



## Walking the Camino Português

### Church services

6pm, Saturday: Vigil Mass of Sunday

9.30am: Sunday Mass – with children’s liturgy in term time  
21 July: Family Mass

9.30am: Tuesday Mass

9.30am: Thursday Mass

#### Activities (in the parish centre)

- Monday, 9.30 – 11am: Baby and Toddler Group
- Wednesday, 11am – 1.30pm: Welcome Space
- Friday, 6.30pm: Junior Club in term time (School Years 3–6)
- Saturday 20 July, 1 – 5pm: Free Sustainable Clothes and Books Market

For further information, contact Christ the King’s parish office (phone 2075 3945, email [llanishen@rcadc.org](mailto:llanishen@rcadc.org)) or Canon Matthew Jones (phone 2075 2389, email [matthew.jones@rcadc.org](mailto:matthew.jones@rcadc.org)) or visit the website at [www.3churches.org](http://www.3churches.org)

Services are streamed live at [www.3churches.org](http://www.3churches.org)

The church and parish centre are located at Newborough Avenue, Llanishen, CF14 5DB.

**T**he Camino de Santiago – ‘The Way of St James’ – is a pilgrimage route with a history stretching back over a thousand years. The destination, Santiago de Compostela, is believed to be the burial place of St James the Apostle.

I have wanted to walk the Camino for over 20 years but can’t really explain why. As a Catholic Christian, I saw it partly as a way to strengthen my faith by following in the footsteps of many before us and joining others walking to a place of worship. But the Camino isn’t just for Catholic Christians (or the retired!). Each day, over 2,000 people of all ages and nationalities arrive in Santiago.

Sarah Baxter (*Lonely Planet*) explains why many Camino walkers are not Catholic or of any faith.

‘Because a pilgrimage isn’t just a walk,’ she says. ‘It is to travel with a sense of purpose, with a defined goal and, in so doing, strips everything else away. It is an escape from everyday life to look from a different perspective. In a world of escalating noise and complication, the simplicity and motility of a pilgrimage can offer salvation, no matter what your beliefs.’

There are many Caminos de Santiago, each following ancient paths. The most popular route, the Camino Frances, featured in the 2010 film *The Way*.

My husband and I recently walked 250km from Porto Cathedral to Santiago. Over 12 days, we experienced the joy of the journey, staying in a variety of

pre-booked hotels and guesthouses. Though traditional albergues and hostels are available at a lower cost, we opted for a bit more comfort.

The path is well signposted with yellow arrows. We purchased our Camino passports from the Confraternity of St James and collected stamps daily from churches, hotels and cafés. In order to receive a ‘Compostela’, you must collect at least two stamps per day for the last 100km to Santiago.

On the back of our passport was a poem from Sir Walter Raleigh:

*‘Give me my scallop-shell of quiet,  
My staff of faith to walk upon,  
My scrip of joy, immortal diet,  
My bottle of salvation,  
My gown of glory, hope’s true gage;  
And thus I’ll take my pilgrimage’*

#### (The Passionate Man’s Pilgrimage (1604))

We began our walk along the river out of Porto, then followed the Atlantic coast for a day before turning inland to join the Central route. The path was wonderfully varied, with fantastic scenery, beautiful wildflowers and historic old towns.

The weather shifted from sunshine to rain and, by day three, our feet were blistered, but we didn’t much care.

Initially, the route was quiet, but once we crossed into Spain and entered the last 100km, we found ourselves among a crowd of fellow pilgrims. Along the way there are wayside crosses, tiny niche-in-a-wall shrines and small chapels. Some pilgrims leave stones at way markers to disburden themselves of a sorrow.

The essence of my Camino was peace. Each day had a simple focus. My mind was clear and I was able to appreciate my surroundings and feel closer to God. Each day there were churches where we could pray or spend a quiet moment.

Arriving at the magnificent Santiago Cathedral with 2,000 other pilgrims was an emotional and satisfying achievement. It was a pilgrimage of the heart (and the feet!).

Sally McLaughlin, Christ the King parishioner and Lisvane resident

