GOOD MORNING
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA (NORCAL) CHAPTER

AMERICAN PILGRIMS ON THE CAMINO
AMERICAN PILGRIMS ON THE CAMINO

• An all volunteer, non-profit organization
• 2,300 members in 30 states and the District of Columbia
• A national organization: 49 chapters around the country
• We train hospitaleros to volunteer for service in Spain
• On the Web (www.americanpilgrims.org)
• 19,000 Facebook members
OUR MISSION

TO FOSTER THE ENDURING TRADITION OF THE CAMINO

• SUPPORTING THE INFRASTRUCTURE OF THE CAMINO

• GATHERING PILGRIMS TOGETHER

• PROVIDING INFORMATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO PAST AND FUTURE PILGRIMS
NORCAL CHAPTER

• The 2nd chapter in the US
• Mailing list of 620
• Many events throughout the year
• Hikes
• Sign up for mailing list
OUR VALUES

In all the decision we make and all the things we do, we strive to be in accordance with certain values:

- Community
- Service
- Gratitude
- Simplicity
COMMUNITY

We are welcoming to all people and strive to create real opportunities for people to connect, grow and share in a meaningful way.
SERVICE

We strive to create opportunities for people to help and support one another before, during and after their Camino experience.
GRATITUDE

We embrace every opportunity to thank and be thanked for actions big and small.
SIMPLICITY

We always aim to concentrate on what’s important in life and to celebrate all we have while appreciating every situation.
SHARE OUR MISSION?
SHARE OUR VALUES?

PLEASE BECOME A MEMBER

www.americanpilgrims.org
Returning Home

The Journey Continues
Part One

Preparing for our Camino
Equipment
Finances
Training
Guidebooks
Transportation
We don’t prepare for our return.
Why Not?

Something new; a challenge; an adventure

Our focus is on details; on doing everything “right”.

We believe coming back takes little or no effort. Done it many times before.
What do pilgrims seek?
Many pilgrims seek:

- Time for reflection,
- Solitude,
- Spiritual development
- Getting away from the trivia and materialism of daily life.
Or perhaps …

- Strength to confront a major life change – divorce, retirement, job change.
* Or ...we’re looking for

- Comfort following death or illness of a relative or close friend.
Some have no expectations at all
Some seek Adventure
Cheap holiday
Camino Weight Loss Program
Physical, mental and spiritual challenge
Spiritual answers
Path to making a decision
Part Two

Experiencing
What do pilgrims find?
• Sense of authenticity
• Connection with the meaning of pilgrimage
• Link to centuries of pilgrims
• Becoming part of history with the Romans, the Visigoths, the Moors, the Celts.
• Community

• Group identity
- Support
- Comfort
- Companionship
- Encouragement
• Meditation

• Solitude
Integration with the natural world
Simplicity
Personal Empowerment
We pilgrims also find angels and demons.
The pilgrim’s inner demons

- Insecurity
- Loneliness
- Anxiety
- Impatience
- Sadness
- Envy
- Fear of failure
- Depression
- Anger
The outer demons

- Rejection by others
- Inability to fit in
- Loss
- Judgment, injustice
- Limitations, our own and imposed
- Relationship problems
- Arrogance, dominance, belligerence
- Financial worries
- Family demands
- Job Issues
And the angels

We experience the best of humanity through another, a pilgrim – often a stranger.
We return home with a new sense of self. New eyes to see the world.
Part Three

Returning
We carry home – a tangled of images, feelings, thoughts, sensations, memories.
The returning pilgrim feels like ...

Nothing has changed

Everything has changed
“You change, your daily habits change, your conversations change, your body changes, the food you eat changes, the way you see people changes, the way you see the world changes.”
You change, your daily habits change, your conversations change, your body changes, the food you eat changes, the way you see people changes, the way you see the world changes.

