, nationally and internationally. Such a challenge was very clear to those who struggled for the celebration of Olsok early in this century, an example of which is in the beautiful hymn, *Da Olav Konge bøyde hode til dåpens bad i kristent land*, written by a previous bishop of Nidaros in 1923, Jens Gran Gleditsch (See Landstad's hymn book, No. 802).

The celebration of Olsok – today’s challenge
In modern times a wave of interest in Olav's traditions has come from all branches of society, both inside and outside the church. Even though discussions about the spiritual and geographical centre of the church and the question of archdiocese have come to the surface now and again, there is something deeper which lies behind this strong movement. There is the need to approach the sacred in a time characterised by numerous opportunities, but poor in religiousness. For many years we have seen this in connection with the drama at Stik-
lestad. Year after year many have made a pilgrimage to have the religious experience that the drama, *Spelet på Stiklestad*, can give them. Some people have said quite clearly that they have to go to Stiklestad every year to experience the year's great meeting with the past, present and future through a spiritual experience. Even more people have talked of the experiences that have happened during the play itself: *It was a divine moment when the King rode onto the stage. When the message that the King was dead came, then the evening sun shone behind the hill.* Many have wondered why the church has not discovered this challenge before and taken up this religious searching, directing it towards the church and the Lord of the church.

Slowly, but surely, this celebration has received its correct place in relation to the church. The re-enactment at Stiklestad is still powerful, mighty and beautiful and attracts steadily more and more people. This is also true of the celebrations in Trondheim where the Olsok pilgrimages, Olsok vigil, Olsok services, and pilgrim’s worship, etc. are well known among people. St. Olav's Festival has developed and gained an exciting atmosphere of a religious and cultural folk festival with a wide appeal. From a national perspective St. Olav's Festival is a unique opportunity to demonstrate to both Norwegian people and to visitors, a celebration of the national values that we want to preserve as we begin a new millennium. At the same time the aim is to have interaction between church and culture, which is not only about the Norwegian (Lutheran) church and Norwegian art and culture, but also about ecumenical fellowship and a meeting with other peoples' art and culture. Therefore it is an important part of the profile of St. Olav's Festival to focus on other countries and churches' traditions. This seems to be really important in a time where unhealthy nationalism is growing many places in the world, and where saints as national symbols are in danger of being misused.

**New liturgies for the Olsok celebration**
Traditions have grown lately with pilgrimages to the celebration in Nidaros Cathedral, especially in connection with the vigil of 28th July.
The start of this was some 20 to 30 years ago, when people began to walk from Sverresborg - where the pilgrims in the Middle Ages perhaps saw the Christ Church in Nidaros for the first time on their journey - and then on to the vigil in Nidaros Cathedral. The pilgrimage is a form of worship where pilgrims walk from the north, south, east and west. They visit the local parish churches on the way or stop out in the open air to pray, listening to God's words and reminding each other about the celebration in which they are involved. For the pilgrims who have walked far, for days and weeks, walking into the Cathedral and the Olsok celebration is a fine ending to the journey. The actual vigil has a long tradition where elements have been collected from the old Olsok liturgies, and even though they need to be revised, this has not caused much discussion so far. There is certainly material to be found in those first Olav's liturgies, which could be adapted. Arne Solhaug writes about the work being done on these liturgies up to the present time. He stresses that there is still a big challenge in the further treatment of the fragmentary antiphonal material from among other sources in the State's archives. One can only imagine the greatest possible complete musical image of daily prayers in Nidaros (Solhaug, 1997, p. 73ff).

**Olav's liturgies in the Middle Ages**

Writing in 1930, in connection with the celebrations of the 900-year anniversary of the battle at Stiklestad, Dr. Andreas Seierstad talks about the cult of St. Olav in Nidaros and Northern Europe in the Middle Ages. He refers to one of the oldest of St. Olav's liturgies: *There is a hand-written paper which is thought to be from Bishop Leofric in Exeter, who died in 1072; and is now in the British Museum. Found there is a Latin collect and lessons and hymns which were especially set up for the Olav festival [...] One can wonder that, so early, only about 20 years after Olav's fall, one finds the outline of the worship service on Olav's day in England. Of course in those early times there was a rich church connection and co-operation between Norway and England, and the ritual we find for the English Olav's*
service had come from Norway. In places it is word for word identical
to text in corresponding Norwegian rituals from a later time
(Seierstad, 1930, p. 52ff).

Arne J. Solhaug, using the same theme, explains that Bishop
Grimkell, who was one of the four Anglo Saxon bishops in Olav
Haraldsson's followers when he came to Norway in 1015 to claim the
throne, in all probability, had used propaganda for the new Olav cult
in his homeland. Solhaug says that the oldest liturgical documents
connected to Olav are to be found in England. Besides, these come
from an area of England that could have been Bishop Grimkell's home
in southern England. There are also an impressively large number of
places in southern England where early Olav festivals were celebrated,
and these places are not in areas where there has been a strong Nordic
element in the population (Solhaug, 1997, pp. 68, 69).

Pilgrimage to St. Olav's vigil - a pilgrimage with Olav

As already mentioned, for many years there had been a growing tradi-
tion of pilgrimages to the vigil. This is now a form of worship where
the pilgrims walk from all four directions: east from Lade Church,
west from Lo Church, south from Leira Chapel and north from the
ruin of the monastery Reinskloster in Rissa.

The pilgrim route from the north comes by boat across the fjord.
Other pilgrimages, which could have been taking place for many days,
can join with these. Each journey has three stations before meeting the
fourth in the Church of our Lady (Vår Frue Kirke), and finally walk-
ing to the vigil in Nidaros Cathedral. Thus the pilgrimage is an act of
worship with many parts. In 1995 a new liturgy was formed, which is
still being used without significant changes.

The walk to the vigil through several stations was already estab-
lished when the liturgical group for Olsok celebrations in 1995 was to
start work. This walk was thought of as one, continuous act of wor-
ship. To prevent the experience being unequal for each of the groups
who had come from the four corners of the world and who were to
meet later at the vigil, there was a need for the walk to be structured
with the same number of stations, all with the same liturgical content for everyone. It was also important to include several of the churches in Trondheim in the celebration.

At each station along the route a hymn was sung as an introduction to the liturgy. This was to integrate ‘new’ pilgrims on the way.

During the Olav celebrations, Olav himself has been little focused on. The text that is read at the vigil is from Snorre's saga and the story is about the handling of King Olav's body, and the events that happened around the corpse. It was therefore natural that the walk to the vigil should include more knowledge about Olav Haraldsson, the person.

The liturgical group for Olsok 1995 challenged me to make a liturgy that would include some of these needs. The result is a pilgrimage where both through the texts, readings from the Bible and from the saga, through hymns, prayers, praise and blessings, time is given to think about the meaning of the Olsok celebration; what the scriptures say about following Jesus and being true to their call; and what St. Olav means to us and how his example can give us hope and lead us to Christ. The liturgy will also prepare the pilgrims before entering the Cathedral.

**Pilgrimage worship on the way to St. Olav’s vigil**

The whole pilgrimage is an act of worship and we therefore walk in silence or accompanied by simple music or hymn singing.

L= Leader, pastor, minister  
R= Reader  
A= All

In the Church of Our Lady the gathering begins with meditation music for those who reach the church first. When the last group has arrived the liturgy for the 4th station starts.
1st STATION

Lade Church – Lo Church – Leira Chapel – Hoeggen Church – Rein Monastery in Rissa

Introitus: Biblical hymn: Psalm 70, v2
Be pleased, O God, to deliver me!
O Lord, make haste to help me.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. Amen.

Hymn

L: We are pilgrims; we are in constant movement, through life, through time, through the world. God has given us an eternal goal for this pilgrimage in His eternal Kingdom. He has promised to go with us to the close of the age. Sometimes we need to make ourselves more conscious about this pilgrimage through life. We regard ourselves and each other as pilgrims of today, pilgrims on the way to the goal. We walk in old footsteps towards a goal which has gathered pilgrims for almost 1000 years. As all pilgrims before us, we also carry our own lives, our insecurity and restlessness, our pain and sorrows, our longing and hope, joy of life and curiosity. And we believe that other people’s life may give us an insight into our own lives. Today we will try to learn from the story of St. Olav’s life and his way to Christ.

Let us try to imagine the far past, before all our churches were built, the time when Christianity was almost unknown in our region.

Åsta, the mother of Olav Haraldsson, did not know Christ. She could not send with him the Lord’s benediction when the boy had to leave home. But as the good mother she was, she made sure that the boy had safe company.

R: In the year 995 a boy was born in Ringerike, he was given the name Olav. Olav Haraldsson was twelve years of age when he went onboard a warship for the first time. Åsta, his mother, had Rane, who was called the King’s Foster Father, take charge of the crew, together with Olav, because Rane had often been on Viking expeditions before (Snorre Sturlason: The Tales of the Norse Kings, St. Olav’s saga, paragraph 4). On his Viking expeditions King Olav
brought horror to some of the places where he went. On the other hand, Olav also received some new ideas – and a new faith.

**L**: Reading for the Bible: Psalm 107, 23-32.

**R**: St. Olav stayed during the winter with Duke Richard II of Northumberland in Rouen. There he was surrounded by faith in “White Christ” and was baptised.

**L**: Reading from the Bible: Matt. 28, 18-20.

**Intercession**

**L**: Lord God, our heavenly Father, we bring to you all mothers who have seen their children enter into a dangerous and threatening situation. We pray for all those who have seen their children as victims of injustice and death. We remember with thanks all those who sacrificed their lives for you so that your gospel was brought to our people and our country. We give thanks to you that we all are called to be born again by water and the Spirit. Give us strength to preserve the heritage from St. Olav to ensure that our people still can receive your grace.

**A**: Lord, hear our prayer. Amen.

**Hymn**

**Benediction**

**L**: Let us praise the Lord.
**A**: Glory be to God.
**L**: May God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, bless us, be amongst us, and remain with us always.
**A**: Amen (a bell tolls 3x3).
**L**: Go in peace
**A**: and serve the Lord with gladness.

**2nd STATION**

Lademoen Church – Ihlen Church – Tempe Church – The Museum “Kystens Arv”

*Introitus*
Hymn

R: Olav experienced several dramatic departures during his life. A new and unknown journey lay ahead. Olav did not go alone. The first journey was together with the Viking Rane. Later he came to travel with other companions. But his most important companion came to be the Lord, Jesus Christ. Thus he broke from the old faith, and started a journey on the new. At the same time came a break from Viking expeditions, and led to a new path through which he brought Christianity to Norway. King Olav chose to trust Christ. He chose to follow the way, the truth, and the life.

L: Reading: John 14, 1-14.

Prayer:
Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to you for being the way, the truth, and the life. We pray to you: Help us to dare to break from the past in your name, so that we may put it behind us and go on to the work you lay in front of us. Walk with us, Lord, and teach us to walk with each other.
God, we pray to you:

A: Lord, hear our prayer. Amen.

Hymn

Benediction:
......
L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all.
......

3rd STATION

Bakke Church – The Hospital Church – in the open air – Ravnkloa

Introitus

Hymn
L: Our Lord Jesus Christ fell on the ground in Gethsemane and his soul was very sorrowful, even to death, because he knew his destiny. Still he knew he was surrounded by God’s love. He therefore drank the cup which God gave him to drink.

Through a dream – St. Olav too – was warned that the duty that God had put in front of him might cost him his life.

R: Reading from Snorre Sturlason: The Tales of the Norse Kings, St. Olav’s Saga, (paragraph 214, 2):

Finn woke the king and told him that the farmers were advancing towards them. And when the king awoke he said, “Why did you wake me and not let me finish my dream?” Finn replied, “You are not likely to dream anything more fitting than to be awake and make ready to fight the host that is moving against us. For do you not see how near the crowd of farmers is to us?” The king answered, “They are still so distant that it would have been better if I had kept on sleeping.” Then Finn said, “What then did you dream, sire, that you think it better if I had not waked you?” Then the king told him his dream – in which he thought he saw a high ladder and that he mounted it up into the air so far that the heavens opened before him, so tall was the ladder. “I had come to the topmost rung,” he said, “when you waked me.” Finn said, “This dream does not seem to me so good as it might seem to you. I should think this signifies your death, unless it be only some dream phantasm that occurred to you.”

L: Reading from the scripture: John 12, 23-38 and James 1, 2-4, 12.

Intercession:
L: Lord Jesus Christ, we give you thank and praise for your suffering, death and resurrection which brought salvation to all mankind. Your death, O Lord, has become a source of life to us and your resurrection brings about hope now and forever. You sent your witnesses to bring the gospel to the world. We thank you, Lord, for those who came to our country and our people, those who followed your call in spite of danger and threats.
Almighty God, give us the strength to be faithful to your call.
Merciful God, we bring our prayers to you for the martyrs of our time and for all those who take up their cross and follow you.
A: Lord, hear our prayer. Amen.

**Hymn**

**Benediction:**

.....

L: May God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, bless us, be amongst us, and remain with us always.

.....

**4th STATION**

The Church of Our Lady

*Meditation music while the pilgrims are gathering.*

**Introitus**

**Hymn**

L: The aim of St. Olav was to gather Norway as a Christian country under his rule. This proved to be mortal to him and he experienced defeat. At the same time, however, this was also his victory. Those who stood against him and gave him the mortal wound, changed their minds after his death.

R: Reading from *Snorre Sturlason: Tales of the Norse Kings, St. Olav’s Saga* (paragraph 240 and 243):

That winter there arose much talk among the people of Trondheim that King Olav was in truth a saint and that many miracles had come to pass testifying to his sainthood. Many began to invoke King Olav about matters of importance to them. Many received benefits by these prayers, some in their health, some in the furtherance of their voyages or of other matters where help seemed needful.

The summer after (1031) there was much talk about the sanctity of King Olav, and (now) all this talk about the king took a different turn. There were many then who confirmed the sanctity of the king who had previously been his sworn enemies and had not at any time done him justice.
L: Little by little the people were unified through the sign of the cross. Even if people might be united in one faith, under one king, division is still a threat. This is the case even for our Lord’s Church in this world. Jesus Christ prayed that we all might be one.

R: Reading: John 17, 9-11, 20-23.

**Intercession:**
God of love and justice, we confess that we often have failed to love our neighbours, as you taught us to do. Forgive us, Lord, for silence in the face of war, for neglect of charity and failure in justice, for forgetfulness of other’s pain, and for advantage taken of other’s weakness. Help us to live reconciled and united in your love, so that the world can see and believe. We pray for your church in this world: Let her be an instrument for peace and reconciliation. Give us the power and the will to work for justice and integrity of creation.
We thank you, Lord, for St. Olav’s struggle for unity in our country. Help us that we may learn from his example to work fearlessly for the unity of your Church. Grant us, Christ, that we may dare to see what unites us rather than what separates us.

A: Lord, hear our prayer. Amen.

A: Our Lord’s Prayer.

**Hymn**

**Benediction:**

…..

L: The Lord bless you and keep you
the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you;
the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.
…..
The pilgrimage continues in silence, to the Nidaros Cathedral.
Even though the liturgy seems to function well, it must be re-evaluated often. When this is done, we must meet the challenge of new creativity that means we must think seriously about the ideas behind each of the elements. Not least it is important to place this work in the faith and tradition of the Church.

The service of worship is a pilgrimage and Psalm 107 shows that the departure and the journey can be dangerous. We follow Olav on his journey out into the world, to the meeting with Christianity and back to Norway and a martyr's death.

Perhaps texts that stress Olav as an ecumenical symbol and a universal saint, or the ecologically conscious person, who let wonders happen where his army had caused destruction, could have been chosen here. These texts should be used, but perhaps in another place, maybe during the annual ecumenical church service at the Olav Feast day. The chosen texts are meant to be a preparation for the vigil.

In the texts Olav is honoured in the way the Lutheran reformers learnt: we thank God for him, we honour his obedience to his call, and we are encouraged that God could use a typical child of his time.

Olav is also our national saint, something that clearly comes to light both in this liturgy and in the whole of the Olsok celebration. Even if we are in a way on safe ground when it comes to our church traditions, it is at the same time important to remember that the saint's most important function is to lead us to Christ. We have tried to avoid any form of demonstration of nationalistic tendencies. On the contrary, there has been an attempt to include prayers for the world and for the unity of the church in the different Olsok liturgies (cf. the prayer at the pilgrimage's last station in the Church of our Lady). The intention is to make possible a celebration where nobody is excluded - either foreign visitors or our new countrymen. Both for those who come from other places and for the typical Norwegian it is right and good to be reminded of God's actions for our people. There is no other time in the year when the church at Nidaros is characterised as strongly by an ecumenical and international aspect as at Olsok.
Why create new liturgies?
There is a certain challenge for the Church of Norway at Olsok, of a steadily growing ecumenical character. It is nothing new that the Catholic Church celebrates Olsok, but because the Methodists, Baptists, Pentecostals and others are actively joining in, it makes it very important to be careful when liturgies and symbols are being planned. Olav's celebrations could split us, but they can also bring us together, because St. Olav is himself an ecumenical and international model. He spent some time in Russia, was baptised in France and he brought with him bishops and priests from England. In this way he became a representative for one united church. This has become increasingly clear to the ecumenical fellowship in Trondheim, not least after the Trondheim Christian Council was founded, a council where all the city's congregations are represented. This council is playing an increasingly important role in relation to pilgrimages and Olav traditions, and in relation to the creation of liturgies for use in the ecumenical celebrations. This council is challenged therefore, not only by the actual church situation in Trondheim, but also with discussions in connection with Nidaros Cathedral. Themes naturally circle around strong traditions of worship, pilgrimages and saints.

It is important to tread carefully in a situation where different denominations, with their own history and tradition, will come together in an area that is unknown for some of us. This is a celebration that is going to unite us, not create a division. Therefore we cannot, without planning, take over one single church's liturgical material, but we must create a common liturgy that uses material in a unifying church tradition.

An ecumenical approach to saints' and pilgrims' traditions
The work with Olsok and Olav's traditions has influenced the ecumenical milieu in Trondheim to start work in relationship to the saints. This has been the theme for ecumenical meetings and for discussions between individual people. Rev. Ivan Chetwynd, who for many years has been the Methodist pastor in Trondheim and a strong advocate for
ecumenical work in the city, has more than once expressed the following observation: Without being aware of it, many protestant churches have a relationship with their deceased leader, for example Hans Nilsen Hauge, William Booth, John Wesley, which approaches the reformers' ideas of the saints. They treat them correctly by holding their lives and faith up as a good example for the congregation to imitate. Quite often they are used as an example in preaching, and often anniversaries are celebrated in connection with certain days or something that happened in their lives. This happens in thankfulness for what they have meant to the church.

Rev. Ivan Chetwynd also said that in some of these congregations the practice is to declare believers blessed, at home with God. The following examples can be seen in death announcements: NN is at home with the Lord, NN was called home, NN was taken home to Jesus... Many denominations have the same mode of expressing themselves in connection with memorial speeches. This shows a faith in that those who belonged to the holy fellowship here in the world, keep on being that by singing praise to God in the heavenly world:

Yet she on earth has union with God, the Three in One,  
And mystic sweet communion with those who rest in won.  
O blessed heav’nly chorus! Lord, save us by your grace,  
that we, like saints before us, may see you face to face.

Our congregations confirm that this is so each time during celebration of communion when singing the preface: Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim Your great and glorious name, for ever praising You and saying .....  

In churches where there is an altar rail, many interpret the other half, invisible ring as a symbol of that part of God's congregation in heaven and on earth, which is invisibly in place in the holy fellowship. During an ecumenical meeting where justification and sanctification were on the agenda, it was asked if the inclination of the church
to say nothing about the saints, and also the dead, has resulted in some kind of acceptance of reincarnation in the Christian communities.

Perhaps this is so when the church is unclear about the fellowship between the saints and us; those who went before us and showed us the way; those who were our intercessors and teachers. In this case people will find other ways to keep up the hope of a fellowship with them.

We also see how important it is for people today to seek nearness with those who have gone ahead of us. All Saints’ Day is a good example of this. While this used to be a day when all churches were full, people now, in preference, visit graves where they place candles and flowers. There are probably many reasons for this, but the church must take the challenge seriously. If it becomes natural to remember the dead in the Lord, it could become easier to believe that the fellowship with our dear ones is not broken by death. If we have a common meeting point with the holy ones in the worship and in the belief of Jesus Christ, then there will be no room for faith in re-incarnation, but in the resurrection.

God’s congregation on earth needs intercessors; they need good examples and encouragement from those who have gone on ahead. For the purpose is, that we are all to reach the same goal:

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith (Hebr. 12, 1-2).
Rolf Piene Halvorsen:

PILGRIMAGE SERVICES IN NIDAROS CATHEDRAL (1997)

Elements

If we do not wait
like the earth
what can we create?

If we do not play
like the clouds
where is the joy?

If we do not have a direction
like the river has
how can we walk?

And if we do not burn
like fire
what are we here for?

