

AN INVITATION TO JOIN OSH AND THE AMERICAN FRIENDS OF ST DAVIDS CATHEDRAL ON A Pilgrimage to Wales :: May 12-24, 2008



St Davids Cathedral

Leaders: **Sister Cintra Pemberton**, recognized internationally for her gifts as a pilgrimage leader, who knows and loves Wales and has led yearly pilgrimages to Wales since 1992; and **The Rev Harold Hallock**, President of the American Friends of St Davids Cathedral.

The pilgrimage will follow four themes in Wales:

(1) the people (2) the culture (3) the history (4) the natural beauty

While in St Davids, we'll meet and share meals with the Bishop of the Diocese, the Rt Rev Carl Cooper; and the Dean of St Davids Cathedral, the Very Rev Wyn Evans. We'll also enjoy a class on Welsh poetry with the retired Bishop of Bangor and his wife, Saunders and Cynthia Davies; and a delightfully informal introduction to the Welsh language with Glyn and Janet Conway. A bit later in the program we'll hear some Welsh folk singers and then enjoy some Welsh folk dancing.



Even before arriving at St Davids, we'll have visited the magnificent medieval ruins of Tintern Abbey and walked to the tiny Celtic (6th c.) church of Patricio, where we'll renew our Baptismal vows in the Holy Well of St Issui. And we'll stop at 13th c. Carreg Cennen castle en route to St Davids, enjoying our first taste of Welsh cakes and Welsh bara brith with afternoon tea. We'll meet Bernard and Margaret Llewellyn and their daughter Angharad, who own the castle and surrounding farm.



The beauty of the Pembrokeshire coast in the St Davids area is outstanding, so we'll take a boat trip around Ramsey Island with Padraig Rees and his naturalist mother, Nona Rees, to see it. Cintra has known both Nona and Padraig for many years. Since it's May, the sea birds will be nesting in the cliffs, so we'll see the thousands of razorbills, guillemots, kittiwakes, choughs and many other birds who make their home in the area. If we're lucky, we'll also see Atlantic gray seals and porpoises.



As we begin to head north, we'll stop by the prehistoric burial chamber of Pentre Ifan, dating to 2500 BCE, and another 6th c Celtic church at Nevern, which has one of Wales's high crosses in its churchyard. Nearby is the medieval Pilgrims' Way leading to St Davids, where we can see the footprints of those ancient saints deeply etched into the bedrock underfoot. Members of St Brynach's church at Nevern will welcome us with home made Welsh refreshments.

We leap forward into the modern period when we have our lunch at the Llechwedd Slate Quarries, where we learn about the importance of slate mining to the history of Wales, as the Industrial Revolution swept across Britain. We take a tram ride into the mines and see first hand what the life of a slate miner was like. Then we drive through the spectacular high mountains of Snowdonia and once again move back into the Middle Ages, stopping at the Welsh castle of Dolwyddelan before having Eucharist in tiny St Michael's Church in Betws-y-coed, where the Friends of St Michael's will also meet and greet us.



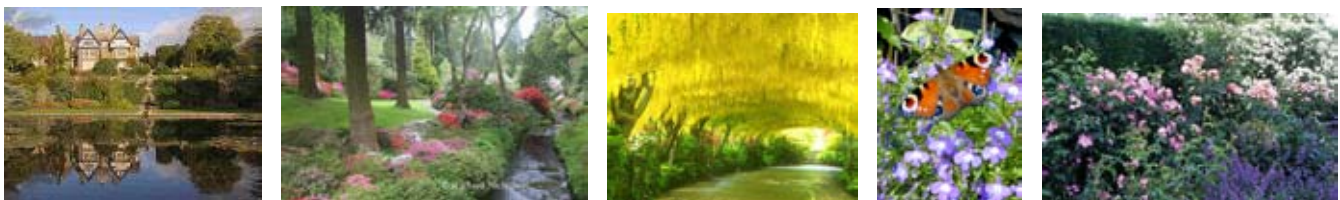
We spend an entire day on the placid and pastoral Llŷn Peninsula, following the ancient Pilgrims' Way, beginning at St Cybi's Well where we will have a healing service. We'll then visit a few of the ancient little churches, all dedicated to Celtic saints, and we'll end atop Uwchmynydd, looking across to Bardsey Island, the Isle of 20,000 Saints. This whole area is probably the most Welsh part of Wales, where the Welsh language is more common than English. We'll meet a number of people who live and work and pray in the area, and we'll have a chance to practice our own Welsh, as well!



We can't forget that the Romans were in Wales, too. This was the farthest extent of the Roman Empire, so we will stop at the Roman Fort of Segontium, before visiting the mighty Edwardian castle in Caernarfon. Afterward we go again into the mists of pre-history at the burial chamber of Barclodiad y Gawres on Anglesey Island, with its mysterious etched cave designs; and then we'll have another Eucharist at another Holy Well at Penmon.



Finally, on our last day, we visit world famous Bodnant Gardens, one of the truly great gardens of Britain. It was established in 1875 and now consists of 80 carefully tended acres, owned by the National Trust. Late spring bloom will be at its peak.



As for meals, most evening meals will be three course dinners offering several choices, served either in our hotel or in a local restaurant, but always specializing in Welsh dishes made from fresh local produce. We'll eat in several pubs, too, since pubs are a way of life in Britain. Vegetarian options are always on every menu.



And every bit of this for only \$3795! This price is all-inclusive, covering round trip airfare between Newark NJ and the UK, all trip-related ground transportation, all accommodations and all meals, all entry fees and activities described above, and all tips and gratuities. It does not cover the cost of any alcoholic beverages on the trip, your passport, or transportation between your hometown and Newark International Airport.

For more information, contact Harold = hhallock@comcast.net or Cintra = cintra@comcast.net