

*A Celtic Pilgrimage in Northwest and Midwest Ireland*  
*For renewal of mind, body, and spirit*  
*August 23 - 30, 2024*  
Contact: [revkimhardy@gmail.com](mailto:revkimhardy@gmail.com)

Dear Potential Pilgrim,

We invite you to a beautiful adventure in Ireland. Some of you have come with us before and may want to return, and others may have, for some time, considered taking a spiritual pilgrimage. Our journeys have evolved into times of exploration and retreat in these lands of exquisite natural beauty. Pilgrimage is as much an interior as exterior journey. As we wander landscapes with their changing views, and endless patterns of light and colors, they offer deep opportunities to contemplate the changing landscapes of our inner world. This is the beauty of pilgrimage experiences.



In Ireland, we learn about Christians who went to the edges of the known world to find God. We see places of historical and spiritual significance from Celtic Christian and pre-Christian worldviews. Those who have walked with us in these amazing landscapes express how meaningful these journeys are. Our exceptional guides work with us to design small group experiences of exploration, rest, and prayer, filling our days with a mix of hiking, contemplation, and cultural opportunities designed to delve into Celtic spirituality and its rich possibilities for deepening our lives of faith.

Our theme this year is *“Celtic Imagination and Liminal Space.”* Through special speakers and cultural experiences we wish to explore how the “unseen” plays into everyday life and how Ireland is a source of awe and wonder. As the Irish say: “Heaven and earth are only three feet apart but in thin places that distance is even shorter.”

The idea of “place” is very important in Irish culture. One’s “place” says a lot about one’s personhood, not only in terms of where you are from but also how you navigate life. We are still working on details for specific activities but the places in which we will be traveling are filled with some of the most beautiful people we know.

The 2024 pilgrimage will be an intimate, reflective, and moderately-paced spiritual journey. Our path will be guided through the areas of Donegal and the Burren. Against the backdrop of beautiful landscapes, and amidst this rich cultural and spiritual heritage, our desire is that our pilgrimage will provide space for connecting with the Divine.

Following in the paths of saints, scholars, and ancient peoples, we hope to return with enriched worldviews, revitalized spirits, and deepened friendships.

**If interested, please send a non-refundable \$1,000 reservation fee, which is required to save a place. We plan to limit this special journey to 12 pilgrims. We hope you will consider joining us.**



With every blessing,  
The Rev. Kim Hardy, Pilgrimage Director  
The Rev. Dr. Frederick Moser  
in collaboration with *The Hidden Ireland Tours*

# *A Celtic Pilgrimage in Northwest and Midwest Ireland*

Our first home base: Castle Grove House, County Donegal – August 23 - 26



**Castle Grove House** is a beautiful, warm inn offering a deep sense of old world hospitality. This will be our first base amidst the wild beauty of County Donegal. It is the area from which the great Irish Saint Colmcille (Columba) came before departing to found a monastery on the small island of Iona. From there, Celtic inspired Christianity spread to what we now know as Scotland and northern England. He is a pivotal figure in the development of Celtic Christian spirituality.







John O'Donohue, known for his writings on Celtic spirituality wrote:

*"One of the reasons that the post-modern mind is so packed and tight is that we have lost touch with our wildness. One of the most natural ways of coming home to your wildness is to go out into a wild place."*



**Our second home base: Hazelwood Lodge and/or Cappabhaile House, , Ballyvaughan, County Clare - August 27 - 30**



The Burren landscapes hold a special place in our hearts. They are unlike any we have ever encountered other than on the Aran Islands – seemingly stark at first but in reality, teeming with plant life that overcomes all obstacles. This landscape’s grey karst limestone rock boasts subtle and persistent tenacity of some of the most special plants in all of Ireland. It is dotted with numerous ritual antiquities of pre-Christian and Christian ages

that boggle the mind in terms of their history and depth of spirit energy. This is a very liminal place, indeed.

