



A Yearning is Answered

Since I was twenty years old and studying both the Old and the New Testament histories, I yearned to experience the land called Israel. In my imagination, surely the Land itself shaped the formation of the people over thousands of years. I imagined special mountains, deserts, seas, rivers, and the ever-constant Wind or Breath of the Creator blowing over all – settling and resettling the people.

However, not until I had integrated more of my own lineage and steeped myself in shamanism was I to arrive to this Holy Land. And, in retrospect, only after the ripening of my covenant with Bob was I to walk in the lands where the history of man's relationship with woman, woman with man, and creating community were central themes among the people. Preservation of the bountiful earth, cherishing of the children, tending the web of life, being a pilgrim in a foreign land—these were the heart-ways that

informed how I approached, with Bob, wandering in the Holy Land.

This booklet of photos and poems is a way of sharing our treasured journeys there.

The poems are those arising while being home and dwelling with our honeypot of memories. They speak to special places and experiences in Israel. What I remember are feelings of great ecstasy, joy, laughter, and feeling very blessed all through our journey. Every day seemed to contain some miracle of beauty, some new friendship begun, some unexpected wonder revealed within the landscape. Joy, beauty, wonderful friendships—these are the memories that bind our hearts to Israel.





*We offer our profound thanks to you, our Israeli sisters
Who invited us to your homeland
Knowing our welcome, we arrived with great anticipation.
For all of you, your families, and
For the many others whom we met
and with whom we played and learned,
I want to share vignettes from our pilgrimage in the Holy Land
Those images and forms that linger just now
Like honey on the tongue
The storehouse is full and replete
And I could easily take my hibernating now
But there's nothing can dispel this sense of wanting to share
Some of the treasures carried from There
And with these vignettes surely I know
In sharing them with you
I'm reaching to the farthest
Side of what is beyond understanding.
And we are slowly, slowly coming home.*



Lessons I learned from My Israeli BearSisters

*A BearWoman BridgeCrosser
is between where she came
And where she goes
Suspended, depending on
—if she falls, she can fly,
failing that, she can swim,
Crossing depends on
can you fly,
can you swim
can you shiftshape
no one fails all.*



*But there are moments
when it is oh so sca-a-a-ary
Suspended, depending—*

*There are times to take very deep breaths,
check your paws for freedom of movement
and maximum mobility.*

*Make sure you are not hauling
any old historical platforms
or clutching outdated plans—
just be who you be,
—a BridgeCrossing BearWoman
—a BridgeMaking Bearwoman
wearing open, empty, and outstretched hands,
a very strong heart, anchored in hope
intense desire for peace among all,
and a galaxy of Spirits
surrounding you.*



*Put your hand into the mouth of Leo the Roaring,
The glittering pebbles that are falling
from the sky through your mind,
They are not fears and they will not harm you
They are only the Moon's tears of joy.
Face the shadows thrown by the Fire
While reciting three of Blake's poems
Wherein the shadows are simply the faces of God
And the shapes in the smoke are Angels disguised.*

*And still—sometimes Bridge Crossing
is scary, scary,*

*Yet just when you think your chest is too tight
And you're going to burn your soul in the Fire
Ever so suddenly a window will open
Onto the blue green meadows of the Sea
And your Spirit will fly and then will swim
to its very own Appointed, Anointed Possibility.
Oh, the joy.
Ode to Joy.*

*I shiver with delight and rub my hands,
I touch my giving heart
sending my love across the Fire
to your hands and receiving heart.
Walk strong, walk well, Walk your Self.
You walk for all
For down the road some day, Cubs will follow in your tracks.
Most of all, give to yourself the Adventure of your life
You Crazy Uppity Courageous
Israeli BridgeCrossing BridgeMaking
BearWomen BearSisters
Friends
Thank you*

