Welcome Home Where You Belong! Fr. John Matusiak Upbeat V.3, n. 2, 1970

It was a long trip back. The road wasn't exactly the easiest or straightest, but it was worth it to return home. My vacation wasn't as great as I expected it to be. A lot of people I know have been there before...they've been going there for years and years and years. Some really liked it, others didn't, but I figured that the best way to find out was to go myself, despite the warnings of my best friend. So I did.

It started out great, although my departure was a rather unexpected one. Somehow, at the last minute, I just seemed to pack up and go, not even telling my best friend. Soon I was there, but it was nothing like I imagined. I could remember the travel agent, how promising he was...the posters with their inviting pictures...the tempting brochures. I found nothing so promising and inviting, just darkness, gloominess, the opposite of home. I had been there before, many, many times before. It was all the same.

The worst part of the whole vacation was that I missed my friend. I was cut off from him, alienated...I couldn't hear him calling me to come home, come home. Somehow I didn't feel quite as if I was all there, as if I couldn't be completely myself without him. I knew I had to return home...soon.

Like I said before, the road back was a hard one...it was as if some mysterious force kept trying to pull me back, prevent my return. I managed to overcome the temptation and chose the hard way, eventually making it home. I found my friend, waiting for me. What could I say to him? My trip was foolish, I was sorry that I didn't listen to him in the first place. He knew where I had been...he had warned me about it. I was stubborn, weak and stubborn.

He turned to me. Somehow I took consolation in his sympathetic smile, his shining eyes, his words..."Welcome home!" I was reunited with him, and that made me happy. I told him that I was sorry...I wept, and promised that the next time I would try to listen to his words of advice. I asked for forgiveness. Again he turned to me, "You are forgiven!" It was great to be home again!