

The Celtic Journey Booklet

2019



A basic rough draft of a document that is still being worked on.



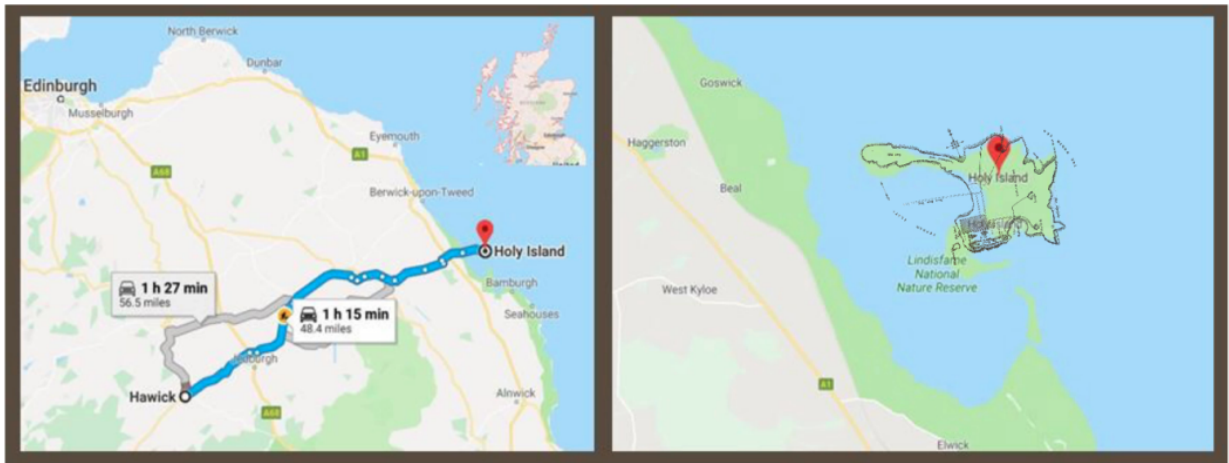
Introduction

Stepping Stones on the Celtic Way

My name is Mark Condry, I don't claim to have all the answers in the area of Celtic Christian Spirituality. I have had a fascination with the subject for years. I do feel more like a weary traveler on a quest. I get invigorated when a new or old way is rediscovered; I'm on a search for different facets of ancient truth. These I believe when discovered can enhance my life journey and others who care to join me.



This all began in my teenage years when I visited Lindisfarne two or three times a month taking the drive with a friend from my border hometown of Hawick, in Scotland. It would take a little more than an hour to drive to Holy Island. These visits left a lasting impression. I'm grateful to my travel companion Margaret Stenhouse who initiated this place of discovery, unknown to me at the time. These times would birth a love of the Celts and Celtic Christianity. She would check the tide tables and if the tides were in our favor we would enter the car and go on an adventure.



The tides have to be right as Holy Island is able to be accessed by car along the causeway. As the seawater recedes there is a road that appears to allow any who desire to get onto this Holy Site. Crossing that road is like an invitation to enter a different dimension, inviting anyone who cares to go. It is an opportunity to touch the past, to experience and explore a bygone era. It's knowing that many Pilgrims have taken this path before us, and we enter an ancient tradition, that many have taken. A quest of discovery as the Spirit leads, you become part of the history. Entering a way of life told through many who are called Saints today, these men and women inspire possibilities of us living a similar holy and dedicated life. The inspiration to live like them was brought back to life in me each time Margaret and I went onto this Holy Island.

We would be following in the footsteps of men and women who have trod this path before, who are looking to escape for a moment, to draw nearer to the God or sacred of the Celtic monks. They having done this enter a richer experience for their spiritual walk. They desire to bring others who they encounter toward a deeper experience of faith in the Divine.

A Journey of Discovery

This is when we enter the quest, of holy longing, or pilgrimage, comes into play, and a wanderlust begins to surface. We enter the world of longing, searching, desiring to know and understand our role in the world, that sacred role for which the Monarch of the Universe has purposed for us to play out and fulfill. (The Monarch of the Universe is my God figure the Divine taken from my book that is a work in progress).