Berit Østberg

Introduction

It was Nidaros Cathedral’s Liturgical Drama Group who had the responsibility for the Pilgrimage service for Olav’s Festival in 1997 and Trondheim City’s 1000th year celebration. The Nidaros Cathedral’s Liturgical Drama Group’s most important model came from Sweden, from Lund Stifts Kyrkospel led by Birgitta Hellerstedt-Thorin and Ingemar Thorin. Birgitta Hellerstedt-Thorin is a trained actor and has worked at Malmö State Theatre with Ingmar Bergman as theatre director. He insisted that all the actors should be on stage during the whole performance, even when they were not performing in the actual scene. They were to stand behind the side curtains and follow the progress of the play. They were to be a part of the whole. He thought that
this would increase contact and sharpen the intensity of the scenes in which they themselves performed. The same thing happens in church, thought Birgitta Hellerstedt-Thorin. She was involved in the Liturgical drama movement connected to Olof Hartman in Sigtuna and became its well-known leader in Lund Diocese. For this work she received two cultural prizes, one from Lund Stad (City) and one from Svenska Akademien.

Ingemar Thorin is a clergyman. He has also been involved in the Liturgical drama movement since the 1950s. Where church drama and liturgy come together he has been a dynamic driving force for liturgical renewal in Sweden and now also here in Norway. For this work he has been appointed Honorary Dean in the Diocese of Lund.

Birgitta and Ingemar Thorin have inspired and helped us in Trondheim with direction and teaching. Several people from the Liturgical Drama Group in Trondheim have been to Lund, either on courses or as church theatre actors in their summer productions. Lund Stift’s Liturgical Drama Group has visited Trondheim on several occasions for Olsok (29th July). Also through Lund Stift’s Liturgical Drama Group, we have come in contact with Viola Spolin’s improvisational technique, “Theatre Games”. Since 1984 Nidaros Cathedral’s Liturgical Drama Group has had regular courses in this technique and uses it each week in its work. Thorin has several times held liturgical courses based on “Theatre Games” for church employees in the Nidaros diocese. The working technique is well known by the milieu around the Cathedral and the pilgrim project in the diocese.

**Nidaros Cathedral’s liturgical drama group**

In the sixties a liturgical drama group was established in Trondheim, which was strongly inspired by what was happening in Sigtuna. This group had been more or less active up until the eighties, when they developed their present form. It has been open to all who wanted to join in, to work with drama in the liturgical sense. There was a group of about 10 people in 1996/97 with a good mix of gender and age.
There are various ways of defining liturgical or church drama. It may be used for any type of drama/theatre in the church building. This is a broad definition. Compared to the tradition of the Lund milieu, Trondheim gives a more restricted content to the definition. Our church drama is always based on, or connected to, the liturgical framework. This is characterised in the acting. The actors are, as a rule, dressed in a surplice or in their own clothes. A surplice is a white, wide gown gathered around a yoke and with wide sleeves. In Nidaros Cathedral lay persons who assist at communion have used this garment since 1980. The surplice gives those who wear it the character of a liturgist. That is what church dramatists experience when acting. The white gown tones down our own personality; we represent everyone and become everyone. When we act, dressed in our own clothes, it emphasises that the worship service is the congregation’s service and that everyone can allow their voice to be heard in the liturgy. Looked at in this way personal dress is also liturgical dress.

Our plays often begin with a procession and end with communion. These are not necessary criteria for what we call church drama, but are often known as characteristic features, in tune with the actor’s awareness of the use of the so-called third presence. Birgitta Hellerstedt-Thorin has said many times that church drama is a special dramatic form. A good actor can be a bad church dramatist and a good church dramatist a bad actor. She says that an awareness of the liturgy’s third presence, God’s presence, often represented by the altar, is required of a good church dramatist. A church drama is never played against a backcloth, but for God, not in front of the congregation, but on behalf of the congregation. A church drama is not only a special type of drama, but also a special type of liturgy. The church drama is a worship service. These are Hellerstedt-Thorin’s thoughts so far.

Now a little more of her liturgical approach. Hellerstedt-Thorin was for many years a teacher at the Seminary of Practical Theology in Lund. One of her methods was to work with the church’s liturgies as if
they were a normal script. She talks about how she would go through the liturgy sentence by sentence with each individual candidate, as if they were lines filled with subtexts. Work with the subtext, that is, what is underlying or between the lines, is quite usual in theatre work. The words and sentences must be filled with conscious meaning, intention, reason, thought, will and the feelings of the person saying them. The words are to be placed in the body and given an atmosphere, temperature and feeling, and in this way become alive. The liturgist must know what he is saying, how he says it and why he says it. This must be a goal, an intention in both words and actions. The intention can be brought out as much by consciousness as by intuition and imagination. The point is to make the connection between outer and inner form. In this work Hellerstedt-Thorin used Spolin’s exercises among others.

Stanislavskij and Spolin

Birgitta Hellerstedt-Thorin introduced us to both Stanislavskij and Spolin. She told us about how Stanislavskij had seen the connection between the old mystical stories from countries around the Euphrates and Tigris to Jerusalem, and the growth of the church’s liturgy and theatre in Europe.

There was an old fertility ritual around the Euphrates and Tigris. Once a year one of the poorest was chosen to be the king for one day. He was allowed to decide whatever he wanted for that one day and whatever he decided was carried out immediately. In the evening he was sacrificed to the gods during a great ceremony. This rite eventually disappeared but the story was not forgotten. It was preserved from one person to the other, from generation to generation, not least because of the many theatre groups who travelled around and acted, sang and juggled the story for people. This was a living tradition right up to the time of Jesus. At the time that Jesus was crucified, everyone was familiar with this story that was a part of a collective reality. We recognise the story in Holberg’s play, Jeppe på Bjerget [Jeppe on the Mountain].
This made a deep impression on me. I felt that my theological studies had cheated me out of some important information. The story gives me a new perspective on the death of Jesus. The incarnation becomes stronger and Judas takes on a new role. This says something about what part the theatre plays. The incarnation becomes stronger in that God makes use of narratives and stories that are already there, even the most contemptible and heathen. Here we have a heathen story about a small, despised person who sacrificed himself for all. The basic pattern for what later became the evangelists’ Easter story was already there. It was theatre, the dramatic art of story telling which had put this into people’s minds. Therefore when Easter with the crucifixion of Jesus arrived, everything was in place. Everyone took on their roles, almost without knowing it. So Judas becomes rather less of a tragic figure. He is necessary for the completion of God’s plan. Without him there would have been no gospel, no consummation. His suicide and then his descent into hell make him Christ’s herald for the condemned. Looked at in this way Judas is the first proclaimer of the love which is stronger than death.

Spolin’s presentation was connected to practical theatre work. Spolin believes that in every person there is a potential actor, which has not been discovered and used (Spolin, 1990, p. 43). Spolin is herself an actor and instructor. She was asked to set up a play with a group of young people with behavioural problems. The work was arduous. So she wanted to do something that everyone could do and which was also fun. She suggested a well-known children’s game. The young people looked blankly at her, no one knew it. There was no answer when she asked them what games they already knew. Spolin was both amazed and shocked and she immediately began to teach them all the games she knew. All the people she met during this period were asked to tell her about the games they remembered from their childhood. In this way she gathered a large number of ordinary games. The youth group became socialised and integrated in relation to theatre, through playing.
Returning to her work with the actors she saw that they also needed to be "socialised" on stage. In this way she began to play with them too. Play became, little by little, an important part of her work as theatre instructor. She studied them, developed and systemised them. She has produced many books and a file of theatre games. Nidaros Cathedral’s Liturgical Drama Group has used these as a basis for their ground training since 1985.

After many years of working with theatre games I read Stanislavskij’s book *En skuespillers arbejde med sig selv* [An Actor Prepares]. There were two things which struck me: A) What Stanislavskij says about theatre and actors, can also be said of liturgy and liturgists, and B) Spolin puts Stanislavskij’s theory into practice. I will comment on these two situations in the following chapter.

**Stanislavskij - Theatre and the Art of Acting**

Stanislavskij’s book is not a textbook in the usual sense. Stanislavskij has written a diary-like story where the “I” person is a student at a theatre school. Through the book’s actor and teacher, Tortsov, Stanislavskij presents his ideas on theatre, actors and working methods. He has violently criticised the empty play, theatre clichés or the art of presentation, as he calls it (Stanislavskij, 1988, pp. 37ff, 40, 41).

A general theme of Stanislavskij’s is that the role has to be lived out. This means to go consciously into the subconscious so that one is always creating something. When the actors themselves are creative in a deeper and, at the same time, more natural level, then the public can become drawn into this and relive the role and the play’s spiritual dimension. This he calls the real theatre: *Art where one fully grips the audience’s mind and forces him not only to understand, but to relive all of it, what is happening on the stage, so that it makes his spiritual experience richer and leaves impressions in him, which cannot be erased.* This he calls experience art, which is the real art. In this art it is the relation between the outer and inner form which is important. To be able to give expression to this fine, subconscious spiritual life, the actor has to be able to control his voice as well as his body.
Stanislavskij speaks of the mental techniques in the spiritual work which he means is the art of acting. The human soul, he says, expresses itself in the feelings which live in us (Stanislavskij, 1988, p. 25ff). The danger for an actor is to be more worried about the impression he subconsciously creates of himself, the “see how clever I am” attitude, than the natural and logical spiritual reality and development required by the role. In plays it is important to be yourself, not to pretend. It is to live a role. Everything that happens on the stage both on the inner and outer plane must have a reason. One must always be active. Even when one is not doing anything, one must be actively doing nothing. He stresses strongly the meaning of the connection between the spirit and the body. This is the real reason in what is being played, not necessarily the action itself, it is the driving force in the play and moves the action on. The real thing is that which has reason and motive. Motive is what makes any sort of action interesting (Stanislavskij, p. 50ff).

**Nielsen, Guardini, Utnem - liturgy and liturgist**

The question now is if it is possible to use Stanislavskij’s perspective in the liturgy and with the liturgists. If we look at Erik A. Nielsen’s book, *Den skjulte gudstjeneste [The Hidden Worship Service]*, we see a clear agreement between Nielsen’s criticism of today’s Danish worship service and Stanislavskij’s criticism of the cliché theatre. This is especially clear because Nielsen in his judgement of the worship service begins with the German dramatist Lessing’s criticism of the theatre (Nielsen, 1988, p. 11).

Nielsen speaks of the service as an event, where there is some activity taking place. But our present time’s *indifference to more radical experiences is also reflected in the church*. He talks about the “ordinary” values of our time which are shown by withdrawal and boredom. An ordinary upbringing teaches us to moderate or totally suppress the body’s more or less natural signals and all spontaneous outbursts of the soul’s condition (Nielsen, 1988, p. 10-11). We recognise
here Stanislavskij’s assertion that in fact the soul expresses itself through the body.

Nielsen compares theatre and church by starting with ancient theatre, which was liturgy in the sense of a religious cult, and he says: *a theatre without drama [...] is just as self-contradictory, as liturgy without events* (Nielsen, 1988, p. 12). *The worship service should be the place, where there is an echo of every human experience...* (Nielsen, 1988, p. 17). Nielsen thinks that those who are genuinely religious are those who want to be changed. *When people own something, which could be called religious expectation, then the longing to see and the hope of being changed are surely the deepest part* (Nielsen, 1988, p. 18). In my opinion this must be the same perspective as Stanislavskij’s of the theatre when he talks of the theatre’s function of widening the experience and leaving spiritual traces in the souls of the audience.

Nielsen continues his analysis of the church by criticising how we in our society have changed the priest from a strong shaman, to the stolid, dry, boring and insignificant figure of our time. He talks of the drama of reality and says that *the worship service is the world’s largest and most comprehensive drama*. Therefore he is looking for rhythm, incarnation, and presence. The rituals *must be completely filled with rhythmic life* before they can have any existence (Nielsen, 1988, p. 19ff). And like Stanislavskij, Nielsen is left not being able to explain fully the magic or the great power, as he calls it (Nielsen, 1988, p. 26f; Stanislavskij, 1988, p. 343).

The catholic religious philosopher Guardini is also quite definite when he talks of the relation between liturgy and reality, and the worship service’s inner and outer form. He talks of this in his book *Om hellige tegn [About Heavenly Signs]*. He says that liturgy is an action, an instant reality. It is not just a thought, but also something we do, something that happens. The soul can only express itself through the body. The spiritual is hidden in physical processes. He goes so far as to say that to see and to do are basic forces in liturgical life. It is *about understanding, experience and consummation in a vital way*. Thus he
looks at different body movements connected to the religious life, describes how they can be executed and what thoughts and feelings we can put into them. At the same time, he makes clear that this cannot be compared with experiencing the reception of these signs directly from one who has integrated them into his own life (Guardini, 1995, p. 9ff). Experience is also stronger and more genuine than the words and thoughts we can, in retrospect, connect to the experience.

In Norway Jan Oskar Utnem clearly criticises our worship services in the same way as Stanislavskij, Nielsen and Guardini. Utnem expresses his thoughts in *Tilbedelsens ansikt [The Face of Worship]*. The book is a criticism of our worship services and the church’s lack of understanding of the meaning of body and spirit. He maintains that this is related to our tradition of suppressing the bodily senses, apart from hearing and speaking. When each individual’s physical body is not visible, then the worship service form is also invisible, he says (Utnem, 1998, p. 58).

Utnem criticises today’s worship services in the same way as Stanislavskij in his time criticised the theatre. Both focus on the connection between content and form, between the inner and outer, as much as in the action as in the actors.

**Spolin - Theatre games and magical presence**

We have seen how Stanislavskij, Nielsen, Guardini and Utnem search for the connection between the inner and outer, between form and content. Stanislavskij developed a theatre school to try and achieve this. In my opinion, however, Spolin has in reality given us a practical training programme to enable us to reach Stanislavskij’s goal.

As previously mentioned, theatre games are built on ordinary games, but are to be regarded as exercises led by a trainer. Each exercise has a few, but limited number of rules. Within the rules there is freedom to do anything. It is this limited space with full freedom, which becomes the centre for spontaneity and creativity. The games have a focus, which in a way is impossible to reach. Because the moment the game is played and the goal is reached, the focus moves and
one must again work to keep the focus and reach the goal (Spolin, 1990, pp. 9, 10, 39). This is the exercise.

Let me for example use "tag". A is to catch B. B decides himself where and how he is to run. This is the creative point. The moment A or B decides not to run, then there is no game. The moment A tags B, the game is over or it can be reversed and B is to catch A. When A and B play "tag", they will be spontaneous and have complete concentration in what they are doing. If one has contact with one’s own presence, it can then be taken into a new situation, new exercises and games which demand another side of our attention.

In the way the focus moves as soon as it is reached, I can see similarities between theatre games, meditation and liturgy. The goal for meditation and contemplation is to see God or reach a contact with the transcendental. Contact with the transcendental is, as a rule, short. One must carry on with the prayer and meditation to gain a new contact, just as in the game. The moment one reaches the focus, it moves, and one must continue to work to be able to reach it again. It is the same with liturgy. During the worship service or church drama I can experience more or less being there, in the holy mystery. The moment the change happens, both the liturgist and the congregation concentrate again to enable it to happen again. Sometimes the experience is total. Time, place and space disappear for another dimension, which I experience through the game or the church service, where everything and everybody melt together in divine being.

In Spolin’s Theatre games catalogue there are about 200 exercises divided into three main groups. All have the same basic structure. But there is always a new focus, new boundaries and new possibilities. In her handbook for the catalogue Spolin says a little about what the games can achieve. Some of the exercises are practices in concentration in relation to place, time and the people working together. They increase room focus beyond the surroundings and into oneself. The trainer asks the players to feel what happens in the different parts of the body, describe the room they are in, what the other players are like, how it feels to be moving, what it is like to stand still.
This then should be integrated. Movement should be included with non-movement, non-movement into movement. Fellow actors should be seen with the back, spoken to with the stomach, etc. Impossible tasks in themselves but all the same something which practises concentration in relation to place, time and the people one is together with. This says Spolin, is an organic way to perceive, understand, sense and experience surroundings. These exercises make one awake and observant and create a confidence and security in relation to oneself and to one’s surroundings (Spolin, 1990, p. 20).

Another series of exercises are mirror exercises. Here the focus is to mirror a fellow actor, singly or in groups. The responsibility for leading alternates, so that in the end both lead and both follow. Follow the one who follows is the code word in these exercises. Here the important point is to do what you see and not what you think you see. Usually we let an impression, what we see, go through our head, before we react ourselves. In these exercises the players give themselves to spontaneity and movement. Here we let go of continuous evaluation and control over ourselves. The self or the ego comes out. Seen this way, mirroring is an organic event and a reality of another type than the intellectual (Spolin, 1990, p. 22). When the mirror exercises reach their peak in “follow the one who follows”, then we are at the heart of what Spolin calls the theatre game process. Then the players look at themselves by looking at their fellow players. One sees and is seen. It is the free inner egos which are expressed, where an equality in responsibility and status in fact become the reality (Spolin, p. 38).

The games often have a fixed structure of who, where and what. “Who am I” deals with the relationship to fellow actors. “Where are we” is a place, the surroundings. “What are we doing” deals with the group activity, e.g. I am a hot dog seller. We are at the market square. We are celebrating 17th of May (Norway’s constitution day). The exercise can be to establish who, where and what without using words, without saying anything, but by showing, being and doing. If one must use words, then they can just be nonsense-language to avoid oral communication. This exercise can then be developed so that each in-
dividual player has decided what, where and who, without telling the others in the group what they have decided. During the exercise each player should have shown who, where and what, and thus integrated this with the rest of the group into a joint where and what, and with individual but integrated, who. This is an advanced exercise which needs a maximum of concentration, being open and not least that of letting go of one’s own fantasies and ideas. One has to be 110 % involved as to what is in fact happening and not to what one thinks is happening. In these exercises the activity is moved from the head of each individual player’s thoughts to what is happening on the stage. The experience these exercises give, is that life and relationships can be, and are, under continual change. The players get to practise being flexible. They train in being able to tackle changes in a creative way so that the necessary changes lead to a joint ‘what’ and ‘where’ being established. These are processes which in daily life often appear as threatening and dangerous. Nielsen claims that anxiety about them can ruin today’s church services.

I see a positive attitude and the ability to be flexible as necessary for giving liturgy life. Often both the liturgists and the congregation experience something unexpected happening in a church service, without being able to integrate it into the liturgy which is being celebrated. The liturgy cannot become an event as long as the liturgist does not see who is present, and what is happening. We have all felt more or less embarrassed in such situations and reacted with sometimes awkward but also clever moves to resolve them. Spolin’s exercises do have something to offer to give us better results.

Spolin says the following about the intuition, the openness, the ‘for who-what-and-where’ that the games should bring out: *Intuition, as used in this work, is called by many other names in a vast number of other schools. And since it is so undefined, and maybe even not definable, intuition is here called the X-field – the field from where the artist (the poet, philosopher, scientist, teacher, housewife) receives her inspiration. The intuition bypasses the intellect, the mind, the memory, the known and dives down into unknown sources, the non-
labelled. How you use your intuition (the X-field) is not something you can learn. You somehow have to stumble into it. It just happens!

Spolin goes on to say that the term intuition describes what is beyond the limits that culture, race, education, psychology and age can supply. These give us the manners, prejudices, intellectualisations and customs that we use to survive. The games should free us, so that we can see with our inner eye, where there is no prejudice, references, and predetermined understanding (Spolin, 1990, pp. 36-37).

Here we meet once more what Stanislavskij, Nielsen, Guardini and Utnem are aspiring to and searching for in the connection between inner and outer forms and one’s soul being present in the moment. Spolin gives us in addition a process-orientated method, where the participation of the sender and the receiver are of equal value, and where the process is reciprocal. She says that this is a magical presence and proof of the inner ego’s existence. It is fertile ground for the poet, the artist and the seeker (Spolin, 1990, p. 21). I would also add that it is fertile ground for the liturgist.

**Løvlie - An aesthetic perspective**

In the magazine *Nordisk Pedagogikk* 1-2/1990 we find an interesting article associated with this theme. Professor Lars Løvlie at the Pedagogical Research Institute, University of Oslo, writes about the aesthetic experience. He says here that aesthetic is the sum of sensing, feeling, mind and meaning, in other words a totality in the experience (Løvlie, 1990, p. 129).

He goes through what he calls the expressive and the transformative theory. The expressive theory puts genius in focus, revelation if you like, which others will receive. This theory or attitude gives the artist a special position in relation to life, life’s meaning and the eternal truths. The artist is the one who has contact with these or who has his own access to them, which he/she can transfer to others. Løvlie criticises this theory as ordinary and claims that it binds opinions and attitudes in our society. The most important is to conform to the right
opinions and views which are presented to us by the genius (Løvlie, 1990, p. 132ff).

He has a very interesting section which is called *I lekens grep* [*In the grip of the game*]. The point of the game is to play it. Everything that is said about the game’s meaning and function is secondary in relation to playing it. Only by playing the game can it be completed. The authentic and maximal experience potentiality lies in performing the game itself, in what happens between the players and their use of props, symbols and metaphors (Løvlie, 1990, p. 135). This is an introduction to what he calls *the transformative theory*.

What Løvlie says about the game, many of us could also say about the liturgy, its only point being that it is a celebration and it is only as a celebration that it has value and legitimacy. This is in contrast with those who maintain that the point of the game is its educational side or that the liturgy’s point is the preaching or to convert people.

