



# EL CAMINO



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**Facebook Page: El Camino Project**

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**THE VISION STATEMENT:  
THE ANGLICAN CENTER OF SANTIAGO WILL BE  
AN ECUMENICAL PLACE THAT OFFERS  
HOSPITALITY, LEARNING, HEALING, HOPE AND  
LOVE AND REJUVENATES THE EPISCOPAL  
DIOCESE IN SPAIN.**

Friends,

We send you warm greetings from Madrid this summer! Much has happened with our project to build a pilgrim welcome center in Madrid since we last wrote to you. Money has been raised, a matching grant with UTO at 815 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue has been established with , several more pilgrim groups have come over to express interest in the project, and our Facebook followers are on the rise.



Earlier this spring, the Bishop co-celebrated a Eucharist in Santiago with Bishop June Osborne, the Bishop of Llandaff, Wales. Over 100 Welsh priests came to Santiago to experience the Camino.

In May, Calvary, Memphis, came bringing 40 parishioners and then celebrated the Eucharist in Santiago with the Rev. Spencer Reece and one of our seminarian interns from Yale, Joseph Cundiff. Later this June, the diocese of Colorado brought together a dynamic group of young adults to celebrate their faith with a Camino led by the Rev. George Foraker that began in Avila.

In this newsletter we wish to share with you three impressions on the center and on our seminarian internship program. Again this summer we have three interns, two from Yale and one from Sewanee. Part of our vision for the center is that it will be a gift to the future of the church, which includes these up-and-coming seminarians who will one day be priests.

Peace to you,

**The Rev. Spencer Reece**  
*National Secretary, Spanish Episcopal Church  
Sub-dean, Cathedral of the Redeemer*



## Seminarian Reflections

This summer we have enjoyed hosting three seminarians from the United States who have been supporting our work. We asked them to reflect on their experience in the Spanish Episcopal Church and the gifts a pilgrim center in Santiago could bring to the world.

### Joseph Cundiff

*Diocese of Long Island*

The holy city of Santiago de Compostela lies near the “end of the world” at Finisterre, and for many pilgrims Santiago is the end of the road, but it is also the beginning of a journey.

My visit to Santiago was my first time and it was brief, but it was not the end of a pilgrimage for me. I did not make a pilgrimage by foot, but had the opportunity to meet and minister to two groups of pilgrims from the U.S.A. We celebrated the Eucharist in a small Roman Catholic church surrounded by a travelling carnival. I was able to get a taste of how steeped in tradition is the city and The Way. I was also able to see the diversity of pilgrims on the Camino on the streets of the storied city as I saw faces of all ages, heard languages from all corners.

The Way of St. James has been a popular pilgrimage since the 9th century, but I was surprised to learn there exists no significant or unified Protestant effort to welcome and host all Christian pilgrims.

When pilgrims arrive in Santiago, they may have a thousand questions on their mind about spirituality and Christianity. A stronger Anglican presence can help provide the spiritual guidance necessary for a full expression of the church universal. Considering how popular the Camino is becoming - some 300,000 pilgrims now walk each year and numbers almost double for Holy Years when St. James’s Day (25 July) falls on a Sunday - an Anglican pilgrim center in the third holiest Christian city seems now more than ever to be needed for all pilgrims - especially Protestants - to be welcomed and for the Word to be witnessed.

### The Rev. Patrick Keyser

*Diocese of Virginia*

The word ‘pilgrim’ originally comes from the Latin meaning ‘foreigner’ or ‘stranger.’ I am intrigued by this idea of a pilgrim as someone who journeys through a foreign land, especially in light of our modern context in



which more and more people are choosing to take a pilgrimage, particularly the Camino de Santiago. I think many pilgrims recognize that there is more in this world than what appears on the surface of the frenetic and isolated lives many of us live. Pilgrims are those who recognize that they are strangers in this world and set out in search of something greater. They seek something transcendent. They search for home. Pilgrims seek God.

This month I was blessed with the opportunity to join a group of young adults from the Diocese of Colorado at the start and conclusion of their pilgrimage on the Camino. I joined Bishop Carlos in leading them in a pilgrim’s blessing at the cathedral in Madrid as they began their pilgrimage. We offered prayers and a blessing, and we read the story of the road to Emmaus from the gospel of Luke and prayed that they too would meet Jesus on their journey. Then Bishop Carlos and I met the pilgrims again in Santiago at the end of their camino where we again offered prayers, this time joining in a celebration of the Eucharist to receive Christ’s presence in the sacrament. We were fortunate to be able to gather in an old Roman Catholic parish church, but such an opportunity does not

exist for everyone who travels the Camino. As I joined in welcoming this group of pilgrims, I pondered the great opportunity for hospitality that would come with the establishment of the Anglican Center in Santiago, a place where all would be welcome and the Holy Eucharist would be available for all pilgrims who desire it. There is something deeply Biblical about the idea of a Center whose purpose is to welcome strangers, as the word 'pilgrim' suggests. The Anglican Center in Santiago can not only be a place of hospitality but also a place where those who have been earnestly seeking could find God.

