

# Pilgrimage to St. Olavs church



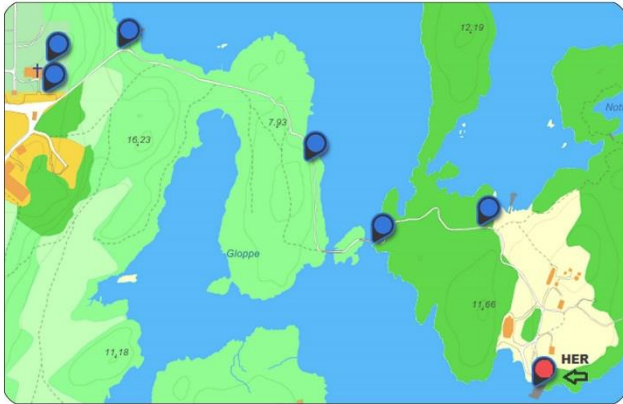
Avaldsnes

menighet

Karmøy prosti



# BRYGGA - THE PIER



## **Jesus said: FOLLOW ME!**

Then an expert in the law came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus said to him, "Foxes have dens, and the birds in the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head." Another of the disciples said to him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." But Jesus said to him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

*Matthew 8,19-22*



## **Symbol WALKING CANE**

The walking cane is an extra supportive leg of a pilgrim. It provides support on rough roads and acts as a weapon against predators and villains. Figuratively it acts as a weapon against the evil in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The walking cane is also a reminiscent of a wooden cross.

*Detail from the entrance to  
St. Olav's Church.*

## **PRAYER**

*Teach me your paths, and to walk them  
trustingly step by step!*

*Jakop Paulli, 1902*

## **The value of pilgrimage FREEDOM**

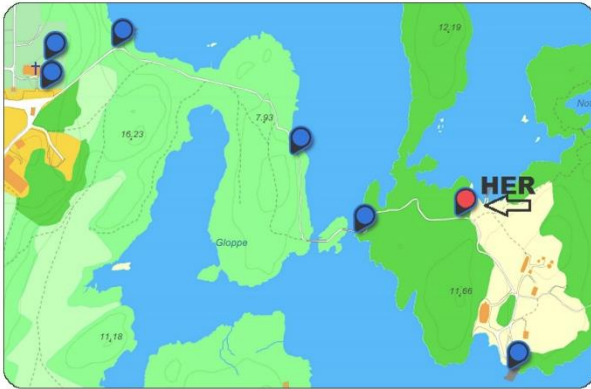
The freedom we think we have is often deceptive. Our culture makes us slaves of the clock and the calendar. Humanity has become a target of all things and thereby a slave of itself. To wander in nature at a slow pace can provide a sense of freedom and peace from stress. The freedom of wandering encourages laughter and tears, loneliness and affiliation. Much of what lies beneath the surface is affected when one unleashes the true human. The free pilgrim perceives this as an adventure of a lifetime.

## **History of pilgrimage ST. OLAV'S CHURCH**



As King Håkon Håkonssen ordered the construction of St. Olav's Church at Avaldsnes in 1250, the worship of Olav was at its peak in Norway. The church in Avaldsnes was centrally located on the fairway to Nidaros. The pilgrims came from the south with boats or on foot from the east. We can assume Avaldsnes was a busy place around the time of Olsok. (Olsok = the death of St. Olav, July 29<sup>th</sup>.)

# SKOGEN - THE FOREST



*Jesus said*

## **I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD!**

Then Jesus spoke out again, "I am the light of the world. The one who follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

*John 8,12*

## **PRAYER**

*Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*

*Psalm 119,105*

## **The value of pilgrimage**

### **SILENCE**

Our world today is surrounded by lots of sound and noise. Silence is a scarce commodity. A forest grove is a good example of how silence can heal the body and the mind. In the centre of a forest, far away from the noise of everyday life, one can hear only the sound of nature. Once this inner silence has gained a foothold in us, humanity can be like the peaceful forest grove itself. In this silence we will not only be more responsive to ourselves, but also towards God and others. The silent affiliation during a pilgrimage can speak more than a thousand words, and bring people closer together. Silence is the light of the soul.