The transformative theory looks at aesthetic experience as poetry and creativity. *The meaning of the work is to be found in the running dialogue between three aesthetic points: the artist, the artwork and the receiver. This running dialogue is a process where atmosphere, feelings, and intuition are included in the experience just as much as ideas, reasoning and practical skills.* Much emphasis is placed on taking part and communicating, where new things happen in the openness between parties, and where there is a balance between nearness and distance. When the new cognition is reached, a basis for a new dialogue and a new process is created. Therefore there is all the time talk of widening experience, not upwards, but outwards (Løvlie, 1990, p. 138ff). He does not consider cognition as a ladder but as an outward spiral.

Løvlie asserts that in the expressive theory people become lonely, while in the transformative theory there is a fellowship where an expression is the basis for a new expression. Here, there is a process between those who express themselves and those who listen and then express themselves. Here lies equality and participation.
Put simply, says Løvlie, in an acknowledgement process there is a difference between someone talking to me and I accept what he says as the truth, and a conversation where both people are gaining a new understanding. Here, there is a parallel with Spolin’s thoughts about the equality between people that the game gives them, and Nielsen’s thoughts about what the liturgy should do. Løvlie, Guardini and Utnem point to the experience and the action as being essential in themselves.

Looking at the church, we find on the one side revelation, the Scriptures, as giving us norms, and on the other side emphasis on fellowship, equality and unity in the celebration of this revelation. According to the criticism by Nielsen and Utnem, it sounds like the church is governed by the expressive theory which strengthens the hierarchy and a ‘from above looking down’ attitude both of which make people passive receivers. Therefore the transformative model ought to have a preference when the church wants to foster equality and unity.

Experiences from the ‘Church of the Deaf’
I was a minister with the deaf from 1985 until 1997. It gave me challenges and experiences concerning the possibilities of visual communication. In a deaf society it is only the visual which creates meaning. Whether it applies to something that is said or done, it has to be visual. Sign language has a completely different action character to oral language and needs a completely different type of concentration and nearness. One must first get people’s attention by eye contact before anything can be communicated. This affects the spoken situation whether it is only one or a larger number of people one wants to communicate with. One of the first things I had to learn was to be honest about my own feelings. I could not express something with my face or my body and something else with the sign language. If you are tired then you are tired, and if someone asks you, then answer yes, my sign language teacher told me, deaf people can see it and it would be understood as a lie if you deny it. I met demands for truth and honesty
in the deaf community as something of a key attitude. I have worked with this both personally and liturgically.

**Summing it up**
We have looked at some of the thoughts and attitudes which have characterised the milieu where a pilgrim liturgy has developed. Some of the main points are: Liturgy is action. It needs a nearness, a form of being with those who have responsibility for the occasion, so that there can be a dialogue, an acknowledgement process, between the liturgist and the congregation. This process is an experience where atmosphere, feeling and intuition are included in the experience just as much as the ideas, discussions and learned skills. With this as a start, Nidaros Cathedral’s Drama Group presented a pilgrimage service:

**The Pilgrimage Service for the St. Olav's Festival 1997**
All who are to take part assemble in the Waisenhuset at 2 pm.
Procession: Processional cross and two hand bells outside the church - candles inside the church. The liturgical dramatists, lay readers, visiting priests, assistants, liturgist and bishop. As the procession comes into the church the candle carriers join the cross bearer and the hand bells give the signal to the horn fanfare. The priests/administrators carry the bread and the wine and hold them in their hands during the whole service. The cloak, knapsack and staff are carried to the foot of the tower. The rest of the procession goes to the choir steps by the high altar. The cross and the candles are carried to the northern choir arch.

The liturgist takes his place at the middle choir arch and initiates the greeting before the altar. All bow to the altar and remain standing. Preludium is played and hymn sung while the procession walks forward to the choir steps.

Prayer. Liturgist at the top of the choir steps at the middle arch, facing the altar: *Lord we have come from south and from north, from east and from west, to this holy place to give thanks and praise. We offer our lives to you, our Creator, our Saviour and Comforter. Amen.*
The liturgist turns towards the congregation and gives a sign for them to be seated. The assistants go to their places.
Liturgist: *Grace be with you and peace from God, our Father and Lord, Jesus Christ.*
Introductory words. The liturgist says something with regard to the day’s theme, turns towards the altar and continues: Ps. 84, 2-7: My soul longs, indeed it faints for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God. Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my king and my God. Happy are those who live in your house, ever singing your praise. Happy are those whose strength is in you, in whose heart are the highways to Zion. As they go through the valley of Baca they make it a place of springs the early rain also covers it with pools. They go from strength to strength the God of gods will be seen in Zion.

Gospel reading.
Liturgist: Let us hear the Holy gospel.
Organ fanfare. The cross and candles are carried through the middle choir arch and down the middle aisle. Two readers, laypersons, come to the same place. The lesson is read in Norwegian and in another language which varies from day to day. John. 6, 8-11: One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother said to him. "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?" Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about five thousand in all. Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted.
Liturgist: This is the word of the Lord.
Organ fanfare. Cross and candles are returned to the north choir arch. The readers sit down.

Nidaros Cathedral’s Liturgical Drama Group. The cloak, staff and knapsack are moved from the foot of the tower to the choir steps while the following is said, using microphones:
Now God strings his bow. We have a place to live.
He opens his arms, clothes us in love.
The lord wanders in his garden. We stand at our goal. Here all things can rest.
The support made the pathway safe. (The staff is lifted up and placed in front of the cross and the candles.)
Warmth gave us courage. (The cloak is lifted up and placed in front of the cross and the candles.)
Food for the journey gave us enough nourishment. (The knapsack is lifted up and placed in front of the cross and the candles.)
Now we are here, unclothed and empty handed. Lord come to us. Come.

Intercessory prayers.

The liturgist stands in the middle choir arch facing the altar:

Liturgist: Lord we thank you for the longing which has brought us here. Give us the spirit of love and humility. We pray for this divided and fragmented world. Make our lives complete and coherent, so that we can live in peace. Let your church be a sign of unity.

Sunday: Help us further on your way. Amen.
Monday: We ask for joy and praise. Amen.
Tuesday: Help us so that we do not, in our greed, destroy what you have created. Amen.
Wednesday: Help us to trust that our lives are surrounded by your love. Amen.
Thursday: Help us to show compassion. Amen.
Friday: We ask that all evil and distress should not paralyse our lives.
Support us in the hope You give us. Amen.

Communion. Horn fanfare. Liturgist in the middle choir arch turns towards the congregation and sees the assistants are in place spread out in front of the choir steps; turns towards the altar:

Liturgist:

We thank you, Lord, for the bread and wine that we have received through your mercy. May it be for us the bread of life and the cup of salvation. The corn was scattered on the fields, and the vines were spread over the hillsides, but are now gathered together in the bread and the wine. In the same way we are also gathered together here. You who hold the heaven and earth in your hands, you call us all by name and in this way we belong to you and are your people on earth. Together with the faithful from all ages, we pray the prayer your Son has taught us:

All: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread, forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

Liturgist:

Our Lord Jesus Christ in the night that he was betrayed, took bread, (the assistants lift the bread baskets) gave you thanks, broke it, gave it to his disciples saying: Take, eat. This is my body which is given for you. Do this
in remembrance of me. In the same way, after supper he took the cup (the assistants lift the chalices), and gave you thanks; he gave it to them, saying, Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

All: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: grant us peace.

The Liturgical Drama Group leads the assistants to each of the distribution stations during the anthem Lamb of God. There are at least seven stations. The priests with the bread and on each side of him an assistant with the wine. Distribution is by intinction. Those administering partake of communion at their own stations.

Liturgist: Jesus says: “I am the vine, you are the branches”. Come. Everything is ready.
Organ music or singing during the distribution. After the distribution the priests and assistants gather at the choir steps. The liturgist in the middle choir arch turns to the congregation:

Liturgist:
The crucified and risen Jesus Christ has now given us his holy body and blood, which he gave to save us from all our sins. He gives us strength and keeps us in one true faith for everlasting life. Peace be with you. Let us pray: (The liturgist turns to the altar).

Lord, you are the answer to our prayers and the bread for our hunger. Help us to be your answer to those who lack what we have in abundance. Help us to hear the cry you hear, see the need you see, serve the people you serve. Reveal to us the mystery of your table: one bread, one people, one world. Amen.

The liturgist or bishop turns towards the congregation:

Receive the blessing. Lord bless you and keep you...

Bell rings 3 x 3. The liturgist and the assistants and the Liturgical Drama Group bow to the altar.
Liturgist: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
The dramatists with the cloak, staff and knapsack. Readers. Assistants with the bread and wine. The liturgist.
The growth of pilgrimage liturgy
Arne Bakken, who was the pilgrim minister at that time, was the first who talked of the need for a special pilgrimage liturgy. The church dramatists discussed this with Bakken and the Cathedral staff and agreed on a co-project for the development of a special service of worship for pilgrims. Bakken has also been a church dramatist for many years.

The conditions for the worship service were as follows: The liturgy should be celebrated and last no longer than forty minutes. It should be a service for that particular day’s pilgrims where some of them should be used as readers and assistants. The service should be celebrated each day at 3pm during six of the year’s most hectic days in the Cathedral. Therefore as little rigging and preparation as possible should be used in the Cathedral during the days it was to be celebrated, and there would be no worship programme. The church dramatists were to suggest an outline of the liturgy.

Work method
The church dramatists worked for four hours a week during the spring term and they also had a working weekend in May. We began our weekly meetings with two hours of theatre games and then two hours where we actively worked on the liturgy itself. Once a month we had a meeting with the cathedral staff about the work.

The first stage
The pilgrim was the figure which came to characterise the whole of the millennium celebrations in Trondheim in 1997. The pilgrim had left everything he was used to and started out on a journey. The pilgrim is the stranger, or the one who has become a stranger to all that is familiar to him. The pilgrim seeks but does not always know what he is seeking. There are basically three items which typify the pilgrim: the cloak, the staff and the knapsack. Verbally we decided to use words such as wander, walk, rest, support, help, thirst, drink, hunger,
suffer and get new strength, and see how the meaning of these words are associated with a life of faith.

The first meeting was a “brain-storming” session where all possible associations with the cloak, staff and knapsack were listed. We made several sketches of the cloak and the knapsack. The programme for the liturgy was quickly planned: Processing in, Intimation, Reading, Meditation, Intercessions, Communion, Recessional.

After a couple of meetings the work came to a standstill. Something was wrong and we did not know what it was. We tried to analyse our own process and soon saw that we had been thinking mostly about the pilgrimage itself, about being on the way, while what we should have been doing was to make a liturgy for those who had reached the goal. In other words we had to think differently. We had to think about what to do "at the goal". It had to have a ‘welcome-here-element’, an ‘at-the-goal-element’ and a ‘farewell-home-element’. This changed the character of the whole church service. We decided to keep the cloak, staff and the knapsack, the pilgrim’s protection and support on the way. During the service these would be brought forward and put down in front of the high altar as a sign that the goal had been reached, to have come forward and become unburdened in the presence of God.

All the participating liturgists were to take part in the procession, with everything needed for communion - bread and wine, chalice and paten. This was done in order to avoid having to use extra helpers to prepare things in the church. The procession had to come from outside, make its way into the Cathedral and forward to the high altar, all this in a milling crowd, not knowing how big it would be. There could be chiming bells, hand bells, fanfares, hymns or organ music for the procession, so that people would observe that something was happening and make it easier for the procession to move forward, and for all to know that a service of worship was about to begin.

We wanted to have a straightforward form of liturgy where the theme was easily understood. The Eucharist should be the end of a long journey to a goal. The pilgrimage we understood to be a part of
the liturgy itself, as a preparation, a confession and kyrie. Therefore we decided to go directly from the intimation to the reading. We let the meditation lead into the creed and let this be a collective response to the previous part.

We considered the prayers of intercession as being important. We wanted to emphasise that we as a church and pilgrims never do anything just for ourselves and for our own benefit. When we are a part of the church, all we do becomes also what we do on behalf of others. The communion liturgy was from the worship book, alternative 1, the best known and therefore the easiest for the congregation to join in. The service of worship would be finished with a blessing and the recessional.

The second stage
Now we had a fixed structure, a better idea of what was to be included and we knew more about the pilgrim items. The choice of text, meditation and prayers of intercession needed more work and the actual making of the pilgrim items still had to be done.

We chose Psalm 84, 3-8 as the reading. This covered both the pilgrim’s motive and the ‘at-the-goal’ idea. It was to be read from the lectern in different languages. Thorin protested about this. He had followed our work closely and joined in many of the practices. He thought that we should have a gospel text which showed more clearly the joy of heaven and the festive meal. Also, to get more concentration on the reading, we should raise up the Bible in a gospel procession. He suggested using John 6, 8-11, the story of Jesus feeding the five thousand in the desert. We accepted both the reading and the suggestion of a gospel procession and added an organ fanfare to intensify this part even more.

The intercessory prayers we should consider in relation to the morning service which would also be specially aimed at pilgrims, and for which Bakken had the responsibility. Besides, there was now a new theme for each day during the whole week of the Olsok celebrations and the Church Days in Trondheim 1997. These themes would
be included in the pilgrim’s service. At the end they marked all of the intercessory prayers.

When it came to the communion liturgy, the staff suggested the communion liturgy from the cathedral’s Eucharist. This fitted in well after some preparation.

When we began to try out the liturgy in the church, a completely new idea developed. When the procession had come into the Cathedral and all had found their places, we discovered that something was not functioning correctly, that the liturgist should begin straight away with the usual opening greeting and a “welcome-here” greeting. It seemed like there were two groups in the congregation: the one “you-who-have-come-here” and the other “we-who-are-here”. We wanted to find something that could express a common “we” and thus be more inclusive both in word and action. Thus: the procession comes forward, the liturgist goes up the steps to the high altar, all face the altar and what happens then? There are two possibilities: either the liturgist turns round and addresses the congregation, or the liturgist remains standing and approaches God on behalf of everyone. The latter seems better, more direct and more inclusive. At this point Psalm 84 fits well in. In this way the text gets a new position, a new function and establishes a common “we” in the presence of God.

Third stage
The cloak and the knapsack were made according to a design from the Middle Ages but a little bigger. The staff was made from a small tree. The cloak was mounted on a pole with a crossbar as “shoulders” and lifted up so that it was obviously an item on its own, a sort of banner. It took time to find a good way of representing the items. We tried a simple form where the items became what they were really meant to be. Slowly and calmly they were carried forward and lifted high like the other liturgical items. In front of the short steps the bearers made a semi-circle and at the same time turned around 360 degrees and placed the items down on the steps. Here they were left until the final
procession when they were carried out, just as the pilgrim would be going home again.

With reference to the practical side of the communion, we had already talked about several alternatives. Here both the time perspective in relation to the church’s previously mentioned programme was to be considered and also the liturgy’s own rhythm. We wanted an easy accessibility so that the congregation should feel taken care of. And we wanted to keep up the dynamics in the service. We therefore carried bread in baskets and wine in chalices in the opening procession. In this way the procession would have the character of an offering and the whole of the service as a fulfilment of the pilgrimage.

The assistants, who were to carry the bread and the wine, could walk forward to the stairs in front of the high altar and spread out on each side, and be standing there with the chalice and the paten in their hands until after the intercessory prayers. After the prayers there could be a horn fanfare to create a greater celebratory atmosphere and to bind the gospel reading and the celebration together, while the assistants got into place at the bottom of the stairs. The liturgist could stand at the top of the steps and pray the offertory prayer facing the altar, turn towards the gifts that had been carried forward and read the Eucharistic prayer over these. To make it easier to serve perhaps 2000 people the assistants should spread to eight different stations. With three persons at each station, one with the bread and two with the wine, and by using intinction, we thought that this would work well in the time we had. With this arrangement we would not need extra staff to set up, wash and clear away communion cups. The tasks of the assistants we would give to the pilgrims/congregation. We would use lay people as well as clergy for this.

In connection with the celebration of the Holy Communion only the high altar was used. However, the time factor of about 40 minutes had to be kept. It would take too much time if we were to carry the bread and the wine, first to the high altar and back to the church again for the serving. This is something we experience at the usual Sunday Eucharist in the Cathedral when we have many “stations” and use in-
tinction. This would also be good liturgical practice in Trondheim, not to use the altar, but let the breaking of the bread be the action, the liturgical unifying focus. Besides, it would fit in well with the gospel reading, the story of Jesus who fed five thousand in the desert, and with the pilgrim motif itself.

**Implementation**

When it came to carry out these plans, the question was how we could manage to get as many as twenty-six unknown people to function in an integrated manner as assistants. We asked Thorin for help with this.

Everyone who was going to join us from day to day, either as church dramatists, visiting clergy or lay persons, met in the *Waisenhuset* which is located across the road opposite the Cathedral’s west front. Thorin went through the liturgy here, showed the assistants their place in the cathedral using maps and issued the baskets of bread and the chalices of wine. The procession formed outside where Thorin read one of David’s psalms. While the bells chimed and the hand-bells rang the procession went to the church. The pilgrim service was on its way. After the service the procession returned to the *Waisenhuset* where we finished with thanks and praise.

Even though this service should not have needed extra preparation and staff in the Cathedral, there were other staff there that have not been mentioned. During the summer there is a large group of tourist guides in the Cathedral, door attendants and technical personnel and moreover, as previously mentioned, the organist and horn players were involved in the liturgy. If the arrangements were to be of optimal success it was important that all the personnel who were to be in place should receive the same information about what was to happen. The Cathedral already has good routines for this, which also functioned well for us. One thing we learnt from this experience, however, was the importance of having only one person responsible for informing everyone involved. In this way we would know how to solve any problem likely to occur in relation to all the agreements.
made. This will contribute to a greater confidence and greater concentration on what is really going on.

**Summing up**
In relation to the terms of the pilgrim’s mass, we maintain that our aim was accomplished. It was celebrated within the allotted time of forty minutes. It was a service for that day’s pilgrims where they joined in as readers, planners and assistants. The liturgy needed the minimum of preparation inside the Cathedral.

Now and then there were perhaps too many clergymen in the procession. It was said that the multitude of white-clothed people frightened some of the visitors. It would have been better to use more laypersons, something that would have lightened the impression.

**Responses**
Worship services, which are different from the normal Sunday service, often give three different reactions. The first is silence; the second is positive and the third negative. As the people in charge it is more often than not that we hear the positive comments. Therefore it could be interesting to see if a written questionnaire would give us more answers. In February 1998 I sent out a questionnaire to twenty people whom I knew had been at the pilgrimage service. The following questions were asked: What was your general impression of the service? Did you understand the symbolism of the three items included in the service? Did they become integrated into the liturgy? What do you think functioned badly, what could have been done differently to enable you to have a better experience of being at the "goal"?

Six people answered. The results were different and represented the three main reactions I already have mentioned.

Group 1, two answers: It says: so long after the experience I cannot remember much more than that it was fine and there were many people. The impression was positive. The church service was
part of a flood of good experiences during St. Olav’s Festival and the Church Days.

Group 2, three answers: This is a response very clearly related to a strong, positive experience. *Using words like simple, clear, concentration about the existential - these services were really inspiring for me, a pilgrim in Trondheim in the summer of 1997. These people understood the pilgrim items and found that they were well integrated into the service.*

Group 3, one answer: This part of the congregation questioned the pilgrim concept and felt that it was strange. It was difficult to understand what the pilgrim items were in reality and why they were there. The items were not integrated as part of the worship service. Added to this there were problems in parking, not enough time and not enough places to sit in the church.

We can question the value of this sort of questionnaire conducted so long after the event. What is interesting is that this has confirmed the impression I had from before. Besides, it says something about the importance of not only the liturgists, but also the congregation, being prepared for what was about to happen. Stress before any event always influences the experience.

**Conclusion**

I have discussed the relationship between the inner and the outer form of the Liturgy, considering this as an action. This I have done by pointing out the similarity in Stanislavskij’s criticism of contemporary theatre and Nielsen’s and Utnem’s criticism of contemporary worship services in Denmark and Norway as being boring clichés which no longer touch or move their congregation. I have shown how I think Spolin has developed a practical method to enable us to challenge this criticism. This method is built on openness and communication, something that Løvlie insists is important in a new, non-hierarchically, but all inclusive model for acknowledgement, where acknowledgement is not only an intellectual process, but one that includes all the senses.
Keeping in mind this criticism and Spolin’s methods I have shown how a liturgy for contemporary pilgrims grew in Trondheim at the Cathedral. I have tried to say something of the relationship between outer and inner form in this liturgy. The description of the process itself has been important in order to show how, in all creative work, in all art and all liturgy, there is tension between thoughts of the liturgy, how it is and how it is experienced. I have tried to bring out the tension between intellectual work and creative work, between theory and practice, to show how important this actual practical exercise is, so that a liturgy can become organic, be an action within a fellowship, which can by this be transformed.

After doing this I am left with two thoughts. The first is connected to the fellowship of worshippers. Liturgy is something that begins in fellowship and means something first and foremost to this fellowship. If the fellowship is too large, it is necessary for the liturgy to be simpler and clearer to be really understood, and to function as a common action. At the same time I ask myself how can spontaneity, flexibility and nearness be kept in such a large and random group? Perhaps the liturgy has to use a more familiar form, as for example a normal Sunday liturgy? However, those who come to Nidaros Cathedral and who call themselves pilgrims are not always familiar with the usual form of service.