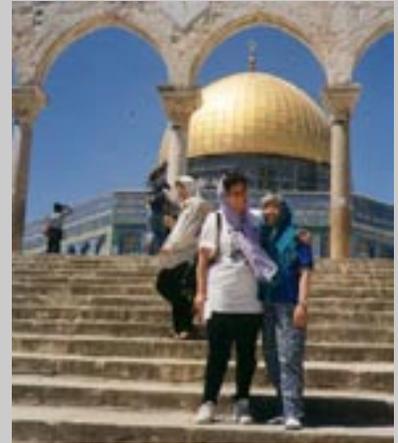
Carol

Pilgrims Logue

*From Santa Cruz to Tel Aviv
 Dinner with friends and families,
 To Caesarea, the ruins and the Aqueduct
 And the great forgiving Sands.
 To the Desert, the Caves, the Dead Sea,
 And the Kibbutz Ein Gedi,
 Bathing with Mud, walking the Wadi,
 Playing with the children in the Falls.
 Into the desert, taking our drums and rattles
 Calling the Spirits to welcome and bless us
 And sending our blessings too.
 Baking and floating and mudding and laughing
 Living so Easy in the Lowest Land Point on the Earth.
 Up from the Sea, up towards Jerusalem
 The highway royal to the City Holy.
 Taken to the vista overlooking the city,
 As we rattle the city, the young ones arrived
 Asking for us to rattle them also and asking us
 “please, can we use your rattle too”
 Tossing a fellow my horsehair rattle
 Watching with joy as he rattled his friends
 And then scaled the wall to toss me my rattle.
 What a fine way to greet O’ Jerusalem.
 Wandering with Ziva parts of the city,
 Seeing the neighborhoods in which she had lived.
 From our hotel, the Mount of Olives
 Stunning at night, glorious by day.
 I keep seeing the multitudes described in the Bible
 And the holy places surrounding this Mount.
 Our guide was terrific and very instructive
 Also knew when to keep his mouth shut
 And allow our own silent experiences.
 The Wailing Wall, the Excavations
 Surprising to us to see such separations
 Of the men and the women, the various religions
 Competing for glory, for the Beginning of Time.
 The hectic merchants, the frazzled tourists
 The small alleyways, Stations of the Cross.
 Relief when we found that the Church of Golgotha
 Was not very busy and we spent some time
 Experiencing the Stone—strong with the history
 Of so many pressing and touching somehow the
 Man known as Jesus—later the Christ.
 Seeing the tombs of David and Absalom*

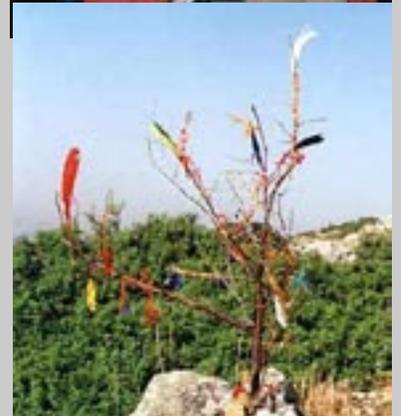


*The Dome of the Rock, the Rock itself
 A city whose meaning is stained in its stones
 Remembered by wailing, protected by young soldiers
 A chaotic mix of hope and confusion.
 Where Law and Love continually battle for the souls
 Of the people and the hopes of a nation.
 Respite from the press of the city Jerusalem
 Came on the back of a camel that day
 And the friendly encounter with the Arab who kept him
 A certain sweet fragrance from the Gethsemane Garden
 And just down the street, a garden even older
 And one we considered the original Gethsemane.
 Old were the olives, old were the trees
 The boulders, the soil whispered to us
 Of a place holding tears, comfort, and joy
 Of companions who slept and yet who tended
 Both their flocks and their friends as best as they could
 While the Trees offered shelter beyond calendar time.
 Ever so saturated by such teeming history and memories so fresh,
 With joy did we wander to the quiet Galilee,
 To the kibbutz Kadarim.
 What a wonderful place, full of joy and ease,
 The laughter of children the sounds of the Zoo.
 Old Mr Donkey, the cow, and the chickens,
 The cats and the dog—we feel right at home.
 Ruthi, her family, a clan full of blessing.
 I felt so incredibly at ease that I just assumed
 That the big red hand by the side of the road
 Was another example of the protective Hamas
 I acknowledge the blessing and drove right on through
 Until Ruthi, my sister, told me that this particular red hand
 Meant STOP and I was astonished to find it was not the Hamas.
 A Bedouin's tent, Ziyad a young urban chief
 His stories, his messages echoing those of the Native peoples
 In the United States around thirty or forty years long ago
 And I found myself hoping they would be treated better,
 And would keep their traditions alive in their Circles.
 On a cave in a hillside we met the Druze mystic man
 Through an evening of sharing, drumming and singing
 We both kept thinking and sharing how wondrous it seemed
 That here in the Galilee
 And down in the Desert were the two strongest places
 Of mercy, of joy, of grace and of healing.
 As though these very two places were the pillars of Israel
 Anchoring her firmly in the Ancient and Becoming.
 The mystery of the land was like the mists off the Sea
 A Lightness of Being stronger than the gravity of sin.*



