

Thursday, March 24, 2022: Another version of the paper for the Gaia Oasis Pilgrimage Talk.

Gaia's Oasis: maya@sisterswellspring.com April 18-22, 2022

Connecting to the Soul of the Earth: The Sacred Art of Pilgrimage

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A poem for those suffering in war:

The Peace of Wild Things Wendell Berry

When despair grows in me

and I wake in the night at the least sound

in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,

I go and lie down where the wood drake

rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.

I come into the peace of wild things

who do not tax their lives with forethought

of grief. I come into the presence of still water.

And I feel above me the day-blind stars

waiting for their light. For a time

I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

Now to my talk:

I'd like to start with a story:

The Conference of the Birds is a story told by the 12th century Persian Sufi poet and mystic, Attar. Its central theme is the awakening the heart, one that is central to Pilgrimage and to our relationship with the earth.

The Earth is very sad and calls birds to her from all over the world. She tells them of her great sorrow that the earth has become so polluted. So many creatures on land and in the seas are cruelly treated, the trees who breathe for us are being cut down and this creates climate imbalances, and people kill each other in wars that ravage the land and poison its resources, and now the Earth fears for the fate of the planet.

The birds cry out in dismay and ask how they can help. Earth asks them if they are willing to go on a special journey to the lands beyond time, over the 7 valleys ruled by the 7 monsters, to ask the Great Being in the House of the Hidden Treasure, the answer to earth's suffering. The birds raised serious questions about this journey to such a strange and unknown place.

But eventually, the hoopoe bird comes forward as a messenger from the invisible world who says she knows the way to the Great Spirit beyond time. She says the journey will require courage, keen vision, wisdom, and gentleness. At first, the birds are excited, but soon lose heart, and begin to make excuses why they can't go. The hoopoe reminds them that the gifts of singing that they have and delight others with will be useless if there is no longer an Earth to care and provide for them. So, with expressions of further doubt, and hoopoe's continued encouragement, telling them that overcoming the monster in each valley will strengthen them and give them more wisdom and love, slowly but surely the birds begin to rally their courage for the challenging journey. As they flew off into the darkness, they looked back and saw the earth as a shining jewel, and this filled them with love for her once again.

Well, inevitably, the challenges of the monster in each dark valley, draw some of the birds in as they waver in their resolve, give into doubting themselves, get seduced by illusory promises, and otherwise lose heart, and they get pulled down into the darkness, and they forget the suffering earth, and the promise they made to help her. Many birds die in this way. But some birds find their inner strength and by facing and refusing the darkness, break the spell of evil and travel on.

Eventually, the few remaining birds, now exhausted and wounded from the trials of the journey, reach the shores of a silvery magical sea, dive in, and come to the exquisitely beautiful garden of the House of the Treasure. A great light was shining from within, and a figure appears dressed in a robe like a rainbow. "Where have you come from and why are you here," says the figure with great tenderness. The hoopoe and some other birds relate that the earth is very sad and is asking for help, and that they must return with a message from

the Great Being. So, with their hearts tested, the figure invites them into the House. As they enter, they are quickly overcome with awe at the vision of the glory and radiance of the secrets of creation, spreading its subtle and mystical light into every imaginable form of life. They are granted a vision of the true reality and profound mystery at the heart of Being.

The Great Being emerges with an aura of Presence and Silence and responds to the birds that in persevering with the journey, and arriving at the heart and mystery of life, they themselves are the now answer, are indeed the message itself, now that they have come to experience their true nature and found the divine spirit in their own hearts. Now they can return to earth, knowing that the divine light blazes in each stone, leaf, flower, and tree, and enlightens every star, atom, animal, and child.

The Great Being concludes that if ever they are anxious and afraid, they need only imagine the streaming golden light, and the Presence will be with them giving them strength, reminding them that there is no death, only life eternal. And with that they are invited to tell the children of Earth what they have seen. So, with their hearts ablaze, the birds return to Earth, gathering all the birds who had fallen by the wayside in the valleys of the monsters and who are now vitally alive, so they could all return together. They see the Earth as a shining jewel once again, and fly to the gathering place where they had originally started from. There they tell Earth their story. She is overcome with gratitude and thanks them for saving her life. She tells them to also tell the children of Earth the story in their hearts and they will know how to care for the earth, and for sake of their children's children, and maybe one day even make the journey to the mysterious land beyond time, east of the sun and west of the moon.

A story that is as central today as it was 900 years ago and is a great metaphor for Pilgrimage as it is for life in general.