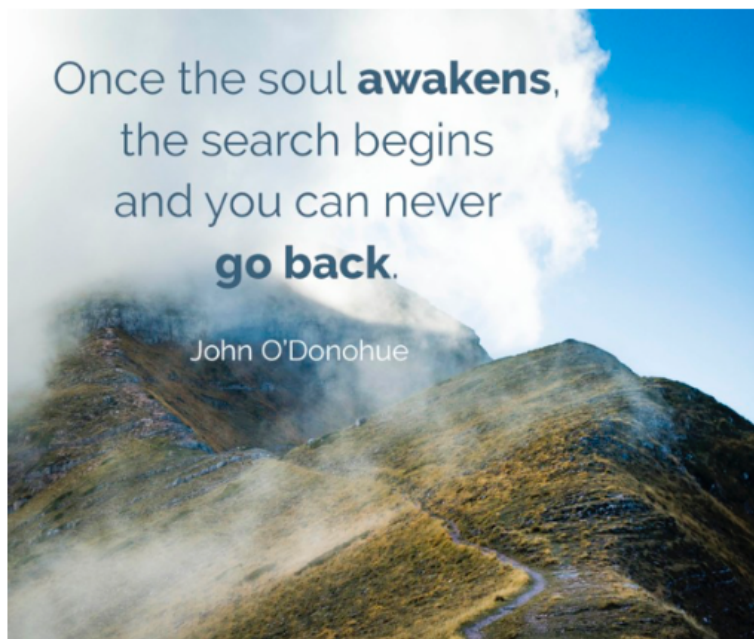


These surroundings were well-known to *John O' Donohue*. He was born here in the north-western corner of the Burren in this landscape that powerfully shaped his thinking and spirituality. He referred to it, extensively, in his seminal work *Anam Cara* as well as other writings.

More details about this journey will be added as planning continues. We know this will be a special experience and hope you will join us.

Links to lodging:

<https://www.castlegrove.com/>  
<https://www.hazelwoodlodge.ie/>  
<https://www.cappabhaile.com/>





**Ireland – A Celtic Pilgrimage 2024 – Detail**  
**Contact – The Rev. Kim Hardy – revkimhardy@gmail.com**

**Package includes:**

- 7 nights' accommodation
- All ground transportation including pick up at Shannon Airport on August 23 and return to Shannon on August 30
- Special guest speakers and/or musicians
- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner
- Full services of our Irish guides, Con Moriarty and Ann Curren

**Cost:**

- With 12 pilgrims \$5,350 (per person double occupancy)
- With 10-11 pilgrims \$6,025 (per person double occupancy)
- Single Room Supplement is an extra \$900
- An insurance charge of approximately \$90 per person (TBD after consultation with Church Insurance), which provides a rider on the parish's insurance policy to cover any potential liability. This will be paid by separate check to St. James Church, Essex Junction, VT
- We collect a gratuity at the conclusion of the pilgrimage for our extraordinary guides.
- Sometimes we have the opportunity (as desired) to purchase books by the scholars or authors we encounter along the way.
- Airfare is not included.

**Reservation Dates**

This pilgrimage is reserving now and could fill up quickly in that we are limiting it to keep the group intimate and avail of a smaller bus which perfectly winds the roads of Ireland! We are accepting until we have a full contingent of 12. We plan to meet up at Shannon Airport on August 23 and depart from Shannon Airport on August 30.

**Travel Insurance and Flight Insurance**

We strongly recommend travel cancellation insurance and flight insurance to be obtained through a travel agent if for any reason the trip is cancelled. Any other insurance costs such as medical insurance must be borne by the individual. You might try <https://www.squaremouth.com> or <https://www.travelguard.com> for travel insurance.

**Deposit and Liability Insurance Checks**

To secure your place, please make:

- **A non-refundable deposit of \$1,000 by check to The Hidden Ireland Tours, c/o Binky Oswald, 112 Frazer Court, Mobile, AL 36607 (NOTE NEW ADDRESS). and**
- **A check for liability insurance to St. James Episcopal Church when exact amount is determined**  
c/o The Rev. Kim Hardy: 20 Lavoie Drive, Essex Junction, VT 05452.

### **Payments**

**A second payment of \$2,500 is due by April 1, 2023. Final payment is due by June 1, 2024.** Final payment amount will vary in that it is determined by size of the group and whether you are requiring a single supplement (single rooms are somewhat limited but available). If you prefer to pay \$3,500 at time of deposit, that is fine as well.

### **Air Travel**

Each person is responsible for travel to Shannon Airport, arriving on August 23. If you arrive before that date you would need to get back to the airport or to the first lodge. Detailed information on meeting the group will be provided after we receive deposits. **We will contact you as soon as we know we have a group large enough to proceed. You might want to wait until this notification from us to book flights.**

### **COVID 19 Vaccination**

Proof of Covid 19 vaccination is required.

### **Spiritual Guides**

All guides work together for an organic experience. The Rev. Kim Hardy and The Rev. Dr. Frederick Moser are clergy in the Christian tradition. There will be daily times of prayer and reflection provided throughout our journey as well as the celebration of the Holy Eucharist (Communion) at sites of religious or natural significance.

### **Pilgrim Participants**

The pilgrimage is open to members of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont and others who are interested in Celtic Christian spirituality. The pilgrimage is sponsored by St. James Church, Essex Junction, VT.

### **Physical Ability**

The pilgrimage assumes the ability to walk moderate distances, such as 5 miles on some days. Some activities may involve moderate climbing. For those who are unable to walk that distance or climb, guides will provide an alternative activity. *Please be aware of this when considering the journey.*

### **Disclaimer**

*The Hidden Ireland Tours* reserves the right to make changes to the itinerary if necessary. Such changes may be necessary depending on weather conditions, etc.