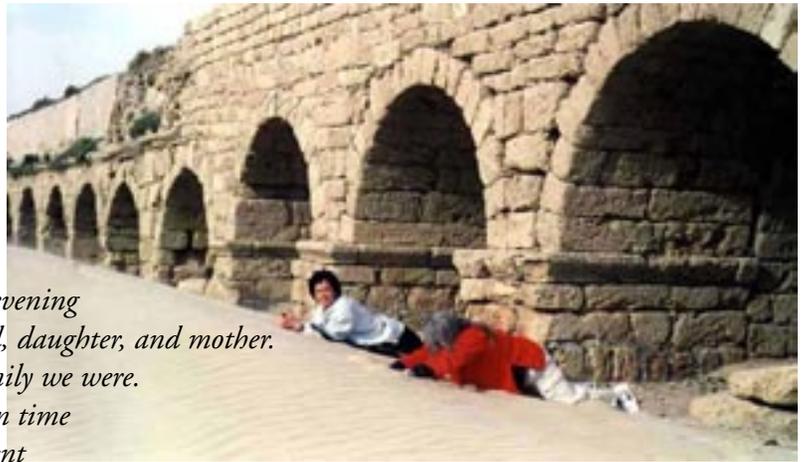
*We felt blessed by the Sea, by Kadarim's peace
 And we planted our prayer tree
 And with young Shai, left a medicine pouch
 And the promise of returning, together making peace.
 Up in the mountains we crossed into Lebanon
 While we were looking for what's called the Good Gate.
 The border less fierce than we had imagined
 And so we played with the flags at the gate
 The Cedars of Lebanon, the Olives of Israel
 Our feet in both worlds—calling for peace.
 We had thought we'd stay in the kibbutz Kefir Szold
 Until we discovered uneasy felt we
 Buoyed by the air, by our camaraderie, we faced the fierce
 Keeper who managed this place and left her our money
 But picked up our bags and hurried to Kadarim
 Where joy was free, and with children we could play.
 We set off the next morning Neanderthal to revisit
 And to spend a night at Nasholim by the Mediterranean Sea
 This last night on the road, by the beach we gathered
 And as Sun was setting, saw the Light archway to the
 World over Yonder and together gave thanks for all the rich beauty
 Fed to our spirits,
 For our friends here in Israel and our adventures together.
 We felt ever sated and ready to leave this Holy Land
 Knowing we'd return, return and return.
 Was quite fitting for us that before we left
 We had dinner with our sisters, we visited Ziva's mother
 Exchanged giveaways and then to Ilana's—dinner together
 To the sounds from the mosque—sounds from the synagogue
 Together in us are the sounds of the peoples in this Holy Land
 Where the Desert Endures, the Mountains Keep Watch,
 The Rivers, the Seas keep washing all clean
 Baptizing oh Israel in the waters of God.*

*Love,
 Carol & Bob*



Crossing the Threshold

*I felt immediately anchored
 In place and love as we gathered our first evening
 With our Israeli sisters and Ziva's husband, daughter, and mother.
 Immediately we were with family and family we were.
 From there we began to travel backward in time
 And experience both the past and the present
 Shaping our pilgrimage
 Off to Caesarea and walking among
 The bombastic ruins mounted at the edge of the Sea,
 The stones, the pebbles, the sand
 Leaked of painful memories when Herod used both
 Man and beast as sacrifices for building his wonders
 And pleasing the crowds through the wounding and death of others.
 The stones tell the stories, listen to them.
 My stomach lurched—I felt nauseous and stricken
 By the magnitude of the feelings seeping from the stories held in the stones.
 We left this Place – and went to the great Aqueduct
 Immediately I felt the great soft yielding sand
 And sank into its body, yielding my sorrow, my tears
 My lurching stomach
 After some time a sense of great beatitude and peace
 Seeped through the sand into my body
 Seeped from my body into the Sand
 I felt peaceful and strong and ready to travel again.
 As I rose from the sand, Ziva said, “look”
 And there where I had lain was the outline of a large Bear
 Held in the Sand.
 It was a ‘sign’ for our trip and filled me with wonder.
 Knowing that wherever we went, whatever we encountered,
 We were held, we were protected by the Great Healing
 And Compassionate Spirit
 Often appearing in the form of the Female Spirit Bear.
 I felt a huge release of any worry, fear, or concern and
 Immediately opened myself to any and all adventures to come.*





