



Last Year Fr Tony Horgan, MSC was our Chaplain for our first Camino Pilgrimage. Here is a little snippet about his journey.....

Pic. Fr Tony MSC taking a break from walking the Camino Ingles last summer.

“I was a bit unsure when last year I was asked to be Chaplain for the Camino Pilgrimage. I was daunted by that the idea that I would have to walk 20 km plus each day over six days, especially so because when I do go for a walk the most, I would have done is 5 km. However on the first day once the walk began I soon realised it was all very manageable since I was doing it as part of a group and I felt the security of the organisers, their continual support and encouragement as well as bringing us each day by coach to the starting point for the walk and taking us back in the afternoon to the comforts of the hotel we were staying in.

***We are all pilgrims together on the journey of life
and all we have is one another***

Sometime in our lives we have all heard these word of wisdom (maybe part of a eulogy at a funeral we ‘ve attended). I found walking the Camino brought these words to life for me in a very powerful and personal way.

One of the first things I noticed when walking on the Camino was how easily we become connected as a group and also how we quickly we became aware of the beauty around us in nature. Sometimes when walking we could be alone, more often we were in company telling stories and listening to other people’s stories (not all stories are to be believed however !!). We were getting to know one another and becoming more comfortable in each other’s company and this is what gave life and energy to us as a group. One would notice this particularly at mealtime in the evening. As the week went on the voices were louder and the stories about different incidents during the day became more exaggerated !! The peels of laughter echoing around the room.



From a spiritual perspective one can draw parallels between walking the Camino and our own personal journey of life. While the routine of everyday life can leave us at times feeling numb, our experience of walking the Camino can open up opportunities for self-reflection. It can open a new sense of awareness of who we are personally and also an appreciation of the other person and the world with its beauty. Let us never underestimate the power of conversation, walking along the Camino together sharing stories. Such conversations can be transformative a power for healing and hope. Remember the story of 'the Road to Emmaus' in Luke's Gospel, how the disciples walked along the road with a stranger and 'how their hearts burn within them as they walked along the road' (**Luke 24 vs 32**).

When we finished the Camino Walk, we had rituals to help us express our appreciation to one another for being companions on the journey which by extension gave us a sense of appreciation for the gift of our own families and friends who are companions with us as we reflect on the bigger picture of our own life story. Referring to the words of wisdom

On the journey of life all we have is one another

Along the way as Chaplain, I gave short reflections for spiritual nourishment at what I hoped were appropriate times. Also, each day some of us gathered for a celebration of the Eucharist.

We started the Pilgrimage as strangers, but amazing friendships were made. Our Whatapps Group continues to ping with updates from the group.

In 2025, this Pilgrimage will be even more special. Not only will we walk the Camino Frances but we will also be continuing on to Fatima for 3 days.

We hope to see you"

Thank you

Fr. Tony Horgan MSC