

July 30, 2026 Terre Sainte ou sans Terre?



"I only went out for a walk and finally concluded to stay out till sundown, for going out, I found, was really going in." - John Muir

"Take more time, cover less ground." - Thomas Merton

Thoreau mused that the origin of the word "saunter" or "saunterer" might be from vagabonds in the Middle Ages who wandered the land begging for charity while fraudulently claiming to be headed *a la Sainte Terre* (to the Holy Land). In the alternative, Thoreau suggested the vagabond saunterers derived their name from King John who was nicknamed *sans Terre* (without land). John who ruled England from 1199-1216 was pretty much a failure, and (but?) in the end sealed the Magna Carta in 1215 which limited royal power. So maybe John's many failures were all just "success in progress" as Einstein defined it. With a bit of internet meandering, you can find other word origin suggestions for sauntering. Whatever the true root story is, I prefer my aimless, casual, ambling over hiking or even walking. Dawdling is a savoring of time, not a wasting of it; and so, I would take more time. Since growth requires that we all fake it until we make it, this vagabond would select a *Sainte Terre* over being *without land*. In fact, there is something that happens to me on a stroll in the woods or through a village that is kind of like connecting and belonging in that place. Rather than being "without land", I feel more a part of it...and it of me.

Walking - especially with good company is wonderful too. There is much benefit to purposeful striding, getting my steps, stopping to say hello, moving my body and increasing my heart rate, not driving, clearing my head, and arriving back home. I won't knock it---but it's more about appreciating and using my time well than it is about savoring that time.

For this week's reflection, I picked a trail and never had a particular endpoint in mind. From the start, it was always just an aimless sauntering mosey of my mind. Bull's-Eye!

Happy Thinksday.