## **Symbol**

### **THE LIGHT**

To sit and stare into a light can fill us with a sense of peace. The light will guide the pilgrim through darkness. The light also reveals any danger and deceit.

*The light of Christ in St. Olav's Church.*



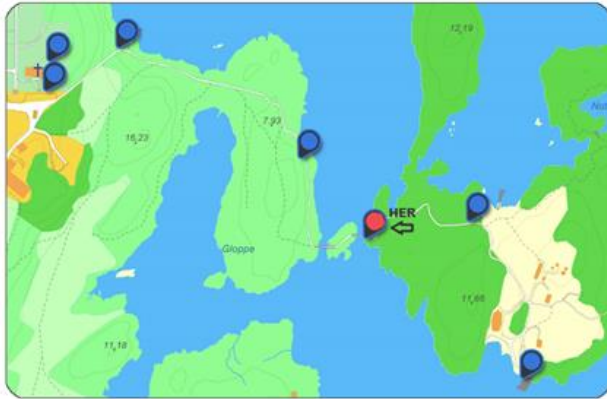
## **History of pilgrimage**



### **THE FOUNTAIN OF LIGHT**

In May 2002 Princess Märtha Louise and her then fiancé Ari Behn went on an historic pilgrimage towards Nidaros, as a preparation for their wedding. Märtha absorbs the impressions and power of nature, and becomes overwhelmed by light. She expresses herself as "a fountain of light." This has become a legendary statement. Pilgrims before and after have probably experienced much of the same – the silence and beauty of nature has touched and brightened their lives.

# BROEN - THE BRIDGE



## *The value of pilgrimage*

### **SIMPLICITY**

The need to acquire more and more may come in the way of the ability to perceive life itself. The things a pilgrim carries with him is an image of simplicity; a pair of shoes, a walking cane, a backpack, a hat and a wooden cross on his chest. All of these things reveal a lifestyle that does not require more than what a human really needs. The most precious things in life are often obtained for free, but only if we are able to discover them. The inner simplicity is affected by the outer simplicity, and vice versa.

### **Jesus said I AM THE WAY**

Thomas said, "Lord, we don't know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus replied, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you have known me, you will know my Father too. And from now on you do know him and have seen him."

*John 14,5-7*

### **Symbol THE WAY**



*The way to the altar in St. Olav's Church is long.*

To understand the way one has to walk it. The wanderer has to have an open mind. For some the pilgrimage can be like a prayer without words.

### **PRAYER**

*Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise:  
be thou mine inheritance now and always;  
be thou and thou only the first in my heart;  
O Sovereign of heaven, my treasure thou art.*  
*Irish text from about 700 A.C*

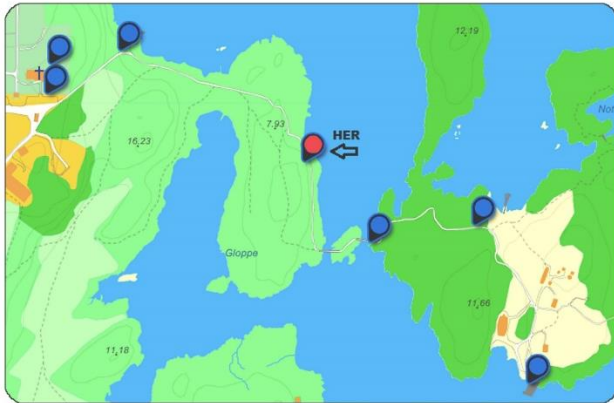
### **History of pilgrimage.**

### **THE FAIRWAY**



Most pilgrims came by sea to St. Olav's Church. But the sea removes all footprints, and we therefore have to look for clues on land. We know that the pilgrims coming from the east went through Ørpetveit and "Munkaskar", then through Moksheim and finally arriving at Vormedal. From here they were carried across Karmsundet. They would have noticed the Church from a surrounding hill. This surrounding hill still carries the name "Fejenbrekkå" ( Fejen = happy ) as a reminder of the joy and happiness the pilgrims must have felt once they had their destination in sight.