The second thought is connected to the liturgy’s role as an agreement and as a provocation or as a reply, an expression in a dialogue, as Løvlie speaks about the cognition process. There must at any rate be a balance between the new and the old, between the known and unknown form and content. However, for the congregation it is also surely a question of education or habit in relation to playing an active role in liturgy. We are living in a liturgical tradition where it is not usual for the congregation itself to take on any responsibility for what happens in the service. Or, to put it in another and possibly better way: it is not usual that liturgists and preachers give the congregation the opportunity to hear, interpret, understand and express themselves in the liturgical connection. The dialogue Løvlie is looking for just does
not happen. The liturgists and preachers over-explain the whole thing and intellectualise something which really should be a group created action of a cosmic dimension, a transformation.

An important element in every service for those who can hear, is the music. Of course, song and music play an important part in making fellowship and bringing forth a transformation. This has not been touched on here, as I have chosen to concentrate on the activity aspect and on the visual in a liturgy where the singing of hymns has been deliberately kept to a minimum. It had been decided that this pilgrim service should be celebrated without hymn-sheets and the liturgy being handed out to the congregation. Therefore we used well-known hymns and the congregation’s spoken participation in the liturgy was reduced.

Experience from the pilgrim service used in the Sunday Eucharist
We have seen the growth and celebration of a special liturgy, a liturgy which received a long preparation time in a milieu with plenty of resources. It is clear that the usual Sunday service cannot be prepared with such great detail as this and with the number of people involved. But in content and attitude every service can and should be like this. Besides, such thorough work with a special service will affect awareness and attitude for those who undertake it, and this will have a “contagious” effect on other liturgical work.

In many congregations there is now a worship committee and groups who have responsibility for the preparation and carrying out of worship services. The experience we have had with the pilgrim service could be used here. Lay people can be readers, formulate the prayers and join in the administering of communion. Naturally, preparation is important in this sort of work. The readers and prayer readers must be familiar with the words and meaning of the text and be used to hearing their own voice in the church either with or without a microphone.

The assistants must practise walking, carrying and serving. If there is a presentation of the gifts where the bread and the wine are
brought forward and the altar is specially prepared for this, this also
needs training. In this way it can be a solemn occasion without being
slow and pompous. Every action from lighting the candles to pouring
the water into the baptismal font can be done in an open and inclusive
way, just by taking time to practise and showing awareness. When
these duties are set up on a roster in the congregation, there will be a
greater understanding and interest for the liturgy’s inner and outer
form. In this way I believe that the congregation will come nearer to
the point of existing, of fulfilment of time, of transformation.

I would like to share an experience from the church for the deaf
where the congregation is very mixed. At the usual Sunday service
there are about four different language groups there: deaf with sign
language as their first language and who have a bad command of
Norwegian, deaf with sign language as their first language and who
manage Norwegian well, newly deaf who have Norwegian as their
first language and who have bad sign language, and the hearing either
with or without knowledge of sign language. It goes without saying
that in such a congregation it is impossible to satisfy all the language
groups at each service. Someone must, each time, feel strange or left
out in all or part of the liturgy. This is a frustration which both con-
gregation and liturgists have lived with for many years. The liturgists
should be able to use all types of language which is something they do
not always do. The congregation must realise that sometimes there are
language and forms of expression which are strange for some and
familiar to others. Nevertheless they can celebrate the service to-
gether, or respect the various differences and attend to the service at
the times that the language form and expression form suit them. To
use an example from music, some like jazz and others Gregorian
music. I do not believe that to mix the two and perhaps other forms in
the same service, so that all get a little of what they like, would be
successful. I think it would be better to work towards clear-cut forms
and expression. This can give a greater holistic experience. It will also
show a liturgical variety and reflect the richness of variation that God
has put into human life.
With this as a background in my liturgical work, I would not first and foremost strive to make everyone satisfied each time, but together with people who have a special responsibility for the actual service, try to make a well-planned, holistic liturgy. Some will like it and others will think it strange. Therefore variation and diversity are important, so that during a given period as many as possible can have the experience of celebrating “their” service. Over a longer time more will become accustomed to different liturgies and recognise the basic liturgical structure and attitude and be pleased with it. This way of working means that we, as the church and the clergy, should change and prioritise some tasks, because practising and planning take time. Besides, discussions after the service are just as important as the planning beforehand. The thorough and thoughtful evaluation of a liturgy should be carried out after some time, when one is a little distant from it. This process is an important part of the liturgical dialogue. It will sharpen our attitude to what we are doing and what it means to be a church. Therefore, reorganisation at the right time is necessary if it is to happen at all. If we are of the opinion that we are not any more of a church than to the extent that we pray, baptise and break bread, then we are not much of a church in the course of a week. If this is the church’s focus, then we must use our bodies to promote this focus. There must be a clearly and easily understood connection between the liturgy’s inner and outer form, and the inner and outer life of the liturgists.
PILGRIMAGE THEOLOGY
– A THEOLOGY FOR THE CHURCH OF NORWAY?

Introduction

Vi er et folk på vandring.
I tro kan vi skimte iblant
et hjem for hver søkende pilgrim,
det salige livets land.

The hymn *Vi er et folk på vandring* in *Salmer 1997, No. 106 (We are a wandering people)* is a sign of the revitalising of pilgrim traditions which have taken place in the Church of Norway over the last few years. Old pilgrim routes have been re-marked with crosses and put in order for pilgrimages. At the same time there has been a theological reflection on what it means to be a pilgrim in the Lutheran context.

The intention of this article is to describe and discuss the theology which is expressed through the renewal of pilgrimage traditions in the Church of Norway. So far there is no systematic description of pilgrimage theology in relation to the Church of Norway, and I would like to present and discuss important elements in pilgrim thought in this article. In the last part I would like to discuss whether a pilgrimage concept can contribute to the church’s self image and mission, and function as a church model. The underlying question is, whether the

*We are a wandering people.
In faith we may occasionally glimpse
a home for every searching pilgrim,
the land of blessed life.*
pilgrimage concept contains a theology which is important for the Church of Norway.

The sources used here to describe pilgrimage theology are published literature, other written sources such as articles, programmes for pilgrimages, reports from pilgrim projects and Trondheim’s millennium celebrations (1997), and my own experiences. I am using only Norwegian sources because it is the pilgrimage concept in Norway that will be the focus.

Work on the renewal of pilgrimage traditions in the Church of Norway has been mainly focused on Nidaros and around Nidaros Cathedral. This starting point will therefore characterise the presentation, that is St. Olav and the Olav tradition at Nidaros will be the main focus of attention.

**Pilgrimage theology - presentation and discussion**

**What does it mean to be a pilgrim?**
There are different ideas in circulation about what a pilgrim is. One definition is that all who travel along one of the historical pilgrim paths is a pilgrim. Another definition is the one based on the choice of the pilgrim as a profile for the millennium celebrations in Trondheim. This has had a significant popularity and is described in the celebration’s basic statement: *The pilgrim marks our historical identity and makes our common seeking visual. Trondheim’s millennium celebration chooses the pilgrim as its main profiling element. In this context the pilgrim epitomises our common seeking and expresses our search for identity, roots, knowledge, possibility of development, material and spiritual values. This is a comprehensive synthesis and has its roots in Trondheim’s special historical identity. Behind this broad and diverse understanding of the pilgrim concept there is an historical, religious understanding: in a religious concept a pilgrim is a person who breaks away from his daily routine so that he can go to a chosen pilgrim goal, a person who enters life’s holy space and experiences something which changes his life. The pilgrim’s respect for life is both*

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humble and open, seeking and secure. For the pilgrim, life has a dimension of God, a holy dimension that is superior and all consuming. Then life has direction and a goal, and the distinction between important and unimportant things in life can be seen clearly. (Evaluation report, 1998, p. 20-21).

Professor Anne Eriksen comments on this pilgrim concept in an interview for Adresseavisen newspaper: Pilgrimages are a good way for the church to gain attention about a church tradition and Nidaros Cathedral. The pilgrimage is also suited the grand celebration of Olsok. At the same time the church accepted that pilgrimages had a popular content. There was much discussion during the preparations for the anniversary celebrations as to whether the Pilgrim or the Viking should be the representational figure. The choice of the pilgrim could have been seen as a victory for the church. However, in reality the figure was emptied of its historical context. The pilgrim "became the visualisation of our common search for understanding and insight in the widest sense and expressed our search for identity and roots", as stated in the anniversary programme. Thoughts about sin, penance and forgiveness - the original motivation for pilgrimages - disappeared into a bank of fog. In all the loving openness the pilgrim concept seemed fairly tame. The description of the pilgrim works well together with the three aims the 1000-year celebrations were built on: closeness, caring and happiness. There is nothing the matter with this, but are these values particularly special for Trondheim? Could they not have suited Sandefjord too? (Adresseavisen, 16.02.99).

Anne Eriksen says the 1000-year anniversary’s pilgrim concept helped to empty the pilgrimage concept of its historical context. I agree with this. Her contention that the church accepted the city’s broad pilgrim concept can be questioned. The 1000-year anniversary pilgrim concept was useful because all those who came to Trondheim during that year could call themselves pilgrims - no matter what they were seeking, or what motivation they had for the visit. The main problem with this concept is that the goal for the pilgrimage becomes diffuse. Indirectly such a concept weakens the thought about pilgrim-
ages having a goal. The important thing about being a pilgrim is to seek, search, journey - not to reach a goal.

In the church’s work with pilgrim traditions the pilgrim concept is in preference connected to four stages of the pilgrimage: the breaking away, the walking, the goal and the return home. Hans-Jacob Dahl has made the following attempt at defining today’s pilgrim: The pilgrim is a religious person who through breaking away and a journeying towards a holy goal, seeks a meaning, direction and a goal in life (Dahl, 1995, p. 27). This definition says something about the stages in a pilgrimage: The breaking away, journeying and the goal. In addition the definition describes the pilgrimage’s inner spiritual side: It is about a religious search for meaning, direction and a goal in life. The definition has two weak points. The one is that it says nothing about the return home, and the other is that the notion of the religious person is not really very clear. The expression is ambiguous and there is reason to ask if it is right to say that some people are more religious that others. I suppose it means that we are talking about the religious-seeking person. I appreciate Dahl’s pilgrim concept with the additional two points above, which are representative of the church’s pilgrimage concept and I shall use this as a basis for further discussion.

To be a pilgrim is not only to journey along a pilgrim’s way. For the pilgrim, the actual physical walking in the forest and mountain mirrors the walk of the person’s inner, spiritual journey. This opens up the possibility for a spiritual pilgrim concept, which is a way to face life without actually physically being on a journey. Arne Bakken describes it this way: To be a pilgrim is in the religious sense understood as a way to live life itself. One is constantly in motion and willing to break away from a fixed way of thinking of oneself and others, a breaking away from a way of living which does not consider the earth as a shared home for all living things [...]. In this way the outer physical pilgrimage can reflect a journey in a person’s "inner spiritual landscape". Therefore one can distinguish between going on a pilgrimage, and being a pilgrim according to one’s philosophy of life. In this way those who are tied to the sick bed can still be pilgrims.
who physically go on a pilgrimage openly demonstrate this philosophy of life (Bakken, 1997b, p. 24).

Trond Berg-Eriksen writes that a pilgrimage is a journey into history and into one’s own life (Eriksen, 1997, 15,19). In a Christian pilgrim’s thought it is important that a pilgrimage is something more than just a journey to a pilgrim’s goal, it is also an inner journey. We can see this if we look at English pilgrimage literature. There is a chapter in an anthology about pilgrims with a series of texts which describe the pilgrim’s inner journey. In the introduction to the chapter Martin Robinson writes: Pilgrimage without an interior journey becomes debased. There is a need to see beyond and within if the experience of pilgrimage is truly to act as a living metaphor for the Christian life (Robinson, 1998, p. 127).

God - holy and triune
Two principal elements in the pilgrimage concept are God as the holy one and God as the triune. When Arne Bakken describes his understanding of God’s holiness he quotes and supports Helge Kvanvig: When we say that God is holy it means in terms of modern language: "God is what in human existence cannot be manipulated." Everything else is delivered into human hands. There is a limit for mankind: at some point human control ends and the divine begins, at some stage the activity ends and the prayers begin (Bakken, 1997a, p. 31). The holy God is the goal of our seeking, our prayer and our worship.

This understanding of God’s holiness contains a useful thought for our own times, which are characterised by the idea that boundaries are there to be broken down and overcome. This points to the fact that there are borders which cannot be broken, boundaries which give a framework for human life. I believe this can also function as a guide towards finding that there is something in existence which is really different - that God is a reality. But this understanding of God’s holiness is also problematic. It looks as if God’s holiness is tied to the human experience of where humanity ends. This can open up the pos-
sibility for humans themselves to define what God’s holiness is. Then it is up to each person to define what boundaries are good and which should be broken down. However, the century we have just left, shows clearly that people are not able to decide these boundaries. We have in many ways been able to conquer nature’s boundaries of tolerance, and bestiality has never been worse. God’s holiness must in this way primarily be defined with the starting point in the biblical reference to God. The Swedish theologian Agne Nordlander describes it with the following expression: God’s holiness is an emanation of all that God is, He is above and divorced from the creation, the inviolable majesty, He, who both saves and judges, He who is Lord over everything and everybody (Nordlander, 1990, p. 18-25).

In addition to God being described as the holy one, there is also talk of holy persons and places. The words, holy places, are used about cathedrals, churches, Olav’s spring, church ruins etc. Does this mean that within the pilgrim concept there is an understanding that some places are more holy than others? The way Arne Bakken understands this is explained in the following: Christianity is not bound to special holy places. However, those here on earth who have one holy place, often get help in understanding that the whole earth is holy. If one sees holiness in a person, it is easier to see that the divine lives in all people: The holy place is not holy in itself. It is holy because the Holy one meets us there (Bakken, 1997a, p. 177-178). In my opinion, this idea of holy places has a much better basis in the scriptures than the dogma developed in the 4th and 5th century where the church building’s holiness became associated with the fact that they contained the martyrs’ remains.

In the understanding of God, the pilgrim concept is clearly trinitarian. The three articles of the creed are bound together in a unity. Jesus Christ’s death and resurrection points towards the whole of creation’s new creation, where the aim is not only salvation for the individual. This leads in the next round to a positive assessment of creation, it is not something that one must retire from and give up. Furthermore, the concept of God as the Creator and the Saviour combined
with God the giver of life - the Holy Spirit - is revealed when the whole approach to the renewal of pilgrimage traditions is a matter of renewed spirituality, about fellowship and about living out a life of faith. The Holy Spirit is there despite the fact that there are not many direct references to the Spirit’s work. Elements in the trinity theory are also revealed in the description of how the invisible God has revealed himself in the Word through Christ. As a result of this Jesus is described as God’s face, according to John. 1, 14; Col. 1, 15 etc.

The Creator and the Creation
God as the Creator and the relationship between people and the creation has a central place in the concept of the pilgrimage. God is the source of all creation and giver of life, and he is the one who has made the laws in the creation. At the end of time God will accomplish his great vision for the creation by recreating the world. People will also be a part of this through their everyday activities, both big and small. People’s contribution does not mean that they are to create paradise. Arne Bakken writes about the relationship between God and the human role in the new creation: *The church [...]* does not emerge before the end of time, when God has guided (it) to (its) destination, the heavenly Jerusalem. *Then God’s and people’s creative activity will be joined and reconciled [...]* God clearly says yes to human work and cultural activities. *It will not be shut out from the heavenly city* (Bakken, 1997a, p. 105).

The relationship between the Creator and the creation has a central position in the renewal of pilgrimage tradition, and this comes to light in a statement of the bishop’s conference (1992) *Forbrukersamfunnet som etisk utfordring [Consumer Society as an ethical challenge]*, which was an attachment to the project description for the Bishop of Nidaros and the diocese council’s project *Renewal of pilgrimage tradition* (Bakken, 1994c, attachment). The contents of *Pilegrimshåndboka (The pilgrim’s handbook*, Working Group Pilgrimages in our time, 1997) are also a good example of this commitment. It contains several meditations on the relation to the creation and the
Creator, five daily offices with the same focus and a chapter about Mary’s and St. Olav’s flowers. In the introduction to the meditations the Swedish biologist and author Stefan Edman writes: During the past hundred years many people in the west, especially the urbanised, have lost contact with nature and with the insight that they themselves are a part of nature’s cycle and continuity. The forests, mountains, fields, sea, all these lost their own value and became reduced to raw materials storage to retain people’s material wealth and comfort. The earth is being plundered, the environment poisoned [.....] Hopefully, however we have woken up [.....] Where do we find the source of energy and inspiration for this necessary national and international breaking away? Answer: In a modern pilgrimage, away from the feeling of being a stranger, to a new, warm homely feeling of existence. Socially, but also in relation to nature. We must admit that we are the nature [.....] that we are biological creatures and can never stand "by the side of". At the same time - and it is a Christian-humanist image - we are religious mammals with freedom to choose between good and evil, and with an ethical responsibility which is not given to any other species in the whole of the creation network. We belong to the ecological system, but at the same time are created to mirror God’s love in the creation [.....] At a deeper level it is about finding God, the source and creator of all things (Edman, 1997, p. 49-50).

Connected with the pilgrims’ breaking away it can also be pointed out that there is a need to move away from a consumer society, which is threatening creation with exploitation and pollution. There is a need to seek values, which require us to take an ethical responsibility for each other, life and the creation. It deals with stewardship of the creation with respect for the ecological balance, and in such a way the Creator’s love for the creation is made visible. Pilgrimages can be an answer to this challenge. They can give closeness to nature and our own conditions of life, which contribute to bring about love, responsibility and involvement.

This understanding of the relationship to the creation also has consequences for understanding the relationship between God as the
Creator and people, and for the task God has given people in the creation. In Gen. 1, 28 God gives people the task of placing the earth under their control and the responsibility of stewardship. In our western culture to have “dominion over” has in practice been understood as an ownership commission. In the new pilgrimage concept it is understood that to have dominion over the creation is more of a service commission on behalf of God and the creation - a commission that contributes to the future of all living things. There is a universal and cosmic dimension over the stewardship and the commission. This contains a human concept which takes care of humans as part of the creation, and that they have a responsibility to God for the creation. This concept of people being servants in the Creation has after a while become part of common understanding within the Church of Norway. There is an example of this in Bishop Finn Wagle’s paper *Humans - masters or stewards* at a conference on ethics and nature administration in 1997 (Wagle, 1998, p. 51ff).

The human concept
I have already touched upon the human concept in the introduction to this paper: People are a part of the creation, and at the same time created by God with responsibility for the stewardship of the creation.

One important idea is that the human is a stranger. The word stranger and pilgrim come from the same Latin word *peregrinus*. Arne Bakken clarifies this in the following way: *In addition to the concrete meaning of the word pilgrim, the church interpreted the word to also mean that the human is "a stranger" in this world and that they were on their way to the heavenly fatherland. Therefore we find the wanderer and the pilgrim throughout the whole Bible. The first were Adam and Eve who were chased out of paradise. They and everyone since then, have had a longing inside themselves to return. The pilgrims wander aimlessly toward a goal outside themselves and declare that they are "strangers and exiles on the earth" (Heb. 11,13) [...] In this there is no disregard for the earthly life, but humans are placed in a larger context* (Bakken, 1994b, p. 6).
Humans are strangers in the world after the fall and they long for home. This concept of humans has at times led to a negative attitude to earthly life and to the creation’s blessings as something to renounce. The understanding of the human as a stranger in the renewal of the pilgrim idea that is taking place, does not disdain the earthly but contains a clear and marked social involvement. The reason for this lies in the concept of the holistic human being, that there is both a body and a spirit. Trond Berg-Eriksen explains the understanding of the human as a stranger when he writes about the restless heart: *Augustine and Dante agree that the choice is between going up in the world, losing oneself and being one with earthly things – or go up in God, winning oneself and being one with eternity* [...]. Because people have lost their way and must be led back to the right track (Eriksen, 1997, p. 18). Because people have become strangers after the fall they must be led back to the right track, which is to find God. The basic pilgrimage is therefore a journey towards God – a journey home.

The thought of humans as strangers is also the closest we can come to the concept of sin, and humanity’s sin is that of seeking earthly things instead of God. An extension of this is that the pilgrim concept contains the idea that God can use sinners in his service. This was true not the least of the Viking King, Olav, who could be a hard man, but also a person God could use as his instrument.

Different pilgrim concepts were discussed in the section entitled ‘What does it mean to be a pilgrim’. Common to all is the understanding of the pilgrim as a person who is seeking. The pilgrim seeks new values, new goals and new identity. But even if differing pilgrim concepts use the same idea, it is not necessarily the same issue. In the pilgrim definition for the city’s 1000th year anniversary in Trondheim there has been no attempt to connect the understanding of the person as a stranger in existence and to God. In this case it means that to seek could mean to seek anything. But in the pilgrim concept where the thought of the seeker and of the stranger is kept together, it all comes down to seeking God. I believe it is crucial for the church’s use of pilgrimage traditions that we manage to keep together the understanding
of the person as a stranger and a seeking person. If we cannot manage this we will end up with a pilgrim concept which does not lead people to Christ - to God.