The following is an extract from the book:

I knew, and I don't know why I knew, that this beach was the same beach, that I had walked with my family, when we were together. I hadn't been told it was the East coast of Scotland, near Holy Island.

The wind was exceptionally sweet, warm, and comforting, not a bitterly cold wind, that I had experienced, that can be the usual experience at this location. It was a beautiful sunny day and the wind was blowing the foam off the sea onto the beach where I was walking. This froth was dancing along the sand, being blown along, its destination unknown, having no control. A lot like my life until recently, until my encounter with Bren and now the opportunities that have opened; now I realize the work of the Monarch of the Universe.

I remember Bren telling me a scripture story I hadn't heard before about the wind, of not knowing where it comes from, or where it is going, just see the effects. It was a parallel of my life, blown along not knowing my destination, but trusting the Guide and now Issidore, my Anam Cara, I was seeing with spiritual eyes, this would be a projection of my future. Pg 31. The Anam Cara; A Celtic Tale of Tobar's Transformation. ~ By Mark Condy.

Pilgrims on a Journey called Life

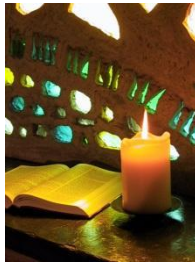
We don't know what the future holds, but I believe there is a longing in all our hearts to take a Pilgrimage, we are all weary travelers, because of the pressures of life. There is a need to get away if only for an hour, even this may be difficult. It is beginning with small steps, taking 15 minutes to pause, which could amount to an hour of needed silence, and enter into prayer and meditation. One day you may take the adventure to a foreign land for a Pilgrimage. For most people presently and also in medieval times, it was a luxury and could not be taken for a week or two, far less a month. This was unthinkable, and this was only attainable for the affluent who had the wealth to go on such a trip.

The solution to accommodating the pilgrim's need, rather than going to a distant land was to go to a local shrine or walk a labyrinth that was provided by the church. Going on a symbolic walk was an act of pilgrimage, to given opportunities for silence, to be still before the Lord. For Christians our model is Jesus, he withdrew on a regular basis to spend time with his heavenly father. We need to do likewise, draw near to God. To seek a word, and council, from the Lord, to seek the meaning of our life, to seek the sacred. It is not solely Christian, many different faith persuasions take a pilgrimage, to dig deep into the recesses of their soul, to come to terms with the inner longings, searching to find the spiritual treasure that will add meaning to their lives.

This is what the Lord says: "Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls."
Jeremiah 6:16 NIV

What we are to look for is to find the local "Thin Space" and to walk where holy ones walked before us, and discover these "Ancient Paths" and sacred spaces. A practice to enhance this would be to find local places of spiritual significance and spend a day going to these different locations of meaning.

It is about boundary-crossing, leaving behind for a moment the comfortable and familiar to experience something out of the norm, that which is stretching you out of your comfort zone, that will stretch you spiritually, and with this taking this risk because we have the confidence in the guide. God is the way maker and our pilgrim companion throughout our life. Not allowing us to grope around in the darkness but giving us light to illuminate the way. There are times we get frustrated with old patterns, then there are times we can learn from a past practice like a light of insight and inspiration. "The Celtic monk or druid standing in the light of the risen sun was in his mind bathing in God's luminescence. It is this concept of the sacred sun that reveals the true significance of the Celtic cross, whose characteristic structure is a cross and a ring. The ring is the sun, the revelation of the divine in and through nature prior to the manifestation of God's love and mercy in Christ." <http://decodedpast.com/light-sun-nature-celtic-spirituality/14400>
[Accessed 2/19/19](#)



"To live as a Pilgrim, all you need to do is see your life as a Journey, and your role as a seeker of the sacred." ~ A Sacred Journey, Lacy Clark Ellman.

This is her wonderful website: <https://www.asacredjourney.net/begin/>