# POTETKJELLEREN - THE POTATO CELLAR



## **Jesus said**

### **GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO EAT!**

But he said to them, “You give them something to eat.” They replied, “We have no more than five loaves and two fish – unless we go and buy food for all these people.” (Now about five thousand men were there.) Then he said to his disciples, “Have them sit down in groups of about fifty each.” So they did as Jesus directed, and the people all sat down. Then he took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven he gave thanks and broke them. He gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd. They all ate and were satisfied, and what was left over was picked up – twelve baskets of broken pieces.

*Luke 9, 13-17*

## **Symbol**

### **THE BREAD**

A pilgrim shall walk with their backpack open as a sign that one shall share not only food, but also experiences during the pilgrimage. We are taught to give and receive, both being equally important.



*- Motive from the altar cabinet in St. Olav's Church.*

## **PRAYER**

*Lord, thy earth carries food enough for all;  
Thank you for the part you want us to have.  
Teach us to set a table for the World in which  
all can be hearty.*

*Vidar Kristensen*

## **The value of pilgrimage** **FELLOWSHIP**

We live in an age of selfishness. Life as a pilgrim teaches us that we shall practice sharing and giving. Our backpack shall be open – ready to share bread and water, clothes and bandages, ointment and raisins. Attached to the backpack pilgrims often have a small tin filled with funds for refugees. Meeting other pilgrims, where one can share joy and sorrow, can establish good and strong relationships.

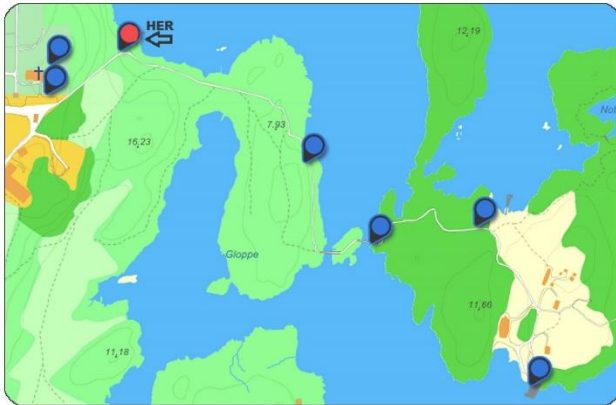
## **History of pilgrimage**

### **FOOD PILGRIMS ATE**

The food pilgrims ate was very simple. Water from the stream, berries from the forest, bread in the backpack and fish from the river or sea. It was a blessing to give food to a pilgrim, and people looked after them. Some pilgrims also undertook small jobs along the way to earn a living.



# BAKKEN - The Slope



## **Jesus said REST FOR A WHILE**

He said to them, “Come with me privately to an isolated place and rest a while” (for many were coming and going, and there was no time to eat). So they went away by themselves in a boat to some remote place. But many saw them leaving and recognized them, and they hurried on foot from all the towns and arrived there ahead of them. As Jesus came ashore he saw the large crowd and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd.

*Mark 6, 31-34*

## **Symbol FEET**

Whether a pilgrim came by foot or by ship, they kept a pace in which the soul could keep up...



*- Detail from the pulpit in St. Olav's Church.*

## **PRAYER**

*My **steps** have held to your paths; my feet have not stumbled.*

*Psalm 17,5*

## **The value of pilgrimage**

### **SLOWNESS**

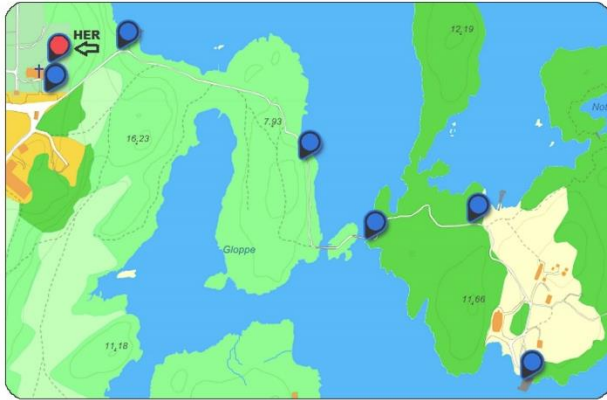
Time-squeeze is a modern word. We live in a society in which the rush trap dominates. Do we have the time to stop and ask ourselves how we really feel? Slowness is scarce, but necessary for those who want to reflect on life and existential questions.