Understanding the person as a wanderer is also important in the pilgrim definition of the human concept. This means to a large extent the same thing as the concept of seeking. The pilgrim has left for a physical journey but is also going on a journey into an inner landscape. In addition it is important here to keep together the concept of the person who is on a journey and the person who is a stranger. The Christian pilgrimage idea is that people are on a journey home, because people are strangers in the world. The problem with a pilgrim concept that defines that all who seek and all who travel along one of the historical pilgrim paths, as a pilgrim, can be shown by the consequences such an understanding would have for Christology. This is discussed in the following section. What happens if the pilgrim concept refers to everyone who wanders and seeks - is on the way - is connected to the thought of Christ as a fellow traveller? Then Christ will no longer be setting the goal for the journey and the goal for life, but the person himself. Christ would become a sort of therapist who only helps people to attain the goal they themselves define. Christ would have the same function as the new profession now titled "Life Coach". A representative for this profession describes his work in the following way: I ask the right questions, and the client arrives at the solutions himself. I do not tell him what he should do. I have no answers for what is a good or bad life (Vårt Land, 20.02.99).

A person is a stranger in the world, who seeks to find his way home. What is this home that people are seeking? We saw that Trond Berg-Eriksen calls it God and eternity. Arne Bakken can also express it in a similar way, but in addition he uses the two concepts ‘wholeness’ and ‘continuity’ to explain the pilgrim’s goal, this will be discussed in the section ‘The Cathedral – a sign of wholeness and continuity’. People’s greed and malignity have resulted in the wholeness and continuity in life being ruined. The wholeness of God and people, God and the creation, people and the creation, and fellowship between
people are broken. Therefore people are seeking the wholeness and continuity they have lost and become strangers to.

Another important factor in the human concept is what we can call the concept of a holistic person that covers both body and spirit. The reformation’s settlement over the pilgrimages meant that the physical journeys ceased. Therefore to be a pilgrim was something that only happened in a person’s inner life. Pietism’s negative approach to this secular life and emphasis on a division between flesh and spirit (Hägglund, 1978, p. 304-306) contributed greatly to a spiritualisation of Christianity. We notice now a reaction to this. In the content of church services we now see an increased use of signs and symbols that speak to the whole person with head, heart and body. A new human concept as a wholeness of body and spirit, a wholeness of people’s outer and inner lives, constitutes the complete basis for a pilgrim’s thinking. The actual point with the physical pilgrimage is that it is a mirror image of the journey a person makes in his inner life.

Olav’s heritage also gives us two important ideas for the human concept. One is that people are created to serve, and the other is that St. Olav as legislator brings out the human’s infinite worth.

**The image of Christ**

What image of Christ comes into focus through the renewal of pilgrimage traditions? The reply to this question is connected to the concept of the saints. A saint’s function is to illustrate Christ by making visual one or more aspects of Christ’s life and work. This includes for example Sunniva traditions at Selje and Olav traditions in Nidaros that show different aspects of Christ. Therefore, we cannot say that the pilgrimage tradition gives us a uniform picture of Christ, because it depends on which pilgrimage goal we are considering. What makes it even more difficult, in describing the image of Christ in pilgrimage work, is the question about how we react to saint traditions in our Lutheran context. I have decided therefore to describe this theme in two parts. In this chapter I will describe the picture which is drawn in-
dependently of saint traditions, and in the chapter about the role of the saints I will cover the saints’ contribution - especially Saint Olav’s.

At the basis for the image of Christ lies the understanding that God revealed himself in the Holy Scriptures through Jesus Christ. In Jesus Christ God has become a person of flesh and blood and Jesus is as a result God’s face in the world.

A central story in the pilgrimage tradition’s image of Christ is Luke 24, 13-35 about the journey on the road to Emmaus (the central panel at the Nidaros Cathedral’s high altar shows Christ and the Emmaus travellers). In verse 18 Christ is called stranger, Greek: *paroikeîs*, Latin: *peregrinus*. Our word pilgrim comes from the Latin *peregrinus*. In Latin “Peregrinus” meant originally a “foreigner” i.e. in legal terms a citizen from any state other than Rome, a "traveller" [...] The wider meaning of “peregrinus” is “stranger, unusual, foreign” (Halvorsen, 1996, p.10). In pictorial presentations of Jesus and the travellers to Emmaus Jesus is often shown as a pilgrim. Further, Luke 24 talks about the risen Jesus as a fellow wanderer on the pilgrim’s way, a fellow wanderer who is both interested in the life and worries of the wanderers and who wants to talk about his death and resurrection. It is important to note that Jesus is also a fellow wanderer even when mankind does not realise this. The story about the travellers to Emmaus also says something about Jesus and the goal. Jesus is there, waiting for us at the goal of the journey and is himself the goal. This may be compared with the fact that Nidaros Cathedral is a Christ church, not an Olav’s church. Through the account of the breaking of the bread the story attains a new dimension, Jesus becomes visible as both risen and living.

Trond Berg-Eriksen points out that the story about the journey to Emmaus visualises a pilgrimage at three levels: a journey into history, to one’s own life, and in comprehension. These three levels are collected into one goal when the Master breaks the bread. For the pilgrim He is the goal for the historical journey, the journey into his own life and the comprehension (Eriksen, 1997, p. 19).
When considering the pilgrim concept which emphasises the role of a person on a journey, I think that it is important to stress two things. The first is that Jesus is the goal for the journey. The other is that Jesus is a fellow traveller with a double role – that He is both together with and facing his fellow travellers. Jesus listens and converses and takes part in his fellow travellers’ lives, but he is also the one who presents the scriptures to show the need for his suffering, death and resurrection (Luke 24, 26ff).

The relationship between Christ and the way takes a deeper meaning by the fact that he is not only a pilgrim and fellow traveller as in Luke 24, but he is also himself the way, cf. John. 14, 6 and Acts. 9, 2.

Along the pilgrim roads over the mountains we find many cairns of different character and age (Smedstad, 1996, p. 26-27). Many theories exist about what sort of function they had in earlier times. However, we can be sure that some of the cairns have been given a special significance as a place where stones were thrown down in connection with the renewal of the pilgrimages. What often happens is that the wanderer carries a stone with him up a steep hill and throws it on the cairn at the top. The stone becomes a symbol of the burdens a person carries with him. When stones are thrown down on organised pilgrimages there are likely to be readings from the scriptures, e.g. John. 1, 29: Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! and 1 Pet. 5, 7: Cast all your anxieties on him, for he cares about you. This is an impressionable element in the journey (Dahl, 1995, p. 28-30; Glennäs, 1997, p. 92-93, cf. Aebi et al, 1998, p. 348-351). Christ who forgives our sins and who is the one we can come to with all our worries, is therefore an important part of the pilgrimage’s image of Christ.

An interpretation of the saints
The following is a study of interpretation of the saints as it is expressed in connection with the renewal of pilgrimage traditions. The foundation of this discussion will be the renewal of pilgrimage tradi-
tions connected with Nidaros and I will therefore confine myself to St. Olav, as it applies to the discussion of which theology and what Christ image the saint is portraying.

Berit Lånkes contribution to this book: *Pilgrimage – A journey towards the Holy* is an interesting new approach to traditions of the saints in the Church of Norway. Another expression of the renewed interest for saints in this context is the book, *Helgener fra vest [Saints from the West]*, with facts and dates about the saints, translated and with an introduction by Jan Schumacher (Schumacher, 1997).

In this book’s introductory chapter, ‘Linking past and present’, the development of the ideas about holy persons and places during the 4th and 5th centuries are presented. A cult developed where prayers were said to the saints and where the saints were regarded as powerful and almost magical. In the light of this development I think that the reformation’s criticism of the saints still holds a warning for us. A renewed interest for the saints must not lead us into the same situation as in the period between 300-400 AD. All the same, I am convinced that a new approach to the traditions of the saints can enrich the Church of Norway.

**Saint Olav – the imitator of Christ**

Some think that the historical Olav and Olav of church tradition from the Middle Ages, stand in such a strong contrast to each other that any attempt to approach the Olav tradition seems in vain. The historical Olav was a Viking king of his time and could be a hard person, but he was also characterised by true piety (Aarflot, 1993, p. 103). Furthermore there is a good historical basis for Olav as a legislator and of his death at the battle of Stiklestad. We can also ascertain that his death has made a quite considerable impact both in the religious and the political sense. In my opinion the story of the impact of his death is more than good enough reason to approach the Olav tradition anew, and re-interpret it.

The main point in understanding Olav is that by his death he has shown the way to the heart of the Christian faith: the crucified Jesus
Christ. As a consequence of this Olav became an image for the fundamental fact that Christ and the individual are to serve each other. This is the interpretation which is the basis for the gospel texts on St. Olav’s day. The alternative gospel reading for the day is Mt. 20, 25-28 which says…. *but whoever would be great among you must be your servant […] even as the Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.* Olav’s death at Stiklestad became a guideline to the King of Kings who gave his life for all on the cross. Olav won by losing: Christianity gained a foothold in Norway and the country became unified into one kingdom as a result of his death. This points us to Christ who also won by losing. Olav’s death became a guide towards Christ and to a new way of living. Life was no longer only a question of violence and power, but about serving and giving one’s life for others. Olav’s heritage shows the image of Christ as a servant and one who challenges us to serve.

The picture of Christ, bowing down, becoming a servant, is in some pilgrimages put into practice by the washing of feet before the pilgrims enter Nidaros Cathedral, cf. John. 13, 1-17.

This main point of Olav’s heritage seems especially current in our time. It can be illustrated with the ecclesiology of the church as a servant which has developed during the last half of our century (Dulles, 1987, chap. VI). This ecclesiology tries to adjust the relationship between the church and the world in a new situation marked by modernisation and secularisation. The church is a part of society and should also be interested in people’s lives in this world. A condensed expression for this theory is found with Dietrich Bohnhoeffer: *The Church is only a Church when it is there for others.*

**The universal Olav**

The background for this aspect of Olav is Snorre’s story of Olav’s vision in Verdal’s mountains when he was on the way to the battle of Stiklestad: *I saw out, over the whole of Trondheim district and thereafter the whole of Norway. And as long as I could keep the image in*
my vision, I saw always further, right until I saw the whole world, both land and sea (Sturlusson, 1979, p. 419).

The traditional interpretation of the vision is that the battle of Stiklestad was a fight between the universal represented by Olav and Christianity, and sectional interest represented by the farmers’ army. Even if the King died in the battle, it was universality and Christianity that won. With this understanding there is still an on-going Stiklestad battle, because there is still the need to fight against individual interests and for Christianity’s universal vision that there is one world and one human race. This is an important aspect of Olav’s heritage for Arne Bakken, and will be discussed in the section ‘Baptism and Communion’. He stresses that both baptism and communion bring people into a universal fellowship and that Christ is the only link to attain a completeness of life. There are also clear connections from the thought of one human race and one world to the pilgrimages’ involvement in the creation. The idea of the Stiklestad battle, which still is being fought, is an exciting expression for the central biblical concern that we are constantly fighting between good and evil. In a time where much emphasis is on pleasure and entertainment it is necessary to strengthen the idea that Christian life also is a battle.

The image of Christ that also comes out here is the universal Christ who holds life together, as a whole, and who fights against evil. That is to say, all that threatens to destroy wholeness of existence and continuity. In this Christ image there is a clear ethical challenge.

There is also a clear link from Christianity’s universality to ecumenical co-operation. In Trondheim a broad ecumenical cooperation is already established, especially during the past ten years, after the worship service led by the Pope in Nidaros Cathedral in 1989. Trondheim’s Christian Council was established in the autumn of 1997, as the first local church ecumenical co-operating organisation in Norway. We also observe that the celebration of Olsok (29th of July) is steadily becoming of ecumenical interest. The focus on Christianity’s universality of the Olav tradition has been an important factor for inspiration in ecumenical co-operation.
Olav and Christianity
This element is carrying on the universal idea from the previous section. A holy place in the extreme north became established by the canonisation of Olav. In this way Christianity reached all four corners of the world, as it was known at that time. The theological point here is that the Christianisation of the world was complete. We are meeting a new image of Christ who holds the world together in one unit.

I think it would be fruitful to reflect further about this point. We know that the world today is by no means fully Christianised. But the thought of Christianity’s universality and Olav’s engagement to fully Christianise Norway means that there is a strong inspiration to mission in Olav’s heritage. This is an element which has seldom been accentuated in the pilgrim concept and which should receive more attention.

Olav – Norway’s eternal king
In the discussion of Olav as Rex perpetuus Norvegiae, Arne Bakken makes two points. Olav gathered Norway into one kingdom in the spiritual sense. The country cannot be held together by power politics only; there is also a need for an inner spiritual bonding. This is of special interest today, something the government’s appointment of a Value Commission showed. The other point is about Olav as legislator: Many of the laws from that first Christian time are accredited to him, and carried his name, “The St. Olav’s law”, until the end of the 14th century. Christianity protected the individual person, no matter what rank or birthright, man or woman, child or older person - all had infinite worth and value in God’s eyes and were inviolable. This vision has been the basis for our culture since then (Bakken, 1994b, p. 29f). The Christ image we see here is that he loves everyone equally and does not treat them differently.

Olav as legislator is a part of his heritage and we can profit from giving it some attention today. This is a challenge to our thinking about the value of human life in borderline situations connected with birth and death, i.e. debates on abortion and euthanasia. Another as-
pect of Olav’s legislature is that the laws helped to give a framework of Christian life in fellowship – they contributed to Christian practice. In this connection it has been said that the Christianisation of Norway was to a larger degree a change in tradition and morality than in belief. The laws helped to define what was meant by a Christian life. This is a very topical point today where we see that old customs of piety are dissolved (pietism) and Christianity’s role in public affairs is reduced (secularisation). In this situation, Olav as legislator gives us a challenge to create a new framework and pattern for the Christian life – new patterns for piety. I believe that pilgrimage traditions can represent such a pattern.

Olav the healer - Olav and nature
Many natural phenomena are connected with Olav’s name. The same is true of the Olav Springs, which were considered to have healing powers. There is a connection with Olav and the life-giving process in nature to today’s involvement with creation in relation to the renewal of pilgrimage traditions.

One motivation during the Middle Ages for pilgrimages to Christ Church at Nidaros and the saint’s shrine was to seek for healing of sickness. In Passio Olavi there are many stories of healing associated with St. Olav and Christ Church at Nidaros. This part of Olav’s heritage, points to Christ the healer, and can be an inspiration for welfare work in the wider sense, both in local relations and internationally. It is an incentive for all efforts to make people “whole”, whether it only affects individual people, fellowship between people or the whole of creation.

Baptism and Communion
As an introduction I would like to mention something that Arne Bakken considers important for understanding both baptism and communion. He stresses that Christ is universal, i.e. the unity which keeps the whole world and the whole of the reality of creation together. The understanding of the sacraments brings this into focus. Communion
bread is Christ’s body and it carries the whole cosmos in it, the bread is made of four elements: earth, air, fire and water. He writes that to eat communion bread is to know that we belong to all living creatures and to the whole cosmos (Bakken, 1997a, p. 153-156). Arne Bakken expresses similar thoughts in relation to baptism. Baptism shows people’s cosmic belonging. Baptism has this function because it is connected with Christ: *Baptism affirms people’s eternal search for something outside themselves and mirrors at the same time human-related goals according to the Christian faith: to be a fellowship of all races and languages where Christ is all in all* (Bakken, 1997a, p. 95).

This importance placed upon the sacraments tells us that Christ is the link to our lives. This is not explicitly linked to pilgrimages as the emphasis is on the universal Christ as a unity connected to life. This concept is associated with one aspect of the Christ image that has been shown us by St. Olav: Christianity and Christ’s universality.

Human life is a journey from birth to death. Being a pilgrim is often linked with this basic journey. For 83.9% of children born in Norway in 1997, the start of the journey was with baptism (Tanggård, 1998, p. 16). With this background it is natural to ask, to what degree the pilgrim is connected to journeying through life founded on baptism – a journeying from baptism to death and forward to eternity in God’s presence.

In some organised pilgrimages I have met this motif at the start of the pilgrimage, or as a reminder of baptism on the way by a mountain stream. In the written material there is surprisingly little reflection over baptism and its connection to the pilgrim. The only one I have found is a relatively short section in Arne Bakken’s book, *Nidarosdomen - en pilegrimsandring* [Nidaros Cathedral – a Pilgrimage]. The basis for this is that people have recognised the pilgrim’s journey into the church, and he writes the following: *On entering life, the church also receives the new born in baptism. This is the doorway into the spiritual life of the church, and as a concrete expression of this the baptismal font, was as a rule placed in the western end of the church, near the entrance. In this way the font and the altar make an axis from*
west to east, from the dark towards the light. It became a visual expression for “via sacra”, the holy way people had to walk (Bakken, 1997a, p. 93-95). Here pilgrimages are connected to a journey along the baptismal way. This connection can help to clarify the idea that the baptism is the start of a life-long journey and a life together with the triune God which is to be travelled along and lived. It is moreover interesting that the new family service in the Church of Norway includes a liturgy that reminds us of our baptism and both in a historical and current perspective helps us to live our baptismal lives.

In the Church of Norway we now concentrate on baptismal teaching. At the same time we are using pilgrimages in work with children and young people in schools and in the church. This challenges us to further reflection over the relationship between the baptismal way and the pilgrim, as something that may deepen both our understanding of baptism and what it means to be a pilgrim. This relationship has been little developed, and the reason could be that pilgrim work in our time has grown from the ecumenical context of churches with different views on baptism. There could also be the fear that a close connection between baptismal life and pilgrimages might seem to exclude people who have not been baptised. This must not happen - that baptism becomes a prerequisite to call oneself a pilgrim. Maybe baptism can be the outcome when a person has made a long pilgrimage into his inner landscape?

Communion in the pilgrimage concept is primarily connected to church services at the goal of the pilgrimage (Glennås, 1997, p. 102). The goal of the pilgrimage symbolises our life’s journey - the new Jerusalem - a new heaven and a new earth. An important idea in the understanding of Holy Communion is accordingly an anticipation of and a sign of the celebration in God’s kingdom, cf. Luke 22, 16.

Arne Bakken writes that the willingness to share is one of the characteristics of being a pilgrim. As with the bread, which we share at communion, we are to share with each other (Bakken, 1997a, p. 156). This underlines the connection between communion and daily life. The way from the communion table and the pilgrim’s road from
the goal and the return home, should be characterised by sharing. Here there is a clear connection to other parts of the pilgrimage concept such as our being stewards of the creation in such a way that there is enough for all, and the idea of serving linked to the death of St. Olav as a guide to Christ’s crucifixion. These ideas are close to the central point in communion - that communion gives us a part in Christ’s complete sacrifice.

In the Porvoo Common Statement Nordic and Baltic churches and the Anglican churches in the British Isles formulated amongst other things a common understanding about communion: *In the eucharist God himself acts, giving life to the body of Christ and renewing each member. Celebrating the eucharist, the church is constituted and nourished, strengthened in faith and hope, in witness and service in daily life* (*Together in Mission and Ministry*, 1993, § 32). Communion as a meal for the renewal of each part of us, as nourishment and strength, connects communion to the journey on life’s baptismal way. Against this background it is pertinent to ask why communion is not celebrated to a greater degree during the journey, in addition to the celebration at the goal. The celebration of communion on the way gives a new dimension to the notion renewal of each part, nourishment and strength. It also helps us to visualise Christ as a fellow pilgrim.

**Concepts of faith**

In the sources I have used I cannot find one clearly expressed concept of faith, but at the same time it can be read between the lines. In the references to the description of pilgrims in the Bible some central texts can be found. Foremost is the story of God who calls Abraham to depart: *Now the Lord said to Abraham, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. [...] So Abraham went, as the Lord had told him...* (Gen. 12, 1 and 4). It also gives the story of the Israelites’ exodus from Egypt and the journey into the desert towards the Promised Land, and the story of the three wise men (Matthew 2, 1-12) (Dahl, 1995, p. 24;
Anmarkrud/Vehusheia, 1997, pp. 9-10). Abraham and Moses experienced God speaking to them when called to go out and seek a new land. The wise men experienced God’s message through the stars. Common to them all was their response to God’s message and the call, in that they departed and left on their journey. Faith is not necessarily based on the belief that something is true. Faith is obedience and action as a reaction to God’s call. Faith is to journey towards home – towards God – in the hope that it will be shown that faith is enough. Faith and action are tied together. This in my opinion is an example of the pilgrimage concept with a human vision, which keeps body and soul together as one; see the end of the section entitled ‘The human concept’. One side of the understanding of faith, which focuses on action, is that it leaves room for intellectual objections and doubts (cf. Ex. 3-4 where Moses comes with a series of objections about God’s call, but he decides nevertheless to follow the call despite the objections).

The next element in the understanding of faith is the risk; faith is to dare; it is to take chances. Abraham’s departure meant that he left his secure family group and faced the unknown and dangerous landscape. Abraham dared to be a stranger (peregrinus) in a strange land.

A third aspect of faith is being open to discovering new facets of life and existence. The background for this is that the pilgrim’s slow journey helps focus attention on the landscape one is travelling through, the people one is walking with, and other experiences along the way. This slow journey creates a willingness to receive new impressions and to change one’s life. But it is expected of the pilgrim that he will be open to change. A pilgrim knows himself that he has left that which he has experienced as safe and known. He has gone out on an outer journey to show willingness to also change his inner spiritual life (Bakken, 1994b, p. 18).

