



# DU Grape Vine



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## A happy and blessed Christmas to all

### KAREN'S PILGRIMAGE REPORT

#### What is a Pilgrimage?

Pilgrimage is best thought of as a spiritual discipline, a means by which one sharpens or clarifies one's attention to the stuff of the holy as one makes their way to a site of particular sacred significance. It is more than a hike or walk as it is an intentional attempt to encounter the divine. It is best not to be too prescriptive about expectations, but to be open to what the sacred has to share with us. We can think of it as a parallel process, both a bodily and inward journeying, either as an individual or as part of a group.



In ancient times, the people of Israel made compulsory pilgrimage to Jerusalem, three times a year if they were able. The destination was Jerusalem, the site of God's holy Temple and the place of celebration of the three main festivals of the Hebrew people. These were *Pesach* (Passover), *Shavuot* (50 days after Passover) and *Sukkot* (Festival of Booths). Islam picked up pilgrimage as one of the five tenets, to make pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in a lifetime, if health and resources permitted.



In Europe, pilgrimage has become a well-established spiritual discipline. Pilgrims would make their way to Rome or other holy sites. Today, thousands walk the Way of St James to the church in Santiago de Compostela in Spain, beginning from many different starting points. Some make pilgrimage on the way of St Ignatius, from Basque country to Manresa where Inigo Lopez de Loyola, founder of the Jesuits, composed the Spiritual Exercises. In Australia in recent years the way of Mary McKillop invites pilgrims to journey from Portland to Penola in South Australia, and in Western Australia, pilgrims can follow in the footsteps of Dom Salvado, the founder of the monastery and abbey at New Norcia.