## **History of pilgrimage SALHUS**



Pilgrims with high status most certainly stayed and slept in Avaldsnes itself, but for those with a “lower” status there was a house called “sælehus” (Salhus) a couple of kilometers north of the Church. A “sælehus” was a hostel for travelers. In 1368 the Hanseatics set the “sælehus” on fire, burning it to the ground along with the Royal Seat in Avaldsnes.

# SYNÅLA - THE SEWING NEEDLE



## **Jesus said: STAY ALERT!**

Watch out! Stay alert! For you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey. He left his house and put his slaves in charge, assigning to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to stay alert. Stay alert, then, because you do not know when the owner of the house will return – whether during evening, at midnight, when the rooster crows, or at dawn – or else he might find you asleep when he returns suddenly. What I say to you I say to everyone: Stay alert!”

*Mark 13, 33-37*

## **Symbol THE HOURGLASS**

The hourglass is a very clear visualization of the past, the present and the future. It has become a symbol of elapsed time. Like the sand in the hourglass – so are the days of our lives.



- Detail from the altar cabinet in St. Olav's Church.

## **PRAYER**

*Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.*

*Psalm 90,12*

## **The value of pilgrimage**

### **SPIRITUALITY**

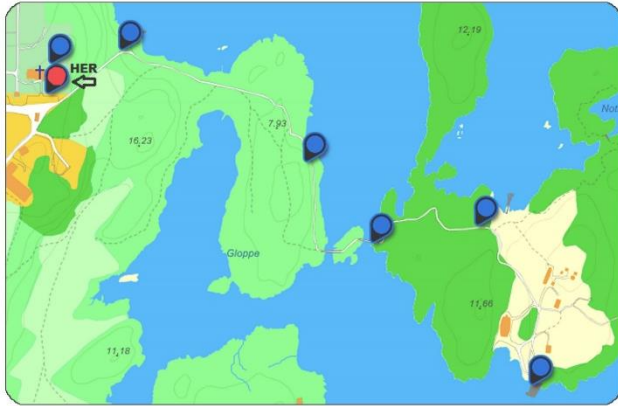
The pilgrim walks towards a sacred goal. A human being is a spiritual creature. When a society becomes too materialistic, humans recoil and seek other paths in an attempt to understand life itself, with all its difficulties.

## **History of pilgrimage MARIA'S SEWING NEEDLE**



“Virgin Mary’s Sewing Needle” stands 7,2m tall on the north side of St. Olav’s Church. It is one of the tallest cornerstones in Norway, and there are many legends associated with it. The most famous is the legend describing the coming of doomsday should the cornerstone touches the church itself. It is said that the cut marks visible on top of the cornerstone were made by priests when it came too close to the wall of the Church.

# KIRKEDØRA -THE CHURCH DOOR



## *Jesus said*

### **DO NOT WORRY!**

Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. For there is more to life than food, and more to the body than clothing. Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn, yet God feeds them. How much more valuable are you than the birds! And which of you by worrying can add an hour to his life? *Luke 12, 22-25*

## *Symbol*

### **THE CROSS**

The cross is the Christian pilgrim’s identity symbol. The vertical arm represents the pilgrim’s relation to God – the horizontal arm represents the pilgrim’s relation to other humans.

- Cross in the door by the altar in St. Olav’s Church.



## **PRAYER**

*I will stand by the cross, and with wonder I see: I am free! I will not die – I will live, with Jesus infinitely.*

(Words by Trygve Bjerkheim )

## *History of pilgrimage*

### **THE CHURCH DOORS**

According to tradition, and in order to symbolize Trinity, the pilgrims circled the church three times before entering through the church door. The actual door is believed to have been situated on the wall facing north. The pilgrims were to enter through the door with their back facing north – the north being where the evil powers lived. Pilgrims of today will be met with the image of the cross entering either the main door facing west, or the side entrance facing south.

## *The value of pilgrimage*

### **CAREFREE**

To be carefree is a wonderful word. A simplistic lifestyle provides fewer things to worry about. Worries itself do not solve problems, and they do not prevent unwanted events. Worries only create anxiety and stress. The ability to live in the present is an essential value for a pilgrim. It is not so much about carelessness, laziness or lack of responsibility – rather it is the ability to be present in what is happening.