A fourth aspect of faith is the fight against evil. Faith is a fight against evil and a fight to reach the goal for human life. This aspect was mentioned in the chapter on the universal St. Olav. There we met the idea that the Battle of Stiklestad is still going on, because there is
still a need to fight against individual interests and for Christianity’s universal concept. Faith is to fight for the realisation of the thought that there is one world and one human race, where all have the right to life, because all are created by God. Here it can be said that strenuous pilgrimages, and fighting with the elements, mirror the human struggle against evil in order to reach the goal.

In a presentation and discussion of the pilgrimage concept of faith it is also important to raise the question about the relationship between faith and deeds. This was very central in reformation theology and important in the Lutheran criticism of pilgrimage. However, in the sources available I cannot find any traces that pilgrimages or other doings have a function that can be classified as giving people merit in the eyes of God. The emphasis placed on pilgrimages during the Middle Ages as a form of penance, plays no role in the new interpretation of pilgrim traditions that now takes place in the Church of Norway. This is, in my opinion, an expression of the fact that we do not think about pilgrimages as a meritorious deed. The relationship between faith and deeds can be shown further by the idea that faith itself is not a deed that a person can control. In the discussion above it turns out that faith is a reaction to God’s action and God’s call. God is there first. Trond Berg Eriksen expresses this in a beautiful way: To be a pilgrim is not what one does, but something one is pulled into because one hears the call of a voice that already knows one’s name (Eriksen, 1997, p. 14).

A concept that lies near the pilgrim’s departure and his faith, is conversion. We do not, however, find this concept in the written material. The reason is probably that the pilgrimage concept has developed into a church tradition where baptism is the basis for the relationship to God and not conversion. I believe, however, that Luther’s speech on daily conversion could be enriching for what the many departures along the baptismal way and pilgrim’s way really mean.
The Cathedral – A sign of wholeness and continuity

The goal for a pilgrimage is often a cathedral or a church. In the concept of pilgrimages the cathedral is a sign and an image of the wholeness the pilgrim seeks. The cathedral is the Christ image. With its paintings, sculptures and stones it presents Christ’s life, and there people meet Christ in word and sacrament. The saint who is connected to the cathedral also has the function of revealing Christ. The cross-shaped cathedrals tell of the crucified, and in addition the arms of the cross point in all four directions and become a sign that God is the one who holds the whole of existence together. The cathedral with its light and darkness, with its sculptures and architecture gives space to all that a human life can contain of light and darkness. In the cathedral the life of Christ and human life and the whole of existence are together as one entity. This unit points towards re-creation’s day so that God may be everything to every one (1 Cor. 15, 28). The cathedral is a sign of the perfect reality which is to come one day, and which keeps all the conflicting parts of life together in one unit in Christ. There the cathedral can meet the pilgrims’ longing and search for completeness and continuity.

Arne Bakken has written about this idea in the following description of Nidaros Cathedral: *This cathedral has grown up around Olav’s grave, it has the shape of the cross and therefore reminds us of Christ on the cross. The cathedral can be read as a book of remembrance about a person from the Middle Ages’ experience of life and faith […] Those who built the cathedrals, orientated them towards the light of the east, built earth and heaven there, death and life, the dim and the light, pain and hope. It is built where logic and mysticism have given each other a hand. All creation is there, for everything belongs to God’s great plan. The universal concept which Christianity carries with it […] is built into the cathedral […] Time was full of books with the title “Summa” (summary). The cathedral is such a Summa of stone and glass (Bakken, 1997b, p. 32ff).

It is an important point that all elements in this concept of the cathedral can be transferred to any church building. Each church is a
meeting place with Christ, and therefore a place where God and people, earth and heaven meet and are held together in Christ (cf. Eph. 1, 10).

**Fellowship**

The important place given to wholeness and continuity has a consequence that the pilgrim is not only understood as an individual, but also as a collective – as in fellowship. The manner in which such a pilgrim tradition is being used makes obvious the aspect of fellowship, both during the pilgrimage and at the goal. Pilgrimages are often organised journeys with large or small groups of people, and end as a rule, with a church service – preferably with communion. Pilgrimages in fellowship are important among other things because every walk in fellowship can be a test of our willingness to show brotherly love and thought for each other. All the bible texts we have looked at in connection with the pilgrim and the departure talk about collective journeys: Abraham left, together with his wife Sarah, nephew Lot and their servants; the Israelites journeyed out of Egypt in fellowship; the Emmaus pilgrims were two to begin with and became three when Jesus joined them. To be a pilgrim is to be part of a fellowship: *The pilgrims helped each other. On the way a fellowship developed [...] and at the goal - in the pilgrim church - the fellowship was strengthened and increased at the mass. For here is a fellowship which is beyond time and place. The earthly congregation sings during the service together with the whole of the heavenly hosts: “Holy, holy, holy”* (Bakken, 1997b, p. 35).

**A Pilgrim’s church**

The main question in this article is if the renewed pilgrimage theology is a theology for the Church of Norway? It becomes important to discuss the relation between pilgrimage theology and ecclesiology. Can the growing pilgrimage theology, contribute to understanding the essence and stewardship of the church? In reflecting upon these ques-
tions it is not enough to describe its thinking which is expressed in the sources which are the basis of this work, for in those there is relatively little to be found. Instead I will reflect further on the basis of the theology that is described and discussed in the previous subsections, and at the same time introduce contributions from ecumenical literature about ecclesiology. During past years the Church of Norway has been engaged in ecumenical commissions with many different churches both nationally and internationally. Two of these commissions have led to agreements on church fellowship. The Porvoo Common Statement has formed a church fellowship between Nordic and Baltic Lutheran churches and the Anglican Church in the British Isles. The talks, referred to in Nådens fellesskap [Fellowship in Grace], have led to a limited church fellowship between the Church of Norway and the Methodist Church in Norway. Before the Church of Norway Synod agreed to these suggested agreements about church fellowship, the documents went through a general hearing in the Church of Norway. The documents can therefore be said to have a sort of official approval as an expression of what the Church of Norway is learning, even if they do not have the status of being legal confessional documents. With this as a background it is interesting that the Porvoo Common Statement expresses the following as an element in church understanding: ... it is a pilgrim Church, a people of God with a new heavenly citizenship, a holy nation and a royal priesthood (Together in Mission and Ministry, 1993, § 20). This implies that the Church of Norway understands itself as being a pilgrim church, even if this part probably has been brought into the document from the Anglican side. This further accentuates the need for reflection over what it means to be a pilgrim church.

**Ideas from ecclesiastical literature**

Initially I want to say that the search for references to God's people on pilgrimage in ecclesiastical literature has given a relatively slim result. Where you find a reference, it is used mainly as an outline without any special further explanation. In the book, *Models of the Church*, Avery
Dulles refers to the church model *God’s people on pilgrimage* (Dulles, 1987, p. 25), but he does not go into a more detailed presentation and discussion of this model. He feels that this does not cover a broad enough field to be able to function as a good church model. On the other hand I suggest that *God’s people on pilgrimage* is well suited as an ecclesiastical model which manages to hold together a wide spectrum of central elements inside ecclesiology. This model adds significant elements which the other models of Dulles don’t comprehend (his models of the Church as an institution, mystical fellowship, sacrament, herald, servant and community of disciples). The arguments for this lie in the continuation of this presentation. There I will not only focus on points for the pilgrim concepts that other ecclesiastical models have not included, but also show that the model *God’s people on pilgrimage* can hold together many important elements in ecclesiology.

In the Catholic Church’s catechism there are two references to *God’s people on pilgrimage*. It talks about the Church on the way towards a new heaven and the new earth. This Church on the way, is in a battle against the *lawless, secret powers*. The Church also belongs to this world and history and is both divine and human without being able to separate these two, and the Church longs for and prays that Christ shall come again (*The Catholic Church’s catechism*, 1994, § 671). The other reference has mainly the same content, but points out as well that the Church is in exile and hopes for God’s mercy: *Until then “the Church wanders like a pilgrim between the world’s persecution and God’s trust”. Down here it knows itself in exile, far away from the Lord, and it longs for the kingdom to finally come, for that time when it will be united with its King in glory* (*The Catholic Church’s catechism*, 1994, § 769). This picture of the Church as a pilgrim is illustrated by a motif depicting wandering in *De Ecclesia*. Under the influence of the Holy Spirit the church is being continuously renewed (*De Ecclesia*, 1997, p. 28). The shepherd’s motif is linked to pilgrimage and is applied to the bishop’s function: *...it is with their wisdom and sensible behaviour that he leads and organises the people*
of the new covenant in their pilgrimage towards the eternal salvation. As shepherds chosen to lead the Lord’s flock so they are the servants of Christ and keepers of God’s secrets ...(De Ecclesia, 1997, p. 42). The shepherd/pilgrim motif is also used to express longing for the historical churches to unite: Therefore the Spirit stirs up longings in all the disciples of Christ and leads to actions which strive for peace and to unite all in one flock under one shepherd (De Ecclesia, 1997, p. 36).

The Anglican Church also has a pilgrim motif in its church concept. In the book, Unashamed Anglicanism, Stephen Sykes connects the idea of the church as pilgrims’ people, to the confession of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church, a confession which points to a church built on the Scriptures and as being God’s people from both the Old and New Testament (Sykes, 1995, p. 113). Another example is the book Marching to the Promised Land by Ian Bradley. There is an Anglican pilgrim hymn used here as the framework around a description of the church situation in England and Scotland (Bradley, 1992, see especially p. 222).

In The Porvoo Common Statement we have already seen that the pilgrim church is connected with the description. ... it is a pilgrim Church, a people of God with a new heavenly citizenship, a holy nation and a royal priesthood. These expressions are from 1 Pet. 2, 9. This is interesting because the same people in verse 11 are called aliens and exiles. The Vulgate uses peregrinus here. The pilgrim church is also God’s own people who are strangers – pilgrims – in the world with citizenship in heaven. Pilgrims are moreover a holy people. Agne Nordlander gives four main perspectives of what it means to be a holy people. 1) The holy people live in fellowship with the Holy in the world, the way to which was opened by Jesus Christ through his atonement by death on the cross. 2) Through baptism and with the Holy Spirit people come into the world Jesus has opened for them. 3) The chosen people live in the Holy Spirit and are called to live a holy life as followers of Christ. 4) The holy people’s blessing becomes complete on the day of resurrection. (Nordlander, 1990, p. 38-49).
pilgrim church is also a royal priesthood, and this priesthood’s function is to proclaim his great works. Here is the basis for the speech about the universal priesthood. With 1 Pet. 2, 9 the link is made between the pilgrim church and the Church as God’s own people. The Church as God’s own people is a main ecclesiastical expression. Some of the main points in the context agreed upon are: The church is not only an institution, but a fellowship of people bound together by the Holy Spirit and belonging to Christ. The Church has also another characteristic such as confession, prayer and worship (Dulles, 1987, chapter III). The idea of God’s own people emphasises the fellowship dimension in the Church, in contrast to the concept of understanding the Church as an institution.

Jan Schumacher gives an interesting contribution to the understanding of God’s own people in 1 Pet. 2, 9 in an article where among other things he discusses the New Testament words for people: ...”nations” (ta étne) (Mt. 28), and “God’s own people” (láos) (1 Pet. 2). The first expression I call “centrifugal”, while the other is “centripetal”. The church is not only centrifugal sending out to “ta étne”, it represents also the opposite - centripetal – movement; it is a “láos”, i.e. a people who will depart and go on a pilgrimage towards God. And it is this “láos”, this lay people who are the goal for the sending of God’s word to the world. The centrifugal movement - “go out to all nations” (Matthew 28) - releases, where the news about Christ is received, a centripetal movement, a realisation of God’s people. Jan Schumacher puts the idea into concrete form by saying that a one-sided interest in the centrifugal mission can lead to a corresponding reduction in helping people set off on a pilgrimage towards God. To help people on their pilgrimage towards God is about taking human experience seriously and giving help in the interpretation of life. In places where this does not happen, people become strangers in the Church (Schumacher, 1992, pp. 66, 67).
God’s people on pilgrimage
– foundation for an ecclesiastical model

The Church’s character
There is an inner continuity between the Church’s character and the Church’s characteristics. In spite of this I have decided to divide it into two chapters. In this chapter the focus is on points which primarily have to do with the Church’s character, but some elements of the Church’s characteristics, which are consequences of its character, will be included. In the next chapter the focus will be on matters which primarily pertain to the Church’s characteristics, but to a certain degree this will also touch on the Church’s character.

A pilgrim is one who has turned or broken away so that he can journey towards God and towards the new heaven and the new earth. The same can be said of the Church. It is God’s people on pilgrimage who are travelling towards God, towards the new Jerusalem, towards fulfilment in God’s kingdom. Like the Israelites (Ex. 1ff) the Church has broken away to go towards the Promised Land. This is the basic understanding of the Church as God’s people on pilgrimage.

The Israelites’ wandering had as the starting point God’s act of salvation, his call to break away and his promise of the Promised Land. In the same way the Church’s starting point is God’s redemptive action in Jesus Christ, the promise of a new heaven and a new earth and God’s call to belong to God’s people on pilgrimage. Life in the Church is a life in belief in God’s call and promise, and of a life in Christ’s footsteps. Therefore the Church lives in tension between an “already” and a “not yet”. The Church already has a part in God’s call and promise, but it still has not reached fulfilment. This means that the Church must continually be critical of the paths chosen and check that it is always on the way towards God. Therefore it is important that the Church at any moment is willing to change its ways: The Church is always called to repentance, reform and renewal, and constantly has to depend on God’s mercy and forgiveness (Together in Mission and Ministry, 1993, § 20). A characteristic sign of the Church, therefore, is
to struggle against everything that threatens God’s people on pilgrimage to forsake their decision and their goal.

The Church as God’s people on pilgrimage has still not reached completion, it is not perfect, but is on the way. This also means that the Church is on the way in the case of the recognition of God and his will. This means, therefore, that the Church must be a fellowship which, guided by the Holy Spirit is continually seeking for new insights and deeper understanding of the Scriptures and of God’s will. It is therefore important that the Church is recognised by the fact that it emphasises experience, knowledge and openness for a new understanding both of the life in this world and about Christ. Openness to new understanding and willingness to change are important elements in the belief and understanding of the pilgrim concept.

The Church as God’s people on pilgrimage is a stranger in the world. This means that the Church has broken away again and again and must constantly break away from a life that only has this world as a destination – because the Church’s goal is God and God’s kingdom. When the Church is wandering as a stranger in the world it also becomes a sign of a reality beyond the material things, a sign of God’s kingdom. Understanding of the Church as a stranger can lead to an attitude of indifference to life in this world. However, the pilgrim concept has no room for contempt of the earthly, but a clear commitment to creation. This balance is also important in the understanding of the Church as a stranger. The fact that the Church is a stranger must not lead to a retreat from the world. The world is God’s creation and the object of God’s love. The Church is in the world but not of the world. The Church is a part of and lives its life in this world; at the same time it is a holy people who primarily belong to God. This means that the Church is both a human institution and a divine reality. The Church is both divine and human, but it is not possible to separate the one from the other. A parallel to this duality in the Church can be found in the understanding of the pilgrim. To journey as a pilgrim shows a continuity of an outer journey in the physical landscape with an inner journey towards God.
Following the thought that the Church is both divine and human, the Church is both visible and invisible. The Church presents itself visibly as God’s own people on a journey - a fellowship - that is fed and supported by the word and the sacrament. The Church’s institutional side is also an element of the Church’s visibility. The way the Church is remembered in history is not necessarily identical with the invisible Church. This ecclesiological point corresponds with the pilgrim’s emphasis on a holistic concept of the human that can be equated with fact that people are made up of both body and soul. The Church is a continuous whole of a visible body and invisible soul. An important aspect of the Church is that it is Christ’s body, and it is interesting in that context that Christ in the story of the Emmaus pilgrims is both visible and invisible to his disciples (Luke 24, 16 and 31).

The Pauline image of the Church as the body of Christ (Rom. 12, 4-8; 1 Cor. 12, 4-31 and Eph. 4, 3-16) is central in the New Testament ecclesiology. This means that the New Testament Christ image can give a deeper understanding of what the Church being the body of Christ really means: To a certain degree we can say that the Church should aspire to be like Christ and do what Christ does. In the story of the Emmaus wanderers we meet, as mentioned, Christ as a pilgrim. This adds an important point to the body concept. The understanding of the Church as the body of Christ could lead to static thinking about the Church, but the pilgrim concept adds a dynamic element: Christ’s body is not called to a standstill, but to movement towards God and towards fulfilment. God’s people on pilgrimage, interpreted as the body of Christ, further means that Christ is the Lord of the Church and that the Church’s fundamental relation is the relation to Christ. The thought of the Church as the body of Christ also means that God’s people on pilgrimage is a sign of Christ and his nearness in the world. The Pauline body concept is connected to the gift of grace concept (Eph. 4, 11-13). This means that God’s people on pilgrimage need a variety of gifts and services and that each member is necessary and important. The gift of grace idea can also explain that God’s people
must have place for human characteristics and differences. The point is not that people should be as alike and uniform as possible. A related idea is to be found in the ecumenical movement where one body with different members and gifts is used as a foundation for the notion that a unified church is not homogeneous, but a unit that has room for diversity (Engelsviken, 1993, p. 291).

An important point in the pilgrim concept is of Christ being universal and the Church and the gospel’s universality. The Church is a universal fellowship which crosses over country borders and boundaries between the different churches. The Church is catholic and apostolic. It is a universal fellowship of people who at baptism have become a part of God’s people on pilgrimage. The Church is one, just as the triune God is one, and Christ is one. This unity is not dependent on the institutional unit, but the Church is called upon to make visible the unity in Christ (John. 17, 20-21). The Church as a model of God’s people on pilgrimage must be said to be especially useful as the foundation for the Church’s work of unity. Both the thought of the Church’s universality, the concept of God’s people on pilgrimage and the body concept describe the Church’s unity. In addition the pilgrim concept has a dynamic element that means that no single denomination has understood the whole truth. This should be a good starting point for co-operation, discussion on an equal footing between the different churches. Another important aspect of the Church’s universality is that Christ and the gospel are for all people. Therefore the Church must evangelise to call people to journey together with God’s people on pilgrimage.

It is also important to emphasise that the Church is local. It is first and foremost the local church which is visible to the people. The local people of God are a part of the universal God’s people on pilgrimage, and the universality of the local fellowship is seen through belonging to the universal Christ with the Word and Sacrament. This idea about the relationship between the universal and the local in the Church as a model of God’s people on pilgrimage, has its background
in the thought that the local cathedral or church is a picture of Christianity’s universality.

**The Church’s characteristics**
The Church is a fellowship of people, but it is not a fellowship created by humans. The basis is God’s call to depart as it was heard by Moses (Ex. 3, 1ff). That which constitutes the fellowship is God’s action. The fall made the split between God and people, but through Jesus Christ’s death and resurrection the way back to fellowship with God is now open. Through baptism to the triune God and with the Holy Spirit people become a part of *God’s people on pilgrimage* journeying towards God. The baptism represents a departure and the start of the way to God and is a basic sign of *God’s people on pilgrimage*.

This people shall be a fellowship where people help each other to live their baptismal life of departure, of sanctification and development by struggling against all that threatens life, fellowship and creation, and to follow Christ in a holy life. This corresponds with the pilgrim concept which stresses the responsibility for the creation, the fight against evil and a journeying towards God with a will to openness and change. A characteristic of *God’s people on pilgrimage* is therefore emphasising that the baptism is the start of the journey on the baptism/pilgrim’s way, and not only an isolated event.

*God’s people on pilgrimage* need nourishment on their journey, and directions for finding the way to a new heaven and earth - to God. Nourishment and direction are to be found in God’s words and the Lord’s communion. Communion also helps to strengthen fellowship and to keep God’s promise and the goal for the journey alive by being a preview of the celebration in God’s kingdom. God’s word and gathering around the Lord’s table are also therefore a basic characteristic of *God’s people on pilgrimage*.

The Church has the task of constantly calling new people to change direction and to walk the baptismal way as *God’s people on pilgrimage* in Christ’s example towards the goal. This involves a double commission. Firstly, the Church is called to go with God’s Word
to all peoples (*ta étne*, see Mt. 28, 18 - 20). As mentioned in the section ‘Concepts of faith’, this outward sending has the aim of creating a people of God (*láoś*, see 1 Pet. 2, 9) who break away to walk towards God. Secondly, the Church is called to become a servant for the world. It is a servant for the whole of God’s creation. A true Church must therefore be a serving fellowship - a diaconal fellowship. This means both having responsibility and care for each other in fellowship, and of being of service to the world. The background for this ecclesiological point is that the service perspective is very central in the pilgrim concept. The commission of the Church is in other words to share: share the bread, share the gospel, share in people’s lives and journeys and contribute in the sharing of the blessings of creation.

The Church should be characterised by the fact that it both walks together with people and shares their lives, and also that it has a function towards people of making the message of the crucified and resurrected Christ known, and by challenging people to belief and to wander in the way of faith. Christ’s role together with the Emmaus pilgrims is then a model for the Church.

