



- *brother Alvaro*

Let us set out on a pilgrimage of the heart,
Wandering in the wilderness,
Learning how to dance¹
- from our song, *Pilgrimage of the Heart*

I like to think that in these sixty years,
brothers here at the priory
have been engaged in daily learning,
a daily practice of a communal dance.

Not fighting, not dancing against the flow,
nor simply following the flow.
Not flowing in a passive repetition of the past,
nor rejecting the teachings of good dance traditions.

Not struggling to be unique or different,
nor searching to do what has always been done—
simply an alternative way of dancing,
a circle dance, and an open circle.

I saw the movement, listened to the rhythm,
and joined the dance.
That was ten years ago,
but every day we learn how to dance anew. ■

¹Song from the recording *Pilgrimage of the Heart*, © 2007, The Benedictine Foundation of the State of Vermont, Inc.



Brothers with Mexican sisters in Mexico, 2010

Fresh Beginnings !

- *brother Daniel*

AFTER FIFTY YEARS, THE SMILE OF POPE JOHN XXIII continues to disarm us with its childlike charm. He seems to have a playful attitude towards life and people which immediately puts all at ease. The photograph displayed in our monastery, of our founder, brother Leo, and the Pope engaged in conversation, brings to mind a statement Pope John offered at the time of the Council: “The Council is simply the dawn, the forerunner of a new day coming forth.” When I reflect on this statement of the pope, so filled with hope and trust, I wonder how this is translated into our own community and how we, as brothers, experience it in an ongoing way.

When I first met the brothers, my first glimpse had the hues of the new sunrise. It was an early morning in January at our Benedictine sisters’ motherhouse in Mexico City. I had known monks, priests and religious sisters since my childhood. The experiences were positive, although at times they seemed formal and tentative. After the morning Eucharist, we gathered in the dining room for breakfast. I was immediately moved by the tenderness with which the brothers and the sisters related. To my amazement these North-American men were seemingly being led by very simple Mexican women. I noticed that the community of brothers were friends and in communion with one another. I kept paying attention as I interacted with them but I could not tell who the prior was, who the priests were, or who was in charge. They were singing with the sisters as well as sharing laughter amidst their attempts to