Song of the Desert

*Into a withering wilderness
Wrinkled by rains long past
Where dusty winds whip with pitiless fury
The endless forms of*

First

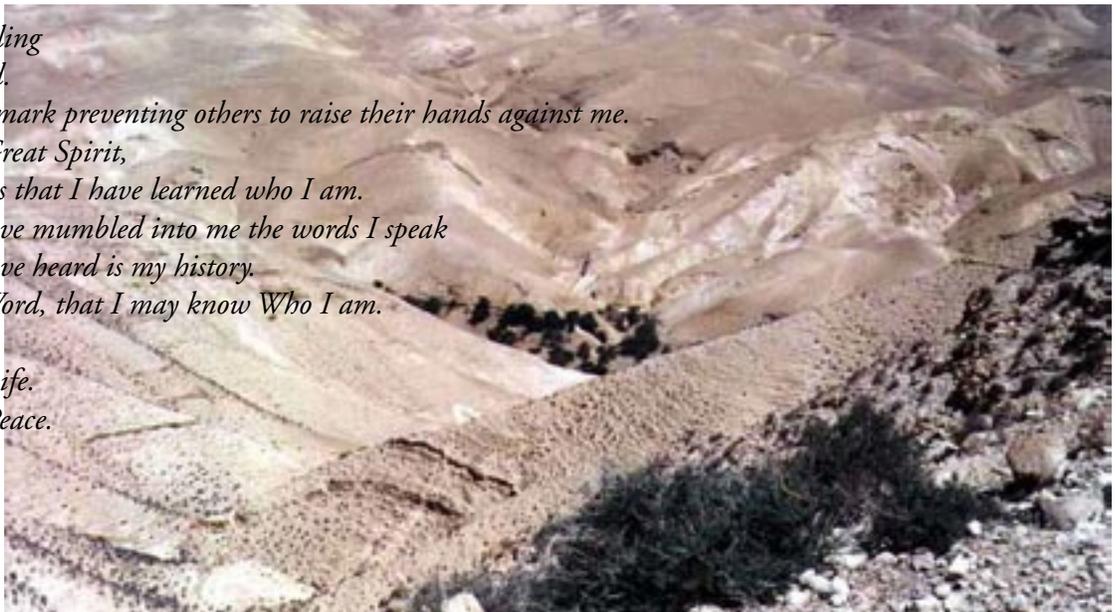
And Last

*Which from the blanched and thirsty soil
Are called*

*To walk the earth in thorny toil
Into this I was borne*

*I was wrested from the earth to toil
In search for rest.
Called out and Named
Is it the voice of God which calls me into this?
All before me have gone to dust*

*Dust of their dust I remain
To quote their sorrow – repeat their pain
And yet within
As deeply felt as sin itself
The consciousness of something more
Mothers me like a bosom
And I nurse upon the crackling dust of dreams and things
Clinging here and there
To this and then to that
Endlessly making the rounds of the light
Called Day
And the darkness
Called Night
Seeing and Feeling
That it is Good.
I must live...a mark preventing others to raise their hands against me.
But Yahweh, Great Spirit,
It is from others that I have learned who I am.
Generations have mumbled into me the words I speak
and what I have heard is my history.
Speak a new Word, that I may know Who I am.
And so,
Let me know Life.
Let me know Peace.*



Ein Gedi Waterfalls

*You, Pouring Water
Making life beautiful
Right here,
At the center of the spreading Desert Dryness
Making life beautiful
For all of us.
Rainbow colors fall down.*

*Birds circle round you
Live on edges of your face
You, Pouring Water
Making life beautiful
Here at the edge of this desert world.
Trees stand shining
Animals drinking and lingering.
You, making life possible
Here at the center of the spreading Desert Dryness.*

*Suns slides along
your falling streams
coloring our faces golden.
You are absolutely necessary in all seasons
Making life green
Here, at the center of this desert world.
At the bottom of your skirts
A pooled circle of beauty
Making wetness in a dry, withered world
Here at the center of this spreading desert
Making birth possible here at the center of this desert world.
I send my Voice
Send my voice all over
“Thank you Falling Water
Thank you Pouring Woman”
You make life beautiful
You make life possible.”*