The relationship between Christ and the Church can partly be described by Christ as the leader and the one who walks together with *God’s people on pilgrimage* (cf. Christ as the head of the body, Eph. 4, 15 and Luke 24, 15ff, where Christ journeys together with the Emmaus pilgrims), and partly by the fact that he is the goal for the journey (Luke 24, 30-31). That Christ is the goal for the journey means a call for the Church to constantly seek places where Christ is to be found. This means that it is called to seek Christ in the Word, Sacrament, prayer and worship. But it also means that the Church has a call to seek Christ in his smaller brothers, the hungry, thirsty, strangers, those without clothes, the sick, those in jail (Mt. 25, 31-46). The Church must always be on a journey towards and searching for the Christ who meets us in other people. A sign of *God’s people on pilgrimage* should therefore be that it seeks where Christ is to be found in our time.
In pilgrimage theology, a human is seen as a whole person made up of body and soul, and it looks with approval on human endeavour and cultural activities. The Church as *God’s people on pilgrimage* should therefore be marked by taking human life experiences and culture seriously. This should again mirror itself in church services and the life of the Church. People should be able to understand their lives and get help to interpret their life in the light of being strangers on the way towards the holy. In *God’s people on pilgrimage* humans should be able to live as both body and soul and with all their senses, some of which, among other things, must result in church services with room for signs and symbols.

Another sign of *God’s people on pilgrimage* is that the responsibility for looking after the Church’s commission rests on all in the fellowship. It is not only the responsibility of all who have a position in the Church. A central place in the Bible for the model for God’s people is 1 Pet. 2, 9, which also is the main basis for the Lutheran thinking about the universal priesthood. From the starting point of the pilgrimage theology it is important to underline that the universal priesthood’s responsibility implies both the Church’s mission and the inner fellowship. Everyone’s responsibility to take care of the Church’s commission is a follow up of the pilgrimage theology’s stress on fellowship and responsibility for each other.

Even though all have responsibility as a part of being *God’s people on pilgrimage*, so God has also called people to a special function in the leadership of the pilgrimage. This shepherd-ministry is to ensure that the Church is on the right path towards its goal. It should keep the hope of the pilgrims’ goal alive and in the role of serving by caring for each individual during the journey. The primary commission of the ministry of the Church is the stewardship of the Word and the Sacraments. The ministers have a double service role - both in relation to God and to the Church. Their function can also be described in that they should be fellow travellers with God’s own people. They should become involved in the pilgrims’ lives, interpreter and teacher about the crucified and resurrected Christ and share bread and wine.
for strength on the way just as Christ did together with the Emmaus pilgrims. The ministry of the Church can be described by the fact that it is in part together with the fellowship and that in part it has a function for the fellowship. This means that to be able to fulfil the ministry of the Church a close co-operation must exist between the leadership and the fellow travellers in the holy people.

The pilgrim as a folk church concept
In the Church of Norway we are striving to find good concepts to describe people’s sense of belonging to the Church. This is especially true when we describe the broad state church membership. As a rule we end up with negative concepts expressing a lack of something in their relationship with the church: they are non-Christian or unaccustomed to church or a stranger to the Church. Such language can easily become self-fulfilling in the way that they define themselves as outsiders, even though they have been baptised, and have a faith and wish to belong to the Church.

I would like to ask the question of whether the pilgrim concept could be a good way to describe people’s belonging to a Church. Such a point must start from the baptismal way being described as a pilgrim’s way. All those baptised could then be known as pilgrims. The pilgrim concept makes room for travelling on the way, and that leaves room for both the certainty and the uncertainty of faith. It is also an important point that this is not a static idea. The pilgrim idea tells people that the baptismal life should be lived and the baptismal way should be travelled. It is an idea which in itself can assist in bringing people to Christ and towards the traveller’s goal. The idea can be used by people if they have travelled either a short or a long distance along the way of faith. But no matter where people are on the baptismal/pilgrim’s way, the idea gives an expression of a positive belonging to the Church. The pilgrim is on the way towards a goal. We do not need words which unnecessarily describe people as being outsiders.
Pilgrimage theology
- a theology for the Church of Norway?

The main question in this presentation has been whether pilgrimage theology is a theology for the Church of Norway. For my own part I have come to the conclusion that working with pilgrimage theology does not result in a reason for giving yellow or red cards to warn or an order to leave. On the contrary, work on this article has strengthened my belief that the renewal of pilgrimage traditions which is taking place, is an exciting challenge and with new possibilities for the Church of Norway in ecumenical co-operation. Therefore it is important to carry on the work with pilgrimage traditions both as spirituality and theology.
From the history of the Church, we can see that the idea of “holiness” within Christian tradition and throughout all time was considered to be a full expression of human life and to be a condition to imitate. It attracted men as a guarantee of their conversion and as a way of directing themselves to God.

Soon Christians began to search not only for the places and the memories of the life of Christ, but also for where they had the certainty of encountering Him (in his angels and saints). With the development of Marian devotion Christians became pilgrims to Marian shrines in order to encounter the mother of heaven, the Virgin Mary. At that point they underlined the function of the Blessed Mother as a model to imitate, an example to follow, in the itinerary of the mind and heart, in a trusting and mutual dialogue.

It is evident that in the past Christians went to shrines for health of mind and body as well as for their spiritual growth. They were convinced that their needs were heard, and they were recharged both inwardly and on an existential level. At the shrine, they were looking for answers and wanted to renew fundamental existential experiences. In this way Christian pilgrims became similar to pilgrims of other religions. Pilgrimage, in fact, has always been a universal symbolic act in which all men rediscover themselves. Throughout time, in
various religions, it appears to be always the same and yet always different. It has expressed the identity of men throughout history.

This pertains to the past and for many it was considered to be over and done with; but something has changed in recent times. For several decades, in various cultural areas and in great religions, shrines and pilgrimages have once again become popular. An ever increasing number of people make their way to holy places, and new shrines appear.

All this calls for an intellectual effort in order to systematically analyse this phenomenon. But to do this we must remember that in all religions pilgrimage consists of a few fundamental components: a subject who walks a certain path, who puts himself into motion, who searches; a place of arrival where the sacred, the divine, is thought to be obtainable; the motivation and the conviction of meeting the mysterious and ineffable reality that people are looking for in that place, believing it to be real and accessible.

In different cultures the aforementioned components are variably emphasised, but are always present and operational. Along with other intervening variables they contribute to making pilgrimage meaningful and culturally significant.

Within the Catholic Church, but also in other religions, pilgrims by their movements, map and integrate ritual spaces. The shrines, the paths leading to them, the facilities inside and outside the shrines, are conceived to create a *sacred environment*, where ritual and symbolic interactions take place.

This environment is very important in presenting visitors and pilgrims with the opportunity of meeting the sacred interlocutors or the powers of the sacred place, of getting to know and assimilate their messages and of living these messages. The motivations of pilgrims, their attitudes and behaviour truly depend on the way the environment is structured. But in some way they are one and the same with it.

This means that, by their very nature, pilgrimages and shrines are complex phenomena. To understand these complex systems a multimedia approach seems to work best. In this frame of reference it
is possible to develop a method of testing how the sacred environment works.

This paper presents case studies of pilgrimage in the Catholic Church. The most important shrines will be considered on a wide basis of empirical data. From their analysis it will be possible to derive some interesting generalisations and ideas on the theoretical as well as the methodological level to deepen our understanding of the field of pilgrimage.

Since 1975 a multi-dimensional and interdisciplinary research project has been in progress on the major shrines of the Catholic Church, beginning with the Basilica of St. Anthony of Padua. This, so far, has produced interesting results. The first account of this project can be found in “Il Senso del Cammino”. I Pellegrinaggi Mariani. Un’Analisi Socio-Culturale sui Pellegrinaggi a Lourdes (France), Fatima (Portugal), Medjugorje (Yugoslavia), Loreto (Italy), Our Lady of the Snows.” (Belleville – U.S.A.), by P. Giuriati & G. Lanzi Arzenton, C.R.S.R., Padova 1992.

Centro Ricerche Socio-Religiose (C.R.S.R.) of Padua - Italy collaborates with Centro Studi per la Cultura Popolare (C.S.C.P.) of Bologna - Italy along with other Institutions. Since 1975 research has been carried out on pilgrimages to the Basilica of St. Anthony of Padua (Italy), Lourdes (France), Medjugorje (Yugoslavia), Fatima (Portugal), Our Lady of the Snows (Belleville – U.S.A.), Loreto (Italy), St. Leopold Mandic in Padua (Italy), Guadalupe (Mexico), Jasna Góra in Czestochowa (Poland), the Oratoire St. Joseph in Montréal (Canada), Zemaiciu Kalvarija (Lithuania), St. Olav - Trondheim (Norway), Sottoilmonte - Pope John XXIII (Bergamo, Italy), Santiago de Compostella (Spain), the Kumba Mhela in Allahahbad (India), the World Youth Meeting in Denver (USA, August 14-15th, 1993) and Paris (France, August 13-15th, 1997), the exposition of the Holy Shroud in Turin (Italy, April 18th-June 14th, 1998), and the Holy Year 2000 in Rome (Italy).
Theoretical and methodological frame of reference
The research on pilgrimage was carried out in the theoretical-practical framework of a social communication of a sacred message presented to the devout and metabolised by them, that is to say, assimilated to various degrees. The hypothesis is that coming to a shrine constitutes a religious moment inscribed in the global life of the visitor and has the function of recharging him existentially, in order to give meaning and substance to daily routine. Through an experience with the “radically other” the pilgrim can find, rediscover, or reinforce his access and communion with it.

The object of the research was to reconstruct:
- who comes to the shrine and for what reasons;
- what they knew about the shrine; what impressions it made; what effect the visit may have on them;
- what meaning they attributed to the function of the shrine and its message in relation to others;
- the meaning of the gestures performed at the shrine; how the pilgrims conceived the image of the sacred interlocutor and what he/she represents;
- the meaning attributed to the normal actions of the cult (the sacraments of the Eucharist and Penance);
- the pilgrim’s normal religious practices and the differences in his general orientation towards life (values and philosophy) with respect to the non-devout; the eventual assimilation of the message of the shrine.

The research was conducted according to the following timetable: St. Anthony in Padua (Italy in 1975-81 and again in 1991-96); Lourdes (France in 1982-84 and again in 1994-95); Medjugorje (Yugoslavia in 1985); Fatima (Portugal in 1986 and again from 1994 to 1998); Loreto (Italy in 1987-88); Our Lady of the Snows - Belleville (U.S.A.) in 1987-88; St. Leopold Mandic (Italy in 1989-92); Guadalupe (Mexico in 1990-92); Denver (U.S.A. in 1993); Czestochowa (Poland in 1992-
97); Montréal (Canada in 1992-95); Zemaiciu Kalvarija (Lithuania in 1994); Paris (France in 1997); Trondheim (Norway in 1996-98); Kumba Mhela, Allahahbad (India) in 1995, Sottoilmonte and Turin (Italy) in 1998, Santiago de Compostella (Spain 1999-2000), and Rome (Italy) in 2000.

The data collected included:
• 10,129 interviews of visitors using questionnaires;
• 718 interviews of the workers at the shrine to verify their image of the pilgrims;
• approx. 12,200 photographs (slides) of the various components of cult behaviour of the devout;
• approx. 70 hours of videotape recording the cult behaviour of the devout;
• approx. 600 recordings of interviews of pilgrims on video and cassettes;
• systematic collection and subsequent analysis of written prayer intentions and ex-voto of pilgrims;
• verification of the preferences of pilgrims in purchasing objects (souvenirs).

The departure point:
pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Anthony of Padua (Italy)
The sacred interlocutor of pilgrims and visitors to the shrine of Padua is St. Anthony. He was a Franciscan friar who was born in Lisbon in 1195 and died in Padua on June 13th 1231. In 1211 he became a member of the Augustinian order. He studied theology and the Holy Scriptures in Lisbon and Coimbra and lived an intense and ascetic life.

Shortly after being ordained priest, he became a Franciscan in 1220 in order to become a missionary in Morocco. But became ill and was forced to come back.

His skill as an expert on Scriptures and as a preacher was discovered by chance and his life changed completely. He was sent to many regions of Italy and Southern France to preach conversion and peace.
He was the first teacher of theology in the Franciscan order. He was also one of the theologians of the Pope, the founder of many friaries and was charged with very important tasks in his order. He had the gift of miracles both while alive and even more so after his death. He spent his last year in Padua where he finished writing his book of Sermons. In the meantime, he was deeply involved in pastoral care, preaching penitence and reconciliation and defending the poor.

He died in 1231, was declared a saint the following year, and his devotion spread rapidly. In Padua he is considered in some way as the second founder of the town, the guarantor of peace and social welfare, everybody’s friend. As such, he became universally popular.

In 1975, within Centro Studi Antoniani of Padua (C.S.A.), in co-operation with C.R.S.R., a strong interest in better understanding the phenomenon of devotion to St. Anthony developed. The aim was to verify whether this devotion was a simple case of popular religiosity or something more and in what theoretical and methodological frame of reference the anthonian phenomenon has to be understood.

Following the way certain scholars (J. Remy and L. Voyè, W. Turner, G. Tilly, etc) in Europe and in the United States have interpreted pilgrimages in modern times as a process of returning to one’s roots, to an idealised past, a sort of re-conquering of a lost identity, but also as a rite of passage through which one accomplishes a mobilisation of individual resources within a collectivity, a procedure which would adequately study a phenomenon as complex as pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Anthony was developed.

Therefore, it was believed that the use of converging approaches (to focus historical background, sacred environment, ritual and symbolic interactions, attitudes and behaviour of people coming to the sacred space) and methods (interviews, photographs, anthropological records) could contribute to a better understanding of the structure and the religious dynamics of the phenomenon. It was also thought that it was necessary to take into account the premises of Max Weber (according to which religion can be considered as an independent variable) and Gabriel Le Bras (according to which it is not possible to
study a religious phenomenon isolated from its social and cultural environment).

In fact, following the above premises it was possible to understand the structure and dynamics of the complex phenomenon constituted by pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Anthony. Overall, the analysis of its civil and sacred environment has been relevant to the understanding of the whole phenomenon. For that reason the research on St. Anthony was the model for those that followed:

The research on St. Anthony was carried out in 1975-81 and repeated (using the same procedure) in 1991-92. Both studies yielded the same results. They are the following.

- The shrine of St. Anthony is placed in the middle of the city of Padua.
- With its eight domes and its two bell towers it is seen from far away. It appears as the defender and protector of the town, welcoming visitors and inviting pilgrims to quicken their steps to reach St. Anthony’s shrine.
- Inside, the church is structured as a typical pilgrimage shrine. It gives people the opportunity to visit the tomb of St. Anthony, pray, listen to Mass, go to confession, see St. Anthony’s relics, thank him for graces, leave ex-voto (votive offerings) and donations, and buy souvenirs. Outside, the facilities offering services for pilgrims and visitors form, together with the shrine, a holy town within the town of Padua itself in order to keep and continually promote the message of St. Anthony.

The other data collected during the research confirm that his pilgrims and devotees consider St. Anthony to be like a brother, a friend of God and others, mainly the poor and suffering. He is felt to be an effective protector and a help for the many problems of life, a reliable model of love for God, life, integrity and reciprocity.
The pilgrimage to the Marian shrine of Jasna Góra, in the Town of Czestochowa (Poland)

Given the importance of Catholic shrines dedicated to the Virgin Mary, the research project on the major shrines of the Catholic Church accorded a special interest in pilgrimages to Marian shrines.

The research on Czestochowa started in 1992. The analysis of written prayer intentions is still in progress.

At Czestochowa the origin of the shrine (13\textsuperscript{th}-14\textsuperscript{th} century) is neither an apparition nor a relic of the Virgin. It is a painting, which is considered to have been a sign of her merciful and continuous care for her beloved Polish people.

The shrine upon the hill dominating the town of Czestochowa is structured as, and appears to be, a sacred mountain. It is \textit{Jasna Góra}, the \textit{white mountain}, a stream and centre of light and life. It is also like a gate to heaven. In front of it, the bell tower of the shrine, like a finger pointing to heaven, seems to direct pilgrims to the sacred place from all directions.

The geographical position of the shrine and its external structures make it a true fortress of the catholic faith and Polish nationality. This is expressed also by the internal structure of the shrine, the national flags hanging from the walls, the relics of the past victories of the Polish Army against the enemies of the faith and the country. All its paintings and sculpture express and reinforce the conviction and the feeling that the Virgin Mary is either the Mother of God or the Mother of the Polish people as well as the Queen of Poland.

Participant observation, visual records of pilgrim behaviour and interview data about their attitudes show that these messages are metabolised and shared by the pilgrims. This is particularly evident in the great feasts, when many pilgrims (mainly young people) come on foot from great distances.

In Jasna Góra the public is decidedly Polish.

The average pilgrim coming to Czestochowa is looking for health of body and soul and even for spiritual growth. He is also
looking for existential renewal and to meet his Heavenly Mother, the Virgin Mary.

He is convinced that he will be heard and his needs met and, above all, that he will be recharged, internally as well as at the existential level, in a way that exceeds his expectations. For that reason he considers the main roles of the visit to be:

- the foundation of values and the source of hope;
- a way of becoming recharged, to receive help and to improve one’s love for God.

He considers Mary to be the “Mother of God” and “Our Mother in Heaven” and also:
- the “dispenser of grace”;
- a “role model”;
- a “sister and friend”.

In other words, the Virgin of Czestochowa appears as the “Mother of God” who from Jasna Góra, the White Mountain, assists her children in that part of the world. For this she is the “Mother” of the Polish people and the Polish country, the “Queen of Poland.”

For the average pilgrim to go to confession means to be reconciled with God and himself, to grow at the spiritual and ascetic level and also to get comfort and consolation, to be reintegrated in the church.

He regularly attends Mass on Sunday and Holy Days of obligation and even on weekdays.

He gives a great deal of importance to prayer and to the Sacrament of the Eucharist, which is seen as:
- a union with God and a memorial of Christ’s sacrifice;
- a way to improve individual devotion and to obtain comfort, consolation and purification.
Regarding Czestochowa, the above information seems very useful to test:

- the reliability of the theoretical-practical frame of reference of social communication of a sacred message in order to verify the dynamics connected to the phenomenon that has been analysed;

- the relationships between the message of the shrine, its external and internal structure and settlement, the expectations, the culture and cultural codes, the attitudes and behaviours of the visitors, devotees and pilgrims.

**Pilgrimages to other major Marian shrines**

Since the other major Marian shrines of the Catholic Church have many aspects in common with Jasna Góra, it is possible to summarise what is peculiar to each of them, compare them with Jasna Góra, other non Marian shrines (in our case St. Anthony of Padua) and comparative case studies like the World Youth Meeting on Denver (August, 14 - 15\textsuperscript{th}, 1993) in order to derive some theoretical and methodological generalisations and ideas.

Regarding *Loreto, Guadalupe, and the other Marian shrines and holy places that we have studied, the following information has emerged from the various methods of investigation.*

It should be remembered that the origin of the shrine of Loreto (13\textsuperscript{th}-14\textsuperscript{th} century) is not an apparition of the Virgin, but the relic of what people suppose to have been the House of the Holy Family of Nazareth.

The message of Loreto can be understood from the meaning attributed to the Holy House, considered to have been the place of:

- the Annunciation to Mary;
- the Incarnation of the Son of God;
- Christ’s childhood and youth;
- the home of the Holy Family.
At the shrine everything is organised to receive the pilgrim and take him by the hand towards the heart of the sacred space, the Holy House. The shrine itself tells its story through paintings and sculpture. Even the city of Loreto admits owing its origins to the shrine.

From the gestures of the pilgrims, Loreto is seen to be decidedly Marian in nature. Inside the Basilica the Holy House is the centre of the pilgrim’s attention. From the geographical distribution and the group structure of its visitors, Loreto can be seen as a national shrine, a common home of a people who go there in family groupings.

The average pilgrim knows and has metabolised the story and the meaning of the Holy House.

He goes there to meet his Mother, to become a better person and to receive help. He is convinced that he will be heard and his needs met.

He considers the main roles of the visit to be:

- the foundation of values and the source of hope;
- an increased devotion to Mary;
- a way to improve one’s love for God as well as for others and to be recharged.

He considers Mary to be “Our Mother in Heaven” and the “Mother of God”.

He gives a great deal of importance to the Sacraments of:

- Confession, which is seen above all as reconciliation with God;
- the Eucharist, which is seen as a union with God and a memorial of Christ’s sacrifice.

Guadalupe, is the shrine dedicated to the Virgin Mary which presently has the highest number of pilgrims in the Catholic Church. Its origin and popularity stem from the four apparitions of the Virgin to an Indian, Juan Diego (recently declared blessed by the Pope). They took place from December 9th to December 12th 1531, ten years after the Spanish conquest of Mexico.
The message of Guadalupe can be understood from what is written on the facade of the Basilica, which is what the Blessed Mother told Juan Diego: *De que te asuste? Estoy yo aqui que soy tu madre.* Translated: *What are you worried about? I, who am your mother, am here.*

The shrine is composed of the old and new basilicas, the hill of the first apparition of the Virgin to Juan Diego, the park near the sacred hill (the *Tepeyac*), other chapels and religious facilities. A gate divides the shrine from the surrounding *Secular City* constituted by the town of Mexico City. The sacred place from the surrounding towns appears like a tent of God in the *New Covenant* with His people. A constant stream of people flows to it, very often on foot.