(Life: Call – depression etc, equivocation, take the plunge, are faced with demons and neglected sides of life and character, gradual healing, a transpersonal/synchronistic event that changes you, back into life with a renewed sense of meaning and purpose.

Pilgrimage: – Call, entry into sacred space, challenges on the way, etc. return to life with a boon or gift, a symbol of a transformed consciousness)

Context: For millenia, a Lunar goddess culture that lived in unity with the earth and stars and the rhythms of life, death, rebirth, gave way (from about 2,500 BC to now) to a Solar, patriarchal civilization, ruled by conquest and control of nature. This Solar

world eclipsed the earlier shamanic culture and saw the rise of the repression of both the feminine principle and of women. Together with the secular rise of science and the period of ‘enlightenment’ and the dominance of rational ways of knowing, **an egregious split between matter and spirit was forged.** This ‘disenchantment’ of our world has led to a huge environmental crisis and a more general breakdown leading to unsustainability on many levels, and a loss of the sacred.

On the other hand, we see **a growing sense of renewal, and of nature – not just humans – but trees, flowers, animals, cells, being now considered sentient and alive,** and now many ecological movements to help heal our Earth and ourselves, the ones who have contributed to this dire state of things. We need to return to a sacred attitude towards life and the cosmos, and in this regard **indigenous traditions are helping us restore the appropriate attitude of care and custodianship for our planet.** Embracing the creative aspects of the Solar age and supported by the ‘relational’ model of Quantum Physics (that we are interconnected with the whole) together with the profound insights of Jungian archetypal and transpersonal psychology, we could move, and are already contributing, to the next stage of a Stellar Era of renewal.

We are certainly suffering the **alchemical ‘death’ of the old order,** both individually and collectively. This painful dismantling cannot be underestimated. But, through working with our hearts and souls by contributing in whatever way we can, and through finding the Presence and Stillness within ourselves, this Stellar era – the vision of Earth and Cosmos as alive and sentient and filled with meaning – will come to fruition.

Consciousness and matter need to evolve to a higher level – (the “ascension process”) – and the Rights of Nature herself need to be respected. Once you know that csness is everywhere, your relationship with Earth and Cosmos inevitably changes – we are drops of water on a vast ocean.

Need for a New Myth:

So, this growing shift in perspective involves the need for a new myth, a new story, a fundamental change in worldview, and a fundamental change in consciousness that accompanies it.

Quantum Physics, Archetypal Astrology, Cosmological Studies, Gaia and Ecological studies, Energy and other healing modalities, are all helping to change our view of reality.

Synchronicity and Subtle Reality:

My own particular interest in something that has necessitated a whole new worldview involving the awareness that oneness is everywhere, is Jung's hypothesis of synchronicity. Synchronicities show that we are inextricably linked with nature, with our earth, and it happens through direct experience, not a theory. **Describe synchronicity: Vision or dream is mirrored by an event in the world. This happens not through a cause/effect relationship, but through an acausal, nonlocal one – meaning time and space are bypassed – and this leads to an “aha” moment, a moment of “magic” that has a shared meaning in both psyche and matter/event. This “aha” sense is structured by eros, feeling, not logos or thinking, so it opens the heart. And the meaningful simultaneity of inner and outer demonstrates the interconnectedness of psyche and matter, that they are one, and that oneness was called *unus mundus*, one world – a term from mystical alchemy.**

Furthermore, such unpredictable events show us that creation is not fixed, or like clockwork, but creative and spontaneous. This was called *creatio continua*. Jung's hypothesis was developed in work with Nobel Laureate and quantum physicist, Wolfgang Pauli. Archetypes underly both psyche and matter; they are not just inner vs. outer experiences.

This requires a change in worldview: the world is not fixed; it is constantly being created: *creatio continua*. Time is not only quantitative but has quality, it is symbolic; the *Kairos* = the right time/divine timing (vs. *chronos*). These ideas challenge objectified view of reality. Meaning and purpose are embedded in the cosmos, the earth, and in us. Our interior being is in alignment with the interiority of the cosmos. (Astrology shows this too.). It suggests every moment is a potentially creative one. We do not need or have to be attached to old patterns. We can change. We're partners, co-creators in the unfolding of the cosmos.

The change requires us now to foster a living **relationship** with the planet, with earth, as psyche and matter are one and the same, or one can say, an underlying reality, *unus mundus*, expresses itself in both psychological and material ways which are linked by invisible threads.

