

France

Spain

Bay of Biscay

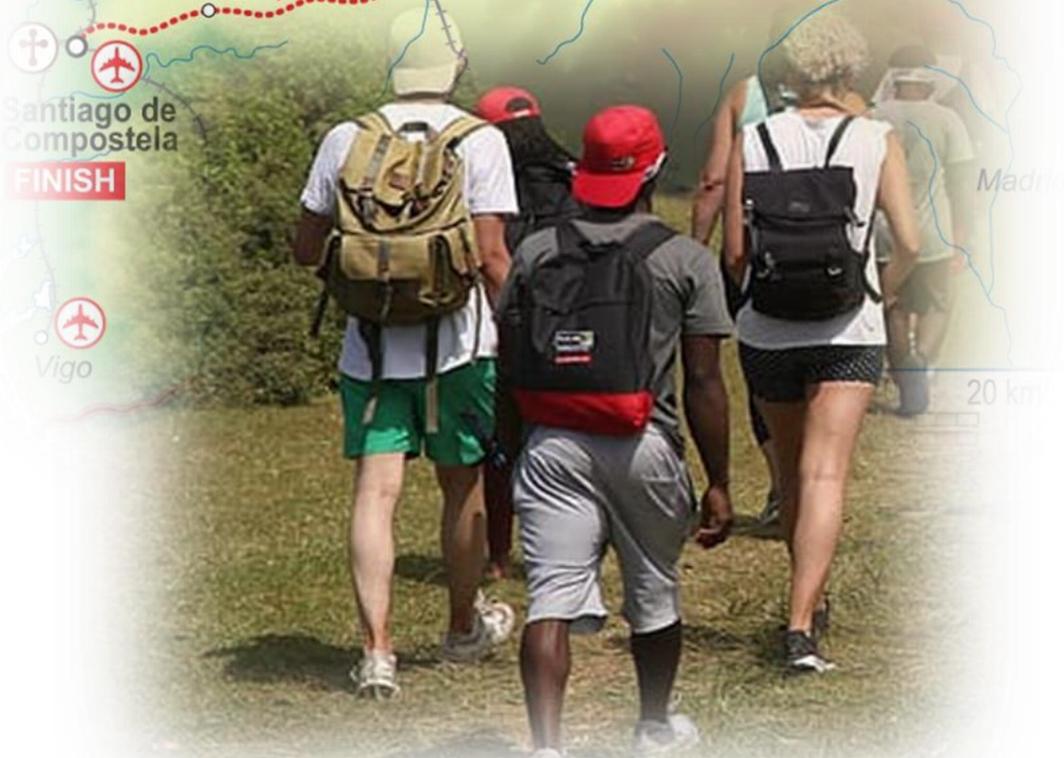
Pilgrims of Hope



Santiago de Compostela
FINISH

Madrid

20 km



"A Pilgrimage of the soul is a powerful metaphor for any journey with the purpose of finding something that matters deeply to the traveller" (Phil Cousine).

Dear Sisters on the journey **as pilgrims of hope...**

By now we are well into our Lenten journey and moving towards the greatest of all feasts, **EASTER**. This Paschal experience is not something we just arrive at and engage *in business as usual*. Hence, the Church's wisdom in offering us the opportunity of six weeks to prepare our hearts and minds with the deep desire for an encounter with the Risen Christ in a personal and communal way.

Travelling as a pilgrim through life is a metaphor that has always captivated me and I am so pleased that Pope Francis has used as the motto for the Jubilee Year, 2025, **Pilgrims of Hope**.

We might be tempted to think of the metaphor of pilgrimage as a desire to find adventure, to get away for a while or to have an experience of travel in another land and culture. But the metaphor of pilgrimage that I invite us to reflect on this Easter time and beyond is a pilgrimage into our hearts, minds, and souls to seek and find the treasures not found in travel brochures but in *following **the compass of our own souls***.¹

Pilgrimage is a journey that seeks direction and is undertaken with focus, purpose, commitment and meaning. It involves risk, sacrifice and entering unknown paths of solitude. Getting lost and feeling alone is all part of the way and yet pilgrims, I have spoken to, find new, deep and lasting friendships with other pilgrims who embark on the same path albeit for different reasons.

In the Gospel of St. Luke, (24:13-35) we hear a beautiful Resurrection story that speaks of pilgrimage and deep **encounter** between the

¹ 'For the Traveller' by John O'Donohue, 2008.

disciples and the Risen Jesus on the road to Emmaus where they recognise Him in the Breaking of Bread and sharing of Wine.

The passion **that burns within their hearts** is significant in this encounter. They burn from within knowing they have encountered Jesus in whom they put their trust ... **they burn with love** because **Jesus is truly present to them**. Jesus from his side is a good Shepherd pilgrim who comes in search of us to accompany us at every bend on the road of our lives.

This same Risen Jesus **is truly present to us...** He is the focus, purpose, and meaning for our pilgrimage as Holy Cross Sisters steeped in the Paschal Mystery.

'The mystery of the mission, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the centre of our spirituality and it inspires our style of mission. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ shows how important the world is to God. Through our holistic service to persons, we bring hope of new life and contribute to the transformation of society' (Charism Statement, 2001).



REFLECTION for community and individual use:

- Do our **encounters** with Jesus burn deeply within us in daily prayer and the ordinariness of each day?
- Do **we burn with passion** knowing He is truly present to us?
- Does knowing **Jesus as the Risen Lord** touch the compass of our hearts, minds and souls that lead us inward to live with conviction and passion to respond outwardly?
- As we continue to travel towards Easter what do we need (to let go of or create more of) as individuals and as communities to enable me/us to encounter the Risen Lord deeply?
- Where is God speaking to us in our own inner silence and during set communal times of silence?

'For the Traveller' by John O'Donohue

A journey can become a sacred thing:
so that the compass of your soul might direct you toward
the territories of spirit where you will discover
more of your hidden life,
and the urgencies that deserve to claim you.

or Bernadette

Sr. Bernadette Duffy

On behalf of the Congregational Leadership Team

We wish you a true encounter with Jesus the Risen Lord.

Alleluia