The heart of the shrine is the image of the Virgin Mary, which is considered to have miraculously appeared on the mantel of Juan Diego. This relic is located above the main altar in the new Basilica. All the pilgrims admire it with great devotion.

The average pilgrim turns to this Mother with spontaneous trust and in his native language. In this language the various cultural roots of the sacred and the profane of Mexico and the Mexicans of yesterday and today are fused in a dynamic manner.

The devotion is still a church devotion, transmitted and assimilated by means of tradition and a visible and oral lexicon, where the various syntactic and grammatical components of the various cultures which have united to form the expressive and emotive language of the Mexicans live on and have been metabolised.

The average pilgrim knows and has metabolised the story of the apparitions and identifies with the figure of Juan Diego.

The Virgin of Guadalupe - Mexico appears as the “Mother of God” who assists her children in that part of the world and for this the Guadalupana (Our Lady of Guadalupe) is the “Mother” of the Mexicans and “Queen” of Mexico.

Thus, Guadalupe appears to be one of the privileged areas which can verify what is written in the Plaza of the Three Cultures in Mexico City about the last bloody attempt by the Aztecs to save their identity:
...No fuè triunfo ni derrota. Fuè el doloroso nacimiento del pueblo mestizo que es el Mexico de hoy, which translated means: There was no triumph nor defeat. It was the painful birth of the mixed populace which is the Mexico of today.

_Lourdes_ became a centre of devotion to the Virgin ever since a fourteen year old girl, Bernadette Soubirous (whom the Church declared saint in this century) attested to having seen a young lady inside a grotto outside her city, Lourdes, located in the French Pyrenees. Some weeks after the first apparition (on February 11th, 1858) the young lady told her that she was the “Immaculate Conception”.

The message of Lourdes is rather simple: prayer, conversion, and penance.

At Lourdes the sacred place is structured by two churches and a crypt over the Grotto of the Apparitions, by a great square on one of the bank of Gave river and a field on the other, by the bathing pools, the Hill of the Way of the Cross and by the places where Bernadette lived. In Lourdes the sacred walk includes: a visit to the Grotto, a bathe in the pool, a procession with the Holy Sacrament and the blessing of the sick, an evening candle-light procession (*procession aux flambeaux*) saying the rosary, the Way of the Cross.

Specific behaviour of pilgrims is: to touch the rock where the Virgin appeared and to take water from the miraculous spring. A very fundamental element is the presence of the sick.

In Lourdes the shrine and the pilgrims’ path are highly structured. The sacred message is rich with symbols related to Christ and the Eucharist.

The public is decidedly international. The sick, the pool and the binomial of water-purification are fundamental components.

The average pilgrim knows the events that gave birth to the shrine. He is looking for health of body and soul and even more for spiritual growth and existential renewal. For him to go to confession, to take a bath in the pool, to visit the grotto, to participate in
processions and the Way of the Cross means to be reconciled with God and himself, to be purified and to grow in hope.

The origin of Fatima in Portugal is the set of six apparitions of the Virgin Mary to three very young children from May 13th to October 13th 1917, during the First World War. The message of Fatima is a development of the Lourdes’ message: prayer, conversion, penitence and, moreover, peace and reconciliation. A part of the Fatima message has not yet been made known. It is the so called third secret of Fatima, related to what is going to happen to the church and society if the words of the Virgin are not heeded.

The main seer of Fatima, Lucia, is still alive. She is a Carmelite nun, and only very few people can presently meet her. She had other visions and revelations after those of 1917. For that reason the Fatima event is still open, and its message not fully completed.

At Fatima, the heart of the sacred space as well as of the sacred walk is the chapel, which the Virgin Mary asked to be built at the site of the first apparition. The main church with its colonnades and the tombs of two of the three small seers, the great square, the nearby village with the houses of the seers and the Way of the Cross, complete the sacred areas.

Compared to Lourdes and Medjugorje, Fatima is the shrine whose dedication to the Virgin Mary is most evident. It is also the most connected to its ethnocultural (Portuguese) background.

The rituality is related to social groups, family and tradition. But it appears as an expressive code shared and deeply assimilated by the people.

The shrine accepts this code and reinforces it. Prayer and penitence are integrated with offerings and acts of thanksgiving.

The site is particularly crowded on the anniversaries of the apparitions, from May 13th to October 13th. In that period many pilgrims come on foot from far away.

Other data from interviews etc., show that people have accepted and practice the above message in their behaviour and attitudes.
The shrine of *Our Lady of the Snows, Belleville in Illinois (U.S.A.)*, is a few miles east of St. Louis, where the Missouri River joins the Mississippi. It was started in 1958 by two priests of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. During the Second World War they were missionaries among the Eskimos in Alaska. They intended to adapt one of the oldest devotions to the Virgin Mary for contemporary American culture. Traditionally, this devotion to Our Lady of the Snows is connected with the building of the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome during the IV century.

The structure of the holy place in 1986-87 was still in evolution. Its main message was an invitation to everybody to come and find himself by meeting God, Mary, nature and fellow men.

Consequently, the holy place was not a sacred space separated from its environment. Rather it was an open field, a green area without fences, like a great park. Among the trees, the religious facilities (the Grotto of Lourdes, the Rosary Court, the Annunciation Garden, the Agony Garden, the Resurrection Garden, etc.) were easily reachable one by one. It was possible to listen to the ‘Way of the Cross’, by intercom, without leaving the car.

The main shrine consisted of a structure housing an outdoor altar located at the centre of an amphitheatre. The religious structures were just as important as those for meditation, meetings, relaxation, help for the lonely and handicapped. For the priest and lay people in charge of the Belleville Shrine one of the main aims was to speak the language of tradition as well as that of multimedia culture.

From the data collected by interviews and other means, it appears that the above goals were basically achieved. It has been possible to verify that people visiting Our Lady of the Snows felt at home and welcomed. They appreciated and often shared not only the services but also the messages proposed by the shrine. It remains to be seen whether and to what extent they can be considered pilgrims and to what extent Belleville is a pilgrimage shrine in the common sense of the word.
The research on Medjugorje was done in 1985, only four years after the beginning of the apparitions of the Virgin to six young people (two boys and four girls of Medjugorje, a village in Herzegovina in the south of ex-Yugoslavia).

The apparitions started on June 24th 1981, and they continued throughout the period of study. The age of the seers was from seven to seventeen at the time of the first apparition.

The Church has not made any official statement about the reliability of Medjugorje. For that reason Medjugorje should be considered a holy place rather that a shrine in a strict sense.

The message of Medjugorje is very much like that of Lourdes, but peace and reconciliation are emphasised even more.

The heart of the holy space at Medjugorje was formed by the places of the apparitions of the Virgin and by the parish church.

Very important in the sacred walk were:
- to pray in the chapel where the apparitions were going on;
- to go to the hill of the first apparitions;
- to attend Mass and religious ceremonies in the local parish church, listening to the announcements and explanations of the messages given weekly by the Virgin to the seers during the apparitions;
- to visit the seers in their own houses and to speak with them;
- to climb the Mount of the Cross.

Specific pilgrim behaviour at Medjugorje is:
- to leave religious and personal objects and to make crosses at the place of the first apparitions;
- to pick up and take home stones, flowers, soil.

At Medjugorje the most important features of the phenomenon were the continuity of the apparitions and their accessibility while they were still in progress. Medjugorje was very interesting as a sacred place at its inception, in a statu nascenti condition.
Among the devout very evident was:

• a very spontaneous rituality;
• a strong wish to be directly involved in the sacred event, to meet the seers and local people.

At Medjugorje, the penitential dimension was fundamental. The practice of going to confession was its basic feature. The presence of youth was a distinctive characteristic.

The data collected confirmed how important it was for visitors and devout:

• to meet the Virgin Mary who was continuing to appear;
• to consider her as the Mother of God and human beings;
• to listen to her messages asking for peace, mutual love, reconciliation;
• to pray to her as model of life and queen of peace.

Pilgrimage to non-Marian Shrines and Other Sacred Journeys

The study made about the shrine of St. Anthony brought with it the idea of another project in Padua, at the shrine of St. Leopold Mandic. He was a capuchin friar who died in 1942 and was declared a saint in 1985. He spent his whole life listening to confessions.

From the photos and questionnaires it seems that the people going to the shrine are looking:

• for a relationship with him, as if he were still alive;
• to have him as their spiritual guide who gives council and advice, helps reconcile them with God, and helps them to be better people.

Pilgrimage to the Oratoire of St. Joseph is extremely interesting. This shrine is built inside the town of Montréal (Canada). It is the largest shrine in the province of Quebec. It was founded by Blessed André at the beginning of the 20th century. The shrine is situated on a hill
overlooking Montréal. It constitutes a point of reference for everybody who is coming to that town.

People going there are looking:

• for the health of the soul and of the body as well as for spiritual growth;
• for recharging oneself internally;
• for re-founding values and for meeting others.

The city of Montréal and region of Quebec are nowadays very secular. The Oratoire of St. Joseph constitutes a reserve of sanctity and sanctification of daily life. It is also in keeping with the image people have of St. Joseph and of Blessed André.

Regarding *Santiago of Compostela* (Spain), we must remember that this shrine had been for centuries the most important pilgrimage destination in all of Europe until the 1300s. Its beginning was in the 9th century. After a period of decline, in the last twenty years the shrine has once again become a centre for European pilgrimage.

In Santiago it is not difficult to distinguish who is a pilgrim. In fact, in contrast with other shrines, here the pilgrimage is the actual journey, the path.

The research about Santiago is still in progress. But what is already clear, is that there are many people, particularly those of young age, who are trying to find themselves, often by being in contact with nature. Many of them seem not to be religious in a strict sense.

The researches about Oratoire of St. Joseph and Santiago, along with that with the shrine of St. Leopold Mandic, constitute the case of *pilgrimages to non-Marian Shrines*. Beside these, there are other studies about phenomena that cannot be defined as pilgrimages to sacred places.

They are the *World Youth Meetings* on Denver (U.S.A.) in 1993 and Paris (France) in 1997, as well as the *Exposition of the Holy*
Shroud in Turin (Italy) in 1998. It is better to define those phenomena as other Sacred Journeys.

The first research about Denver has been completely analysed. The study of the other two is still in progress.

In Denver on August 14-15th 1993, the 8th World Youth Meeting took place in the presence of the Pope. Young people from all over the world, mainly from the U.S.A. and North America, came to celebrate a meeting with Christ and to devote themselves, together with Mary, to building a better town of human beings.

The whole town of Denver became the youth space. Young people were lodged in different places and had several meeting points for religious and cultural events. However, they gathered everywhere to sing, play and be together.

Outside the town there was a field equipped for the Mass with the Pope. The young people had to reach it on foot.

The above sets of components were intertwined in a complex and dynamic combination of expressive means. Colours, song, prayers and ever-widening use of mass-media and visual culture shaped a message destined for an audience composed of young people coming from many different places but sharing the same basic culture. On the other hand, that audience seemed to appreciate and share that code.

Regarding Denver, the following information has emerged from the interviews and the other various methods of investigation:

- Denver can only in part be compared to traditional pilgrimages of the Catholic Church, since it was fundamentally a reunion and above all a meeting of youth, from all parts of the world, in the presence of the leader of their religious community (the Pope).
- The motivation of the participants was religious with a significant social-cultural component (to see the Pope, meet peers).
- As with other pilgrimages, the shared experience gave importance to the religious aspect of the meeting, but, above all, underlined the sharing of emotions from the common experience.
• The youth came from a common religious background, and considered faith and a sense of moral values important for today's world.
• The meeting at Denver was experienced as a moment of juvenile celebration during which it becomes easier to share with neighbours.
• However, the participants did not share the traditional teachings of the Church in several important areas such as premarital sex, and, most of all, the use of contraception, remarriage after divorce, and the ordination of women priests.
• The experience of Denver had certain ambivalent aspects and would seem to constitute the stimulus for a future maturing of convictions and of personal behaviour in a more religious and spiritual way, rather than represent a manifestation of a consolidated and mature faith.

The 10th Youth Meeting took place in Paris on August 14-15th 1997. In Paris there was still the presence of the pope, but the youth attendance had a more international origin.

In Paris there were fewer teenagers and more young adults than in Denver. They gathered for a manifestation whose goal was to express a series of values, which are crucial, to contemporary society.

The people in Paris had an experience, which was effectively, more religious than in Denver. What was very significant is the fact that it was obtained using the typical language of today’s youth.

These young people coming to Paris seemed to have appreciated and assimilated the message presented to them. They seemed also to assign to this youth meeting with the pope a spiritual and ascetic dimension, which the meeting in Denver did not have in the same measure.

In particular, they experienced this meeting as an occasion to:
• re-found values,
• re-discover the Church.
Lastly, the movement of people to see the *Exposition of the Holy Shroud* in Turin, Italy, from April 18th to June 14th 1998, deserves mention.

The Holy Shroud, according to tradition, is the sheet that was used to wrap the body of Christ for burial.

From the documentation we can clearly see that the visit was directed towards:

- seeing the Holy Shroud, in order to relive and assimilate the passion and death of Christ,
- to better understand what God has done for us.

**Further information**

Before drawing conclusions, it is useful to integrate the above information with the flow of visitors to the different shrines, according to the estimates by the shrine authorities at the beginning of each research project.

These are the approximate annual figures:

- **St. Anthony:** 4 million visitors per year for 1975-81, 70% were pilgrims; 5-6 million visitors per year for 1991-96, 70% were pilgrims;
- **Lourdes:** 4 million visitors per year for 1982-84, 75% were pilgrims; 5 million visitors for 1994-95;
- **Fatima:** 2 million visitors in 1986; 3 million visitors in 1995;
- **Czestochowa:** 4-5 million visitors per year since 1992;
- **Loreto:** 3.5 million visitors for 1987-88; at least 2,500,000 of them were pilgrims;
- **Belleville:** 1 million visitors; only 65% of them were catholic;
- **Guadalupe:** 12, perhaps 15-20 million visitors for 1990-92, almost all of them were pilgrims; there was no official record but Guadalupe is, without comparison, the most attended of catholic shrines;
• *San Leopol Mandic*: 1-2 million visitors;
• *Oratoire St. Joseph*: 2 million visitors;
• *Santiago*: in 1999 157,000 pilgrims arrived on foot, 25,000 on bicycle, approximately 6 million visited the cathedral and 7 million visited the city;
• *Turin*: (exposition of the Holy Shroud in 1998): more than 2 million people.

As to *Medjugorje*, there is no statistical information about the year when the research was done (1985). The phenomenon was at its beginning. According to reliable suppositions between 1981 and 1985 at least 2 million people visited Medjugorje.

In *Denver*, in 1993 there were approximately 500,000 people; in *Paris* one and a half million people.

At all the places studied, the number of visitors and pilgrims has been growing. That also happened at the two *World Youth Meetings* of Manila and Paris held after the Denver meeting.

**Temporary generalisations**

The above data showed that in the places studied, the phenomenon of pilgrimage is quite consistent. It follows that even more relevant is the question of how each shrine welcomes the people coming to it.

Given the different “age”, morphological structure and sacred environment of each holy place the answer is not simple. However some analogies are evident:

• The convergence point of the attention and flow of visitors is a sacred building or a complex of sacred buildings belonging to the “shrine type,” with one or two bell towers (or something of high size similar to a tower) and/or a dome, visible from far away.
• The visitors, mainly the devout, when at the shrine, set out on a walk during which they visit the places where the message is propounded.
• The message is propounded through a set of symbols or relics or places concerning a “sacred event” (miracles, apparitions, facts)
that embody a message or during which a message was transmitted through one or more intermediaries (the seer or the seers).

- The message constitutes the reason and goal of the visit, and the shrine structure is its eloquent proposal and justification.
- Visiting the places and through a set of rites correlated with the sacred event or the sacred memory (the sacred relic) the devout wishes to participate in some way in this event or memory and assimilate its message.

The analysis (made through participant observation and recorded on slides and videotape) of behaviour of people attending the sacred places pointed out some recurrent characteristics:

- Together the pilgrims experience a deep but personalised communication with a sacred interlocutor and in some way this also touches mere visitors.
- That communication has the authority of the Church’s institution as its frame of reference and the Church’s prayers and sacraments as its ritual code.
- The folkloric dimension of the feast is something not directly related to the pilgrimage as such, or like at Loreto, Guadalupe and Czestochowa, is its frame or support on the occasion of the shrine festival.

All together, the data from various pilgrimages analysed to date indicate:

- Pilgrimage constitutes a religious and human experience founded in the entirety of the pilgrim’s life.
- Through this experience the visitor reinforces or rediscovers or for the first time finds access to a communion with the “radically other”.
- As a consequence, the pilgrim feels recharged.
- Daily routine takes on meaning and substance and becomes an occasion for meeting, reconciliation and sharing with others and with himself.
The data collected and analysed about the pilgrimages considered in this paper, confirmed the starting hypothesis. They suggested that even contemporary people, because of the cost involved in living in today’s society, need to participate in a sacred moment that gives them the chance to communicate with a reality which may be not as contingent and precarious as is the daily, historical and profane part of their lives. In other words, humans, as such, have an innate religious component.

Because of this, the prospect of modifying the profane by introducing a sacred moment may be seen as normal. Pilgrimage should be considered a privileged means and time, at the social and cultural level, to experiment with that possibility in a real and concrete way.

One of the most successful means of verifying the above data seems to have been the special multimedia approach to the complex phenomenon of contemporary pilgrimages within the Catholic Church.

It might be interesting to test how this approach could be used to understand the same phenomenon in other religions and, at the same time, to see how other approaches from other religious contexts may be useful to better understand Catholic pilgrimages and pilgrimages in general.

**A new open frontier**

With this perspective we might also give new meaning to a phenomenon like the one we have analysed recently. That is the traditions connected to *St. Olav* and the *Nidaros Cathedral* in Trondheim, Norway.

It is clear that this site was important as a shrine for pilgrimage in earlier times. The figure of St. Olav as the *rex perpetuus Norvegiae*, the Eternal King of Norway, and the pilgrimages to Nidaros up to 1537 has already been extensively studied and discussed.
Maybe one should now collect information to try to give a broader and more integrated and consistent picture of the phenomenon.

For several centuries the Vikings and the Normans created a sphere of wide cultural expansion in medieval Europe. They founded several bases in Normandy, Novgorod, Kiev, and Constantinople. From Normandy and Constantinople they spread to other countries and above all to Southern Italy (1043-53) and subsequently to Sicily (1130-1266). There they created what is known as the Norman Kingdom of Southern Italy.

This formed a *Norman Network of places and connections* with a cultural influence affecting all of Europe. Inside this network they could move in all directions in different ways, in trade, in culture and in *pilgrimage*.

What is important, is the fact that from the south of that Norman network the different impulses were able to reach also Scandinavia and influence the local cultural and religious traditions.

In that frame of reference, two events appear not to be incidental.

Snorre, in the saga about Harald, the half-brother of St. Olav, writes that during his stay in Constantinople, before he became king of Norway (1047-1066), participated in a series of military attacks against the Arabs in Sicily and the first settlements of the Normans in South Italy.

Moreover, it is not incidental that there is a striking similarity between the Norman-Romanesque cathedrals in Puglia in South Italy and the Romanesque part of the cathedral in Trondheim.

The historical facts given by the Snorre saga and the architectural similarities are testimonies in mutual agreement. They open new historical perspectives to all of us. They show a network of mutual relationships encompassing not only people and countries of Viking and Norman culture and blood, but many other nations and contexts.
This also leads us to consider that the saga of Snorre is much more reliable at the historical level than supposed. At the same time, it suggests the importance of considering as historical sources not only written records.

This frame of reference reveals interesting traits that can be pursued in order to better understand how rooted in popular culture the traditions that go back to St. Olav are and were. For several reasons these traditions never disappeared completely, even with the Reformation.

This also leads us to the question about Olav traditions in our time and in our present context.

Is it a phenomenon merely on a cultural level? In other words, is it an emergence of some long forgotten knowledge has been reactivated in the last century within nationalistic movements, and in connection with the restoration work of the cathedral that started in the middle of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century?

Or is it something that is more complex and dynamic? Should we connect it to the crisis of modern culture and the transition to the so-called \textit{postmodern}? Should we relate it to the celebration of the thousandth anniversary of the founding of Trondheim (and with it, Norway), and consider it a transformation of St. Olav into a symbol and an interlocutor with religious significance, both in a broader and a narrower sense of the word “religious”?

Is this confirmed by the fact that a new symbolic and religious language seems about to be re-established among the people, a language that makes it meaningful to light candles – votive candles – in Nidaros cathedral?

What do people think when they walk into the cathedral during the St. Olav Festival, and what do they think when they are walking out again? What feelings do the St. Olav Festival, the historical plays, and the liturgical rituals that are connected with St. Olav, awaken in those who participate? And where will they lead in a possible future development? These are very interesting questions.
Maybe the investigations we now are completing and analysing might give us some answers. For the moment, at Nidaros the aspects, which have fundamental importance for people, seem to be:

- the encounter with the building of the cathedral,
- the visit to it,
- the experience of a spiritual atmosphere that gives the chance to feel an interior-existential growth by rediscovering one’s roots and traditions, as well as one’s cultural and national identity.
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