Origins of Pilgrimage:

First, In SofS, I explored synchronicity (and some other visionary and imaginal experiences such as NDEs, kundalini awakenings) on both the personal and collective levels (UFOs and crop circles), as examples of an “intermediate realm of subtle bodies,” a level of reality between matter and spirit that so many are experiencing today – These subtle experiences in my view are **signatures of an emerging new worldview** as I call them. It's as if there's a consciousness revealed at the edge between spirit and matter, at the zero point or quantum level, that is somewhere between our ego minds and our unconscious and beyond. Jung called this psyche-like

or matter-like aspect *psychoid*. (Henri Corbin, calls the world between spirit and matter, the *mundus imaginalis*. This subtle world has its own figures and landscapes, guides and cities). I call it imaginal, or the Other world. It's where reality is both symbolic and non-symbolic/real at the same time, where it tips over into another realm, a subtle world, that is just as real as our inner and outer worlds, but on another level 'between.' It also has **differing levels of intensity of both an emotional and physical nature**. (So, for example, a synchronicity in its "aha" nature helps open the heart, and you feel that emotion in your body. An NDE, or UFO encounter is often a much more intensified experience of unconditional love, that is so real that people return absolutely knowing there is life beyond life, and that the fear of death is completely unnecessary, and that fulfilling your destiny here and learning how to love are the most important achievements in *this* life.)

Of all the ways of experiencing this subtle domain, I also found out that it could be discovered through walking.

**How did I arrive at this? And how does it relate to this conference theme?:
Practical relating to the earth.**

Discovering Pilgrimage

Origins:

Preparation. In 2013, I felt an increasing feeling of sadness over the climate catastrophe, fueled by our misuse of nature and her resources, and the inability of governments to make fundamental changes in environmental policies, energy consumption etc. And too, at that time, there was the prospect of yet another war. Feeling overwhelmed by these large issues, I felt I needed to do something on a smaller scale, something I could actually do. So I planned a pilgrimage – had been wanting to do one for awhile. We had taken a long leave from our teaching positions and were living in France outside Aix-en-Provence, over the summer, right at the foot of Mt. Ste. Victoire. Inspired by a dream and taking long hikes and walks on Mt. Ste. Victoire on an almost daily basis for 2 months, I made plans for my first pilgrimage for late September. In the meantime, I had some interesting experiences on MSVictoire. And these turned out to be my preparation. But the one experience that was to influence my first pilgrimage was a profound one, and happened just before I was to begin it.

When the time came to leave Aix to take the train to Le Puy and begin my walk on the Camino, I made one last hike in order to say a conscious farewell to this strong and powerful mountain that had, after two months, become my companion and friend. It was as if taking the time to walk on her body, mostly in silence and mostly lost in reverie and the physical arduousness of some of the trails, I had, without realizing it until the moment of separation, become rather attached, not to the

mountain as a rock so much, but to the mountain as a sentient being that had consciousness and awareness. I had connected to the spirit of the mountain; and the mountain had become alive for me. I felt as if I was tuning into what the alchemists called the “light of nature,” *lumen naturae*, a kind of subtle energy. So, on that last day, as I walked I started to talk to the mountain. I thanked Mt Ste. Victoire for her beauty and endurance over millennia, for what she must have seen in her long life! I thanked her for companionship all these days. And then I became aware of a deep sorrow overcoming me, and I realized that this was an emotional separation that brought a feeling of great loss, much as I would experience saying goodbye to someone really close to me. Nevertheless, I expressed my gratitude, my love, and my sadness. And then, out of a great stillness that was in the air on that hot day, suddenly a rush of wind out of nowhere arose and embraced me, and I knew that the mountain was responding to me, that I had been heard, and witnessed, and yes, even loved in return. My eyes filled with tears, and for a moment I was suspended in an aura of great blessing, and I was filled with joy. Now, I knew I was ready for the next path, and that this period of time on Mt Ste. Victoire had been my preparation. So, we can tune into the invisible landscape of place, its soul. This involves the imagination, by which we participate in a reciprocal connection. This is both practical and wondrous at the same time!!

And so began, my first solo pilgrimage walk that I imagined as a **mindful meditation walk on behalf of the Earth. The *Le Puy* route begins in the town of Le Puy-en-Velay**, half a day’s train ride away north of Provence, in a basilica with 2 Black Madonnas in it. – The path goes to the mediaeval city of Conques (140miles), with a huge Romanesque cathedral in it – the Journey took almost 2 weeks. (2 years later, I completed this particular route, another solo walk that took a month to the border with Spain.)

