

A perspective on the spiritual

Dallas: Photographer went to holy sites with major religions in mind

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Bob Munro embarked on a journey this month to capture the world's holiest sites from the perspectives of three religions.

The M Streets photographer shot more than 1,200 images over nine days while visiting Jerusalem, the Dead Sea, Masada, the Sea of Galilee, Nazareth, Tiberias, Mount of the Beatitudes and other locations in Israel.

He will show the best of the collection at his gallery, Sacred Pause, next week.

Mr. Munro's career as a professional photographer started several years ago, when he discovered that people felt connected to his work.

Sacred Pause studio markets his art. But the name also reflects a life philosophy of slowing down – taking a sacred pause – to embrace peace, tranquility and beauty.

"With our crazy lives, it's important to reprioritize and slow down, even if it's just once a day," he said.

Israel is one of the most beautiful and spiritual places on Earth, Mr. Munro said.

It was a trip he'd wanted to take for years.

"So many times, people said I should go," he said. "But every year it was either too dangerous or I was making another trip."

In December, he started planning his "Journey to Jerusalem."

His goal was to document the ancient lands that nurtured three of the world's major faiths – Christianity, Judaism and Islam.

"These places have a spiritual point of view, but also a historical point of view," Mr. Munro said.

He visited churches, synagogues and mosques, as well as museums, graveyards and gardens.

Some of the most poignant images came from Jerusalem's Western Wall, he said, where Jews pray and slip prayers and messages into the bricks' crevices.

Mr. Munro updated his Web site during his trip with images and notes about the places he visited. SaLinda Dickerson, a friend and client, said she checked the site daily.

"It was almost like being there with him. He was our eyes for us," she said. "I never even thought about going over there, but I definitely want to plan a trip now."

Though many of his photos include religious imagery, Mr. Munro said he finds spiritual moments in many places.

His "Journey to Jerusalem" collection includes shots of the Jerusalem market and a desert oasis.

He has also photographed sites in New Orleans, Hawaii, New Mexico, Italy and California.

"Nature sites to me can have a sacred quality to them," he said.

Mr. Munro's photos allow viewers to experience the moments he captured, Ms. Dickerson said.

"His photography is spiritual in its own way; there's just a deep meaning to it," she said. "It puts you in a better place when you look at it."

Mr. Munro also teaches workshops on his sacred pause philosophy, using his photos to support it.

"I always want to bring back unique and interesting stories to go along with the images," he said.