

## Pilgrims, Not Tourists

Let us pray, on this journey, for a deepening of faith. Pray for freedom from fear, cynicism and judgments. On pilgrimage to a foreign land, you're going to encounter people who act and talk differently; if you act sophisticated or superior, you'll lose the childlike spirit that the Gospel asks of us.

A pilgrim must have a Beginner's Mind. You must be like a child who can approach everything with an attitude of wonder, awe, and faith. So pray for wonder, awe, and desire. Ask God to take away your sophistication and cynicism. Ask God to take away the restless, anxious heart of the tourist, which always needs to find the new, the more, the curious. Recognize yourself as a pilgrim, as someone who has already been found by God.

When we walk in pilgrimage in this holy place—the island of Quisqueya—we can let it speak to us. Not in our language, perhaps, and maybe not with our customs. But it is a holy place, filled with the Spirit. If we are open, and humble, we will hear it. Just listen and wait.

(from Richard Rohr, *Radical Grace: Daily Meditations*, with slight adaptation)

### As Pilgrims (not Tourists)...

- we bear witness to the experience, rather than consume it
- we listen, rather than fix or impose
- we seek difficult questions, rather than easier answers
- we walk, rather than drive or fly
- we breathe, and mindfully recall that this reality is the *everyday* reality for those with whom we've come to stand in solidarity—rather than complain about the heat, the bugs, the food, the bumps in the road
- we share stories, rather than isolate with technology
- we work, pray, and study—rather than buy, self-congratulate, and remain blissfully ignorant
- we value heavenly treasure, not Mammon (see Mt. 6:19-24)
- we seek a Third Way, rather than the false (win/lose) choices we may be presented
- True Service engages our heart, hands (feet), and mind. We must meet the poor as humans, walk and/or work with them, and study the history (and present) that created this reality—as well as our part in it (few are guilty, all are responsible)