On this first journey, I walked through forests, across fields and farmland and open grassy rocky wilderness, up and down mountains, and along lush river valleys. Some of the walking was quite challenging and I often marvelled that I was able to walk as far I did on some days. As I walked, I tried to focus on my intention, to listen to the earth and to try to hear her message and to notice what crossed my path.

I paid attention to the sounds I was hearing – birdsong, the rustle of the breezes through the branches of trees, the mooing of cows or the enchanting ring of bells around their necks, the mournful chime of a church bell far away, the various voices of a stream or river, thunder in the distance; and the smells all around me – the pine of the forests, the rich dark brown humus earth smell of a ploughed field.

I would also pay attention to my feelings, thoughts, and imaginings. I

was often simply overwhelmed by the beauty around me as I allowed my senses to awaken –

Just one example on this (Le Puy) walk:

When I remembered, I tried to breathe deeply as I put one foot in front of the other, asking to let go of heaviness and any sorrow and heartbreak (as I was breathing out) and to let in more joy and gratitude (as I breathed in the energy from the earth itself beneath my feet). I tried to remind myself that nature is alive, and to be aware of the spirits of the place (as in many indigenous and shamanic cultures), and to honor them silently even if I couldn't see them. Amazingly, with this practice, that I was really making up as I went along, any feelings of loneliness or fatigue would tend to dissipate (or I could use these emotions as a doorway to deepen into my intention), and I often started to feel much happiness and inspiration, even after long and sometimes challenging and arduous days of walking.

The Stone Being and the Bees

On my 4th day of walking, it was the **Autumn Equinox**, September 21, the time in the year's calendar when day and night are of equal length, and we celebrate the end of summer and the beginning of Fall. I was musing on the tension of the opposites of light and dark in life as I set out from Saugues to Les Faux, a 28 km (almost 17 mile) hike. I began reflecting on this time of year that signals the long slow journey into Winter sleeping and dreaming as we appreciate what we have harvested during the year and wonder how it might be either let go of, or imagined forward to create new dreams that can sprout next Spring in the coming year. This is a day when we might remember the ancestors, and when we can begin to prepare for symbolic death and renewal.

It was a crisp blue morning with puffy clouds and the day became increasingly warm and sunny. In a focused yet relaxed way, I was engaging in my practice of breathing out fear and old patterns and breathing in new life and gratitude, when my attention became arrested by a rather large stone on the path. So, I approached 'him' as a Stone Being or spirit. He looked a bit like an Egyptian cone-headed figure, and also rather like an Aztec! Quite a powerful rock, I thought! He seemed to me like a guardian on that part of the path, so I rested against him for a while, asking for his guidance on my way on this special day. After a few minutes, I felt the rock Being communicating with me. He advised me to focus on the things that last – like himself that had been there for thousands of years – enduring values that we desperately need on our planet like generosity, compassion, connection

with our instincts, love, wisdom, devotion to the whole of life, adding that these qualities also exist in the cosmos beyond our planet. He conveyed that we humans needed to see life here now through the eyes of eternity and aeons of time, not just this day, month, lifetime, generation, several generations, but ‘forever,’ like a stone that exists for millennia. Moreover, the passing on of this knowledge of enduring values to others is our job as we humans age. I mused that this is why the alchemists loved their Stone! The philosopher’s stone is a paradoxical symbol for that which endures and can be embodied and cultivated in ourselves as something of lasting value as we struggle with our issues, mature and age.

The Stone Being also had purple flowers and **a bees’ nest** at his base, with bees buzzing in and out of a small opening. He reminded me that the bees are representations of the Melissae (“bees”) of the Goddess, “priestesses” of the Great Goddess as Earth, and “initiates” of Demeter, Goddess of Descent and Regeneration, for bees are required for the balance of nature, for the major part of food production, and can teach us about being in service to the whole of being, to the cyclical processes of life, and to a consideration of our communities, and not just ourselves as individuals. As I later found out, the Bee Goddess and her “bee maidens” were also linked to the Pythia at Delphi, Apollo’s oracular priestess, also called the Delphic Bee. So, bee priestesses were gifted with prophecy and practiced the art of divination. Their honey was used in embalming rituals and was transformed into the intoxicating mead elixir drunk as part of ecstatic rites celebrating the rising of the great star Sirius in July, the star associated with the daughter of the Goddess and the renewal of the year. Moreover, the humming of the bees was considered the voice of the goddess and even the sound of creation itself.