*Here at the center of this spreading desert
The hand of God is spilling water
Making beautiful Ein Gedi Falls...*



Gethsemane

*The Sun and the Moon
Awaken life
Birth and renewal
The yang enters the yin
From emptiness
A seed is planted
Through a cavern of darkness
To a circle of light
A uterus becomes a womb
Of fertility
Soaked in lunar rays
And healing vibrations
From a Star in the East
An avatar is born
A pure heart awakens.*

*From the straw to dry desert
From the temple to the hills
From the Fig to Palm branches
A pure heart opens
Taking rest
Taking prayer
Here in the garden.
Two thousand years later
Olive Trees still bow their heads
Oil, Sweat, and Tears.*

*Spreading his wings
To the sky endless
The eternal dreaming Mind.
He is the Eagle who glides on the wind
A messenger of healing
Teacher of compassion
Translucent body
He is the bird spirit
Of Primordial Space
A pure heart awakened
A pure heart returned
Seen by the third eye
In each rising Sun.*





River Jordan—Incarnation

*Wandering to the Place
Where the tourists go to be baptized
In the Jordan River wherein John
Blessed the young man called Jesus,
I looked upon the assembled crowd
And there in an adjoining baptismal pool
Watched a true FisherKing Dog
Dance among the waters, ever hopeful to catch some fish.
I was entranced by the spirit of this dog
Who seemed one with the River, one with the Fish
And totally oblivious to the pilgrims being baptized.
I wanted to touch this Dog, to feel his carefree Spirit
And so I slowly wove my way through the pool to his side
And when I touched him, he immediately was calm beneath my palm
And I stroked him, calling him John the Baptist in canine form.
As soon as I shouted to Bob, "this is John the Baptist" in canine form
This FisherDog leapt about spraying me with water of the Jordan
And I laughed with delight.
And blessed did I feel.*





Golan Heights

*Driving along the road to the kibbutz Kefar Szold
 A Shadow smeared the landscape
 Uneasy did I feel—agitated darkness seems upon this earth.
 Nothing to explain my feelings yet as we made several turns
 To track the source of this Shadow
 It seemed a definite darkness we would enter.
 Surely this was not a place wherein to sleep
 So we picked up our bags, and decided to return to Kadarim.
 An image now appears within the Shadow
 Yesterday standing in the doorway
 Women with tears in their eyes
 And blood on the land.
 Some invisible memorial
 In this enclosed place of pain.
 Tomorrow stands in the doorway
 And beckons faintly
 I stand holding a body of crushed flowers.
 And Ziva then informs me that it was in this very place
 A helicopter crashed, bodies broken.
 Two days later we then learn
 Bombing from the Golan Heights
 Crashed into this singular area of pain.
 Returning to Kadarim...a day full of joy, and of remembered pain.*





Galilee

*Those who drink from the sorrows of others
Have their own sweet lips to thank
As do I...as do I
And as I feel the pain.....the cleaving
The divisions and the separations
In this Holy Land
So I spread my doubt
And my trouble like a net upon the Sea.
Let the wind from the waters blow through me
Bear off the snarled profusions of old wounds.
Let the rhythm and the freshness buoy me free
May the largeness and the depth of this land bear me whole
Into the renewing blue infinity.*



