

## DAY ONE

### 1. Great Sand Dunes National Monument- the Wilderness

- a. Reflect on how wilderness experiences were formative for God's people- it helped make them who they were
  - i. In the Exodus, the people of Israel would wind up wandering in the wilderness for 40 years. I suspect that if they knew that before they escaped from Egypt, they might not have even tried. Sometimes the unexpected events of life feel like wilderness times.
    - (1) When faced with hardships, no reliable water or food, they usually rebelled— complaining and threatening to turn back. At one point they even took their gold, melted it down, and cast an image of the false god Baal. They had learned that when you had a god like this, you could try to please it, to control it, through what you did.
    - (2) God wanted his people not to just rely on themselves, but him. So he provided what was needed, as needed— manna (only good for that day, couldn't be saved— “Give us this day our daily bread”), water from the rock.
    - (3) It was in the wilderness that God gave them his covenant, and the 10 Commandments to help them live it. This helped them become the people of God.
- b. Reflect: Where or how can we find God in the wilderness times of our lives? (For children- find God when we are sad or afraid)
- c. Pray - thank God for not leaving us alone. Option- if you bring a Prayer Book, do either Compline or “An Order of Worship for the Evening.”

## DAY TWO

### 2. Stations of the Cross

- a. Drive southwest on CO-150 S 19.4 mi to US-160 E. Turn left and go 10.3 mi to highway 258 S. Turn right and head to San Luis
- b. San Luis is a very quaint town with the Stations of the Cross being the main focal point. As you drive into town you will see the sign for it. Parking is across the street next to the visitor's center. The Shrine is located on a mesa in the center of the town. The Shrine is formally known as “La Mesa de la Piedad y de la Misericordia” (Hill of Piety and Mercy). The dirt walking trail is less than a mile long and very easy. It slowly winds you up the mesa, passing the different sculptures as you go. You also follow the same trail back down the mesa, or have one driver head up and meet the group waiting at the top, or head down the trail to meet the others on their way up. Visiting this site is free but donations are welcome either at the church at the top or in the visitor's center. Plan on an at least an hour if all you plan to do is read each station and then move on. Please be mindful of other visitors by using hushed voices and not allowing your children to run around.
  - i. See the *Stations of the Cross for all Ages* for a sample stations to use.
  - ii. Remember, the final station is around the other side of the church— don't miss it.

### 3. Rancho De Taos - the Amazing picture of Jesus

- a. Proceed south on 258 into New Mexico. Turn on 64 to Taos. In Taos, continue on to highway 68. South of the main town are most of the motels. South of those is Rancho de Taos. Look for the St. Francis de Asis church on your left after you pass the 518 turnoff. As you turn into the church grounds, you will see the church on your right and the parish hall on the left. The painting is in there. They as a \$3 donation per person.
- b. Read about the painting there and watch what happens when the lights go out. Talk about how sometimes is it hard to Jesus in the dark places of life— when we are scared, anxious, hurting. Sometimes we see the rest of world fine, but have a hard time seeing Jesus. Doesn't he feel present in this painting when the light are out, even more than when they are on?

- c. Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." [Matthew 28:16-20]
- d. While there, be sure to see the church. Every year the people from all around come and work together to apply a new coating of adobe to the church.

### DAY THREE

#### 4. Santuario de Chimayo

- a. Continue south on highway 68 to Espanola. Turn left on NM 76/Santa Cruz road. Turn right onto Juan Medina Road (you should see a sign for the Santuario). Turn left into the Santuario.
- b. Visit the Santuario. This chapel is known for people being healed. In the church, note the bust of Jesus smiling up in the window on the left. If you proceed through the side door on the left in front, you will come to some side rooms. In the back room (on the right) you will see a hole in the ground with dirt in it. People rub some of this dirt on whatever needs healing. In the other room (to the left) there should be some letters, crutches, and photos of people who have been healed.
- c. Talk together about how Jesus can heal us from many things, but he won't do it always as we demand, or in the way we want. Remember the big picture, that there is more to our life in him than health and happiness. How does Jesus love us?
- d. While there check out the Chimayo chile. It has a unique flavor. *(If you would be so kind, I would appreciate it if you could pick up 5 pounds of the regular ground chile for me! Gracias!)*
- e. When you leave the Santuario, you will continue south (not back the way you came) on Juan Medina Road becoming NM 98. Turn right where it tees into NM 503, following the signs towards the Pueblo de Pojoaque. (It might be worth stopping briefly at the pueblo, but you need to get to Santa Fe early enough to visit the chapel, which closes at 5. You might want to check in to hotels, campground before doing that, see next item). Before the Pueblo, you will return to Highway 84, which will take you to Santa Fe.

#### 5. Santa Fe- the Sisters of Loretto Chapel

- a. Once settled in Santa Fe, make your way to the Old Town and park. From the main square in town you will see the Cathedral of St. Francis of Assisi. Facing it, take the road to its right (Cathedral Place- there is a parking lot along it, actually). Find the first street on the right (walking from the Cathedral- E. Water St.), and walk to Old Santa Fe Trail street, turn left and you will find the chapel on the left.)
- b. NOTE: The chapel may close without notice for special events. If you're planning a visit, please call ahead to be sure the Chapel will be open. (505) 982-0092.
- c. There may be a charge to get in. Plan enough time to see it before closing (be there by 4 or so in case there is a line). There is also a nice gift shop there.
- d. Two mysteries surround the spiral staircase in the Loretto Chapel: the identity of its builder and the physics of its construction. When the Loretto Chapel was completed in 1878, there was no way to access the choir loft twenty-two feet above. Carpenters were called in to address the problem, but they all concluded access to the loft would have to be via ladder as a staircase would interfere with the interior space of the small Chapel. Legend says that to find a solution to the seating problem, the Sisters of the Chapel made a novena to St. Joseph, the patron saint of carpenters. On the ninth and final day of prayer, a man appeared at the Chapel with a donkey and a toolbox looking for work. Months later, the elegant circular staircase was completed, and the carpenter disappeared without pay or thanks. After searching for the man (an ad even ran in the local newspaper) and finding no trace of him, some concluded that he was St. Joseph himself, having come in answer to the sisters' prayers. The stairway's carpenter, whoever he was, built a magnificent structure. The design was innovative for the time and some of the design considerations still perplex experts today. The staircase has two 360 degree turns and no visible means

of support. Also, it is said that the staircase was built without nails—only wooden pegs. Questions also surround the number of stair risers relative to the height of the choir loft and about the types of wood and other materials used in the stairway's construction.

- e. Have a wonderful dinner at one of the restaurants around the Old Town.

#### **DAY FOUR**

6. **Home**— The quickest way home is by I 25, which you can catch south of town. If you have the time and energy, a return by way of Espanolia, with a detour up towards Los Alamos, then off towards White Rock, can bring you to Bandelier National Monument, some beautiful cliff dwellings. This will make it one long day to visit and get home (either back to Santa Fe and up I25, or back through Taos through Walsenburg) so get an early start if you want to try this.