Reentry is a Challenge
“You change, your daily habits change, your conversations change, your body changes, the food you eat changes, the way you see people changes, the way you see the world changes.”
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Interest in your job may have diminished
“Now that I’ve been back to work three weeks, I can see clearly some changes and less tolerance for life in the ‘driven’ world. I wonder if I can stay in the job I have? Or will I only find balance by leaving?”
“The old job just doesn’t hold any purpose anymore and the money isn’t enough.”
Perhaps there is a desire to uncouple from society,

Or, activities, friends, a partner
“I rarely listen to the news and find politics, a real downer”.
Pilgrims report a sense of shock and even vertigo - speed, noise, separation from the natural world.
Desire to simplify lifestyle

- “My house is too cluttered,
- I have too many clothes in my closets,
- I have too many things.”
You may return to a Hero’s Welcome…

Or not

Interest in your stories soon fades.
We often lack the vocabulary to describe a profound experience. It takes good self-knowledge to understand what we want to say. We often lack the vocabulary to describe a profound experience.
Got a case of the PCB? (Post Camino Blues)?

- Endings, goodbyes
- Coping with loss
- Having to accept change, sometimes unwanted change
- Facing difficult decisions
- Feeling overwhelmed, disoriented

What can I do? **Talk to a friend, someone you trust.**
Part Four

The Path Forward
“The Camino helps us wake up to what we really want in life. It helps us to realize where our life is and where we want it to go”.

Awakening
Discernment

What do I miss?

What have I learned that I want to integrate into my life?
TO CONTINUE THE JOURNEY, LET’S GET STARTED

What are those things that as a Pilgrim I miss and want to integrate into my life?
WHAT MIGHT THOSE THINGS BE?

Here are some suggestions…
Continuing the Journey

Community – a shared group identity
Continuing the Journey

The feeling of improved physical condition
Continuing the Journey

A sense of accomplishment
Continuing the Journey

Solitude -- time to meditate -- time with myself and for me
Immersion in nature

Continuing the Journey
Continuing the Journey

Learning new things
Continuing the Journey

Spiritual growth
Continuing the Journey

The excitement of dreaming about and planning my Camino
Continuing the Journey

Engagement in story telling – my own and those of others
Continuing the Journey

Living a more simple life
Continuing the Journey

Connecting with a global community
A sense of bravery and expanding personal boundaries

Continuing the Journey
Connecting with others beyond the trivial

Continuing the Journey
Moments of discernment and self-knowledge

Continuing the Journey
Continuing the Journey

Being a Camino angel
Continuing the Journey

The Camino experience is unique.

And its lessons endure.
CREATING AN ENDURING CAMINO

- Find time to go deeply and **reflect** on what we learned about ourselves

- **Identify** our values and who we want to be

- **Confront** old habits

- **Redesign** our life to be what we value
ASK YOURSELF THREE QUESTIONS:

• **Discernment** – what are the most important lessons from my Camino?

• **Intention** – am I willing to commit the time and effort to integrate these lessons in my life?

• **Practice** – what will I do regularly and faithfully to make these lessons part of my life?
Please accept a copy of a workbook to use as a tool as you go through the process of ...

- discernment
- intention
- practice
How to use the workbook

• Reflect upon your unique Camino experience.

• Check those experiences that you most wish were still present in your life,

• Go to the indicated page, read the quotes for a bit of inspiration and some suggestions,

• Then Craft your plan.
For example, select those experiences that most wish to continue in your life, then go to the indicated page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I miss...</th>
<th>Go to page...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the feeling of improved physical condition</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community and a shared group identity</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a sense of accomplishment</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>solitude and time with myself</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>immersion in nature</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>learning new things</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>a sense of bravery and expanding personal boundaries</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a sense of freedom</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spiritual growth</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>the excitement of dreaming about and planning my Camino</td>
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<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>being a Camino angel</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Consider these suggested activities to help you integrate that Camino experience into your life

Are there others that you can think of?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I miss…</th>
<th>I will explore…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a sense of accomplishment</td>
<td>starting a regular practice of identifying a project, a task or a goal that’s challenging for me and doing it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>finishing something that I once started</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>taking a class in a subject of interest or need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>developing more structure in my day by regularly setting goals and objectives in writing and recording my progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>developing expertise in something of interest, e.g., a Master Gardener or a docent at the art museum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The first step on your Continuing Camino Journey may be simply to select one.
Continuing the Spirit of the Camino
LIVE IN THE MOMENT
WELCOME EACH DAY – ITS PLEASURES AND ITS CHALLENGES
MAKE OTHERS FEEL WELCOME
SHARE
FEEL THE SPIRIT OF THOSE WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE YOU
IMAGINE THOSE WHO WILL FOLLOW YOU
APPRECIATE THOSE WHO WALK WITH YOU TODAY
Buen Camino

Ultreya!