The bees on the path eventually led me to the current phenomenon of **Colony Collapse Disorder**, to the fact that large scale farming and poisonous pesticides – not to mention carting lorry loads of bee hives across the country and across the world to areas that need pollinating, exhausting bees – are threatening bee populations across the world, and hence our food supply. There is a wonderful film about this called, “Queen of the Sun,” a title that alludes to the queen and worker bees’ connection with the sun.

Furthermore, the bees led me to the **Path of Pollen**, an ancient European indigenous shamanic path, and to the branch of this path called “*The Way of*

the Melissae,” (as mentioned above) an ancient feminine oracular tradition [going back to the Venus of Laussel covered in ocre at the entrance to the cave with bees]; a tradition that engages the alchemical art of transformation. In the Path of Pollen, divination is taught and practiced as one of the honeyed arts, and a ‘humming’ mantra allows one to enter a slightly altered state of consciousness to access oracular wisdom from an invisible college of Bee Mistresses. The encounter with bees on the pilgrimage path also conveyed to me that life is interconnected on physical and non-physical levels, and this insight into the Oneness of matter and spirit is something we can experience and affirm. I thought, too, of my walks on Mt Sainte Victoire, and the sense that this ‘rock’ is also a sentient being arising out of and within the *lumen naturae* as the subtle web of light and life that holds everything together, the energy that fuels the daffodils blooming in spring as well as the planets in their orbits and the spiraling arms of the galaxies. Later I discovered that in *The Way of the Melissae*, the major symbol is an infinity sign on its side, called the lemniscate, one of whose multi-dimensional meanings is a path between worlds, which when you ‘walk’ it, takes you out of and back into time and space while remaining in the body. My pilgrimage walk increasingly took me to this in-between subtle world, while also needing to be aware of what my feet were doing!

The bees also led me (among several other writers) to **Rudolph Steiner’s lectures on the cosmic significance of the bees**, that a beehive is a life based on love, associated by the ancients with the planet Venus, that bees draw the love life of plants into its hive, and that we humans digest these cosmic and plant effluences in the honey we eat which creates a sensual pleasure that is also strengthening to our bodies. The bee has been considered a sacred animal since ancient times – and the extensive myths from around the world concerning bees confirm this – whose wax in burning candles support our feeling of reverence and encourage us to develop our spirituality as well as the invisible spiritual depths of nature and the cosmos, and how these are mirrored in our bodies.
(Take out Dream of Bee Master here)

Reflections on Pilgrimage:

1. The deep psyche is the psyche of the cosmos. All the cosmos is in each of us, as each of us is in the cosmos. We experience this in deep meditation, or as an epiphany, or while washing dishes, etc. But in meditative walking also. I think that tuning into the invisible landscape of place, its soul (aka the *lumen naturae*, or *anima mundi*, once

personified as Sophia or Mary), sth that involves our participation through the creative imagination, gives us this feeling of oneness, of the unity of the world.

2. Transformation: in unexpected and unanticipated ways, imaginal experiences with the spirit and spirits of nature during my walks helped to transform my grief into what I can only describe as a deepening of love both for our Earth, and from the planet toward me.

3. the arduousness of lengthy walking day after day, also breaks down the ego mind to break open the heart. Talking to trees and stones; noticing the tiniest things of nature, like tiny flowers, allows you to *know*, and to feel that nature is sentient and alive!

4. I discovered the 4 stages of pilgrimage; call, enter sacred landscape, offering prayers en route, bringing sth back to the community. So, pilgrimage as a “path of stars,” a camino de compostella, is a soul journey, an “inner journey in the outer world.”

5. And again, **The Earth wants to be loved.** How do we foster this? Like any relationship, through developing reciprocity, respect, listening, participating, being present. We can also work through meditation to foster a connection to the elemental spirits and voices of earth, air, fire, water, the four directions, plus above, below, and within.

Leading Pilgrimage for Others: then a couple of years later, after the dream-vision of the Chalice of the Grail, and contact with MM, pilgrimage as a ‘mystery school’ – a journey of learning and direct experience of inner wisdom – I led others on.

