

## Pilgrimage to a Time of Jubilee

As we write to you, spring flowers grace the grounds of the monastery and flowering trees have burst into a breathtaking display of delicacy.

Here in Vermont, spring is usually slow in coming, yet the beauty of its arrival seems sudden and surprising -- as though turning a corner onto an apple orchard in full bloom.

Once again, we are standing in awe before the Burning Bush, amazed at having been led to this holy ground. Nature's rhythms are like a gradual pilgrimage, a revelation, inching forward step by step.

*Pilgrimage* has become a favored metaphor for the journey of human life, and especially for the life of the spirit. The Second Vatican Council (1962-65) reminded us that we are above all a Pilgrim Church, a People of God journeying through history, led by the creative impulses of the Spirit.

Monastic men and women, vowed to stability in community, have been challenged to embrace a spirituality and lifestyle that is more *nomadic* than settled,<sup>1</sup> giving witness to the unending search for the God who lovingly seeks humanity.<sup>2</sup>

In our community at Weston, the theme of pilgrimage has become especially important as we approach the 50th anniversary of our foundation from Dormition Abbey in Jerusalem. In the course of the monastic movement, fifty years does not seem very long; yet in the lives of the brothers who have given themselves to building a loving community, the richness, risk, and joy are immeasurable.

The coming jubilee in 2003 will be a stop on the road, a time of rejoicing in the presence of our God, giving thanks for the paths that have led us to today.

"If today you hear God's voice, do not harden your hearts."<sup>3</sup>

Hearing the call to be nomads rather than settlers, the jubilee will be a kind of Pentecost, reminding us that the blazing God of the Covenant ever moves ahead of us, and that we, too, are to keep on moving.



1. Enrique Mirones Díez, OCSO, "Nomads or Settlers," *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 36:4 (2001)
2. Rule of Benedict 58:7
3. Psalm 95, sung at Morning Vigil Prayer

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