

BISHOP MICHAEL'S GLOUCESTERSHIRE MILLENNIUM PILGRIMAGE

As the final event of the celebration to mark the Millennium of the County of Gloucestershire, I am planning a Pilgrimage Walk around the diocese from 8 to 15 June 2008.

The plan is to gather a group of about a dozen walkers, who will walk about 15 miles each day (not carrying back-packs, which will be transported separately), stopping to pray or to celebrate the Eucharist in churches on the way and receiving the hospitality of parishes each night. The hope is that others will join the pilgrimage walk for a day at a time.

The pilgrimage will set out from Tewkesbury Abbey on the morning of Sunday 8 June, walking that day to Newent, via Deerhurst and Upleadon. On Monday the group will go via Highnam and St Oswald's Priory in Gloucester to Elmore. On Tuesday via Saul, probably by boat to Berkeley and on to North Nibley. On Wednesday via Ozleworth to Tetbury. On Thursday via Avening and Bisley to Daglingworth. On Friday via Ciencester, Ampney Crucis and Coln Rogers to Withington. On Saturday via Sevenhampton and Hailes Abbey to Winchcombe, where the pilgrimage will end with a Eucharist on Sunday morning. The route takes in most of the significant minster towns of a thousand years ago, together with some of the churches with Saxon remains, but will nevertheless be a pilgrimage of 21st century Christians engaging with communities as they are a thousand years on from the foundation of Gloucestershire.

The pilgrimage should be an occasion of good fellowship and conversation, of spiritual experience and exploration, a celebration of our Christian heritage, a series of visits to our holy places in Gloucestershire and an opportunity to engaged with individuals and communities along our route.

I am hoping the group that will walk with me might include men and women of varying age (from 18 upwards), among them some enquirers in relation to faith, some exploring their vocation, students, ordinands, clergy. All they need is the ability to clear their diary for eight days in June and sufficient fitness to walk to cover about 15 miles a day, partly on roads, partly on footpaths.

Anyone interest in walking with me please contact me as soon as possible on bshpglos@glosdioc.org.uk.