1. We followed a symbolic theme – the first one I prepared was on the Magdalene Mysteries. We explored the historical reality of MM as revealed in the Gnostic gospel tradition – a woman, Miriam, who was the “beloved companion”/ *koinonos* of Yeshua/Jesus, “apostle to the apostles,” spiritual teacher, “the woman who knew the all”... Her and Yeshua’s symbolic presence in the gnostic Cathar movement of the Languedoc region of France (where our pilgrimage started). Also, she is known as “Our Lady” among the Knights Templar, Troubadours, and cathedral builders in the 12th century. The theme of the Quest as revealed in the Grail legends (which marked a flowering of the feminine principle) was a popular theme in the 12th century as it is today – a quest to find the lost parts of ourselves through shadow work, to recover the sacred feminine, & to find meaning in life through the special gift we are here to embody and share.
2. Behind the historical MM, we looked at the archetype of the celestial Sophia, the “mystical rose of the world,” the divine feminine activating in our time – a presence that embodies both vision and passion, spirit and instinct. And the related archetypes of Priestess (MM as priestess of Isis), and the Chalice of the

Grail, and its symbolic resonance as the ancient cauldron of the dark feminine – a wisdom to be accessed in the depths of our souls, accompanied by the Wise Ones and womb shamans. Also, the Black Madonna tradition which thrives in France. Black is associated with wisdom and the light to be found in darkness. “I am Black but comely” is the royal bride of the OT Song of Solomon. The shaman, too, is the “one who sees in the dark,” who closes the eyes in order to ‘see.’

3. MM as symbolic of the visionary imagination, a receptive but participatory “seeing” centered in the heart. Being in nature, we contacted the elementals (in earth, water, air, and fire), as a way for nature to express herself to us, and opened to hearing the messages in plant, wind, forest, bird calls, flower, animal, rock and mineral, hoping to contact the spirits of the earth and the soul of the Earth, *anima mundi*.
4. We followed the pattern of pilgrimage and its 4 stages. Each day had a different theme related to the **sacred site** we were visiting. Starting with a vision and intention for the journey, we dropped into a *solutio*, acknowledging wounds, releasing old patterns, and exploring the rich symbolism of water, water of life, streams of ancient knowing, to birth new possibilities. We entered an initiatory, death and rebirth, alchemical process whose purpose was transformation, and the hope for a vision to be granted as a treasure to return home with to offer to the community. We used dream, vision, and soulful conversation to deepen our experiences, writing in our journals as a further way of anchoring the events to deepen into them later. We ended at the cathedral of the Black Madonna of Montserrat in Spain, a portal of profound beauty, spiritual, and bodily healing.
5. On our last day, each participant shared a vision, poem, dream, insight, song, that had brought something new into their lives, a gift from the journey to take home and offer in some creative way to others.

And we also had a lot of fun! With festive meals at night, enjoying the food and wine of the region. In this way, spirit and matter were balanced in equal measure.

Closing Remarks

My experiences and leading journeys for others, helped me to realise that one of the ways of activating and **embodying the new worldview, the reality mentioned above, of the emerging subtle imaginal world, in a practical way, was through walking, through Pilgrimage.** This is, in fact, an age-old **shamanic practice.** I had started with sadness and overwhelm about our global environmental crisis. But, with the treasures along the way, my walks had made me feel that the earth wants to be loved, and not just related to via our anxiety and stress. If we can love the earth, in

return the earth also loves us – this is the essential message that my walks had conveyed to me.

Walking as pilgrimage can open us to:

Ecstatic states where we feel the energy of the earth nourishing our souls.

Paulo Coelho (in his first book, *The Pilgrimage*) calls this **the *agape*/love that heals**.

As we love the Earth, the Earth also loves us.

He further observes that as you encounter the challenges of the pilgrimage, the arduous walking up steep mountains or down steep forests, you come to feel that ***you are no longer walking the Chemin, but the Camino is walking you***. (Coelho, *Pilgrimage*, p. 253). **The Camino itself becomes your teacher**. I found this too.

Who we really are, are **custodians of our planet**; once we truly feel this deeply in our bodies, we cannot continue to do harm. Rather we can decide to live, not off Earth's resources, but within nature and as a part of, **the miraculous web of Life**.

Pilgrimage walking can awaken us to this call, can awaken us to the sacred.

"At times I feel as if I am spread out over the landscape and inside things, and am myself living in every tree, in the splashing of the waves, in the clouds and the animals that come and go, in the procession of the seasons" (C. G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Ch. 8, p.225f),

This poetic expression of Jung's seamless connection with nature, is *surely a suggestion that our consciousness is not only to be found bound to our physical bodies, but is part of the very spirit and fabric of nature herself*.

This is what synchronicity shows as well, that psyche does not stop at the individual's body boundaries, that the archetype extends to nature. We are all interconnected!