## Noah Stansbury

*Diocese of Pennsylvania*

Over the past few years, I've met several friends who have made their pilgrimage on the Camino de Santiago, some of them more than once. They always talk about what an inspiring experience it is. They talk about what it's like to travel hundreds of kilometers by foot, in that most ancient and maybe most human way of travel. They talk about having time to be with themselves and with God, and enjoying the natural beauty of Spain. They talk about the alternating periods of solitude and of walking with people they've met along the way. Of course, they talk about arriving in Santiago at the end of it all, and giving thanks

for the ways, however small, that they are different at the end of the journey than at the beginning. And I've noticed that the beginning of the journey often gets left out of the story. It's easy to talk in clichés about the journey being more important than the destination, but we all came from somewhere, didn't we?

One of the ministries of the Spanish Episcopal Church is supporting pilgrims on their journey to Santiago, and those journeys all have beginnings. Those journeys all need a place where pilgrims can take



stock of how God has been working on them up until now, and where God might be inviting them next, both spiritually and physically. The work of welcoming the stranger, naming God's goodness in every person, and blessing others for their journey ahead is every bit as important as the work of those who are doing the journeying itself. I hope you'll consider supporting the work of the Anglican Center in Santiago and the Bueno Samaritan Center in Madrid, as the Church here continues its work of supporting pilgrims on all stages of their journey.

## Updated FACEBOOK PAGE HELP US TO SPREAD THE WORD



Here in Madrid we are working away to get the word out about our Pilgrim Center. So much progress has been made since we started nearly two years ago. Our board has formed, our 502c3 has been established, a site has been pinpointed, and the Episcopal Church of the United States is sending up smoke signals. Sherri Dietrich, the President of UTO, one of our major supports and partners over the years, just announced a Challenge Grant, which we've highlighted on our Facebook Page: El Camino Project. Please send all your friends to the page, please like the page, please friend the page, the more friends and followers we have the more interest we are able to build. The UTO grant will match anything up to \$60,000 and with those funds raised we will be closer to buying the building in Santiago. The project is a \$5 million dollar project. We've raised \$150,000 so far. Every dollar counts. Every dollar makes a center possible. People have given

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generously. This center will create a center for all pilgrims, a center for meditation, a center where ordained men and woman from the Episcopal Church can celebrate the Eucharist. Dietrich wrote: The Camino de Santiago de Compostela is one of the oldest routes of pilgrimage in Christianity, and Santiago de Compostela was the third holiest site in Christianity in the Middle Ages. Over 250,00 people walk part of the Camino every year, and more and more of them are Protestants; in fact Protestants walking the Camino outnumber Roman Catholics. But while Roman Catholics can end their pilgrimage by celebrating the Eucharist together in the cathedral, Protestants are not welcome to take Holy Communion there and so don't have a place to end their journey together. Since 2015, plans to build an Anglican Centre in Santiago have been developing, and UTO now is joining in that work."



United Thank Offering (UTO) "Challenge Grant"  
matches your donations up to \$60,000  
to build the Anglican Pilgrim Centre in Santiago.

Help support the Anglican Pilgrim Centre in Santiago,  
a place for all Christians, by donating via...

TEXT – "CAMINO" to 41444

ONLINE - via [unitedthankoffering.com/give](http://unitedthankoffering.com/give)  
Select "UTO Camino Challenge Grant"

CHECK - with "UTO Camino Challenge Grant" in the memo,  
to:

United Thank Offering  
DFMS - Protestant Episcopal Church  
P.O. Box 958983  
St. Louis, MO 63195-8983

**UTO's Pilgrims on the Camino in October of this year will literally walk in the shoes of Protestant pilgrims on the Camino: they will walk part of the Camino, share the end of their journey in Santiago de Compostela, and experience firsthand the need for this Anglican Pilgrim Centre. We will post updates of our journey on the UTO Facebook page and webpage. There are still a few spots available if you want to make the pilgrimage with us this fall!**

**Caminante, no hay camino, se hace camino al andar... – Antonio Machado**

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