By the Road Side in Galilee

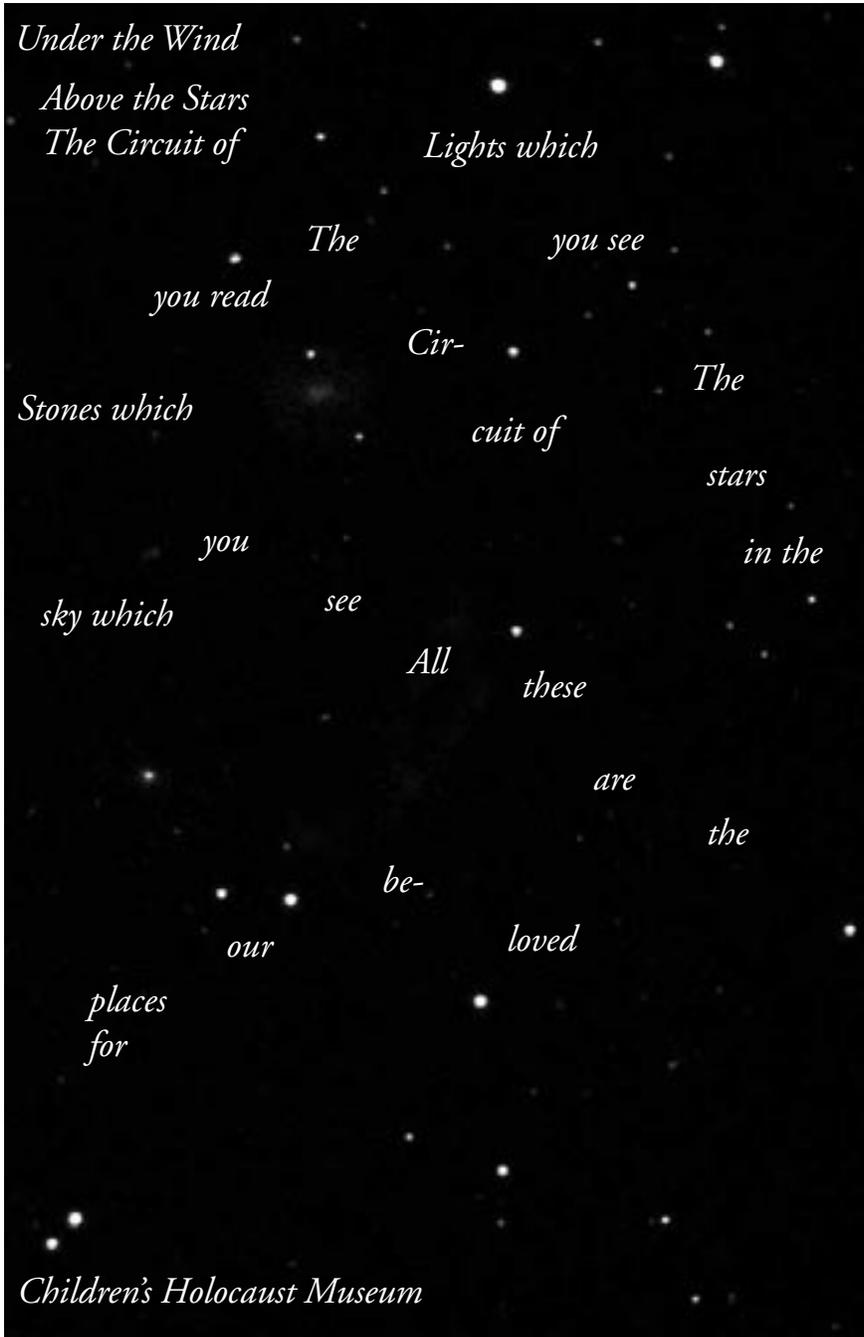
*From Peter's house, beyond the Place of loaves and fish,
 We sought a place to spread our picnic and perch above the Sea.
 Three times we passed this form lying by the side of the road.
 Something kept calling me back, calling me back
 Some wounding that needed tending, a prayer to be said.
 Turning the car back one more time, we stopped by the side of the road.
 'Twas a Wolf killed by an auto, his head extending forward in supplication
 His body still somewhat warm – his Spirit hovering around.
 We blessed, prayed, and rattled his Spirit onward
 Tended his body with flowers around his head.
 Amazed was I to be with this Wolf here in the Galilee
 Twenty years ago in Assisi, Italy, I had set high above
 The town of Gubbio and read the stories of St. Francis.
 I remember Francis touching the starving and terrifying Wolf
 And teaching the people of the town to 'be not afraid' and
 'Share your food with this wolf'
 For in the time of famine all were hungry.
 The teaching of the Wolf of Gubbio is to share
 the little we have in the times of great need,
 How to honor the wild and the tame
 To not be afraid and to not frighten either
 By showing your fangs and threatening the weak
 And telling this lesson with his hand on the head of the Wolf,
 Was one of the miracles that contributed to sanctification
 From Francis the man to Francis the Saint
 And what was this Wolf by the side of the road
 Speaking to us, with his head tilted upward
 Awaiting our touch and our prayers
 Before we departed from the land called Galilee?*





Holocaust Museum







Joy



Joy





The SunGate



Israel

Holy Land



Pilgrims Journeys