



April 23, 2022

Dear Community of Pilgrims,

These days, the world is full of pilgrims. Sadly, too many are forced on their journey by war, famine, violence and fear. Our world is living through this, even as some of us turn our hearts in prayerful unity with the displaced and fleeing. When the New Mexico Pilgrimage for Unity Steering team last met, the world's sorrows were on our hearts, specifically Ukraine's Christian leaders, churches and people.

Because of an educational experience of one team member, Jim Gilroy from San Cristobal, New Mexico, we already knew a little of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies, based in Kyiv, Ukraine. During the January Pilgrimage for the Week of Christian Unity, the presentation for our opening evening was from an Orthodox Priest, a member of the faculty of the Institute; he shared insights into unity and his words humbled us with the ring of truth and humility.

Thus, we asked Jim: *What have you heard from our friends at the Institute?* Jim gave us a brief update. We were moved to add a new component to our Pentecost Planning: an effort to support, financially as well as prayerfully, their work.

Thus, as we announce the plans for a Pentecost Pilgrimage, we also open a period of donations in support of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies in Kyiv. Here are the goals expressed by Fr. Roman Fihos, Director of Distance Learning. As you read these, imagine the courage and vision of Institute leaders offering such goals when war rages on the ground, in the air, on the sea, in cyber-space and over the media:

- To continue the Distance Learning Master's Program, with the several students enrolled;
- To develop all current courses with new material integrating ethical questions raised by a time of violence and strengthening the practices of reconciliation and peace-building;
- To respond to the challenge of humanitarian work by new programs to equip Christian communities to cooperate at the grass roots level.

Their commitment to ecumenism and to education is also at the heart of the New Mexico Pilgrimage for Unity. Our founder, Mike Pitchford, developed the initial Pilgrimage through his Master of Theological Studies thesis, then lead the 2017 pilgrimage with ecumenical support. We've demonstrated ecumenism within the Steering Team by our diversity, especially following Mike's death in 2020. As a team we offered two years of Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Pilgrimage. We were "adopted" by the Ecumenical Institute for Ministry, New Mexico, as a program within their educational offerings. And now, we seek the support of the wider Pilgrimage for Unity community on behalf of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies in Ukraine. The 2022 Pentecost Pilgrimage offers:

7 days of praying with/for ecumenical friends in Ukraine
3 days of self-designed pilgrimage
1 Pentecost Celebration
4 monthly Zoom gatherings for the Pilgrimage community
 (perhaps culminating in a 1 day face-to-face pilgrimage to Chimayo in September)

The Pentecost Pilgrimage page on our website is up, but not finished; there you can register, donate, review resources, submit prayer requests to enhance your own (and others) participation. With this email comes the flyer...first to you, and soon to all.

Update from the Steering Team: 3 of our leaders will be walking the Camino this year: Langha Pham, Bill and Becky Glad; and 4 of our members do not live in NM: Rock Fremont in Arizona, Becky Glad in Texas and the Huggins in Maine. Still, we walk in solidarity while moving beyond state lines, just as ecumenically, our first steps in 2017 united Roman Catholic, Protestant and Evangelical pilgrims.

These are the intentions for the 2022 Pentecost Pilgrimage:

As we prepare May 26-June 1: Spirit, pray in us.

As we walk, June 2-4: Spirit, walk with us.

As we seek unity, June 5 through fall: Spirit, create unity through us.

Thank you for praying and walking in unity, Pilgrim Kay Huggins