



30th Sunday Ordinary Time – 27 October 2024

## WALKING THE CAMINO



Last month, I turned 40. Unlike my other “zero” birthdays, I found I had little interest in marking it with a typical celebration. Forty felt different. I found myself quietly contemplating the fact that somewhere in the next decade (based on average life expectancies) I would likely have fewer years ahead than behind me. That felt serious and, as my birthday approached, I had a heightened awareness of how important it was

to use time wisely. From this mindset, I booked my husband and I to walk the final section of the French Camino, from Sarria to Santiago de Compostela in northern Spain, on my birthday week. I hoped it would allow time for reflection; I'm not religious in the traditional sense, and I find the word “spiritual” offputting. Yet, as a writer, I have spent a lot of my life thinking and reading, taking time to contemplate questions about life's meaning, attempting to understand human behaviour, including my own, and wondering is there a wider presence behind it all. The first day of the pilgrimage, as the sun arose above the trees lining the Rio Sarria, we walked through the town to the overwhelming chorus of birds. John and I selected our stones; part of the Camino ritual is carrying a stone, which one leaves behind at some point on the journey, in a symbolic act of letting go. We bought our scallop shells from a tourist shop, as it seemed everyone on the pilgrimage had one hanging from their bags, and collected our pilgrim passports to get stamped at the various stops along the journey. In many ways, the whole Camino is one large ritual, built on these smaller ones. Of those we met on the route, quite a significant number were groups of Spanish students. Occasionally we heard English speakers, mostly American or Irish, but for the most part it was a simple “Buen Camino” as we passed fellow travellers. The few Americans we spoke to reminded me that for a large portion of travellers it was a religious journey; I winced as they spoke confidently about Christ and God in a way an Irish person would be most unlikely to.....John and I talked sometimes, sometimes were silent. We spoke about the tension I felt when people spoke of Christ and God. I realised, as a gay man, I assume I'll be judged by them. We also discussed Galician graveyards, where the dead aren't buried, but stacked in wall vaults, something that seemed odd to me, as I'd like my body to be placed in the ground where it would be reabsorbed by nature. Day three, the weather changed. We bought cheap plastic ponchos and tried to make the best of it but when we got to the hotel after seven hours of walking in the rain, I was feeling deeply unspiritual. That day, my knees, through significant amounts of discomfort, reminded me I would be 40 in less than two days. I tried to remind myself that the magical rolling hills of oak forest only existed because there was lots of rain.....“What is a pilgrimage if you are not religious?” I reflected on Philip Larkin's poem Church Going, in which he muses about what churches will be used for when religion is done away with. He ends with the idea that they'll be “serious houses” for those with a hunger to “be more serious”, and I thought about how it related to the Camino.....On the final day of the pilgrimage I woke up to the sound of John shuffling at the dark corner of the room. When he moved away, I saw two lit candles (in the shapes of 4 and 0) around a makeshift “cake” of Lindor sweets and Italian cannoli. As I blew out the candles, I thought back to the graffiti on the Camino: “LOVE is aLL!”....We have a collective myth around the Camino, one that has evolved many rituals over time, which began with an apocryphal story about St James the Great, and from then the devout have flocked along the routes to Santiago de Compostella for more than a millennium. The pilgrims are different now. I, like many, question if the body and bones in the crypt are of St James and I question their miraculous powers. Yet, the one thing that is unchanged for everyone walking the route is they are all seekers of one sort or another. However, I doubt what is sought can be found physically en route. For me, the Camino offers space, a time and place for those who hunger “to be serious”, to discover meaning where it ultimately resides, within ourselves.

*Courtesy: Jamie O'Connell author of Diving for Pearls  
And the Irish Times  
Full article [here](#)*

## Remembered this Weekend

Graham Mooney (Months Mind)  
Rosaleen Kelly (1st A)  
Jinny Nugent (12th A)  
Jemmy Nugent (10th A)  
Seamus, James &  
Margaret Maguire  
Irish Troops Lebanon



## Three Parish Bible Group

Would you like to meet in a small group maybe once a week to read the Sunday mass readings and reflect, share and pray with them? It could be a great way to deepen your faith and meet others who worship in the Liberties. If you would like to know more, please email Father Colin at [fathercolinrothery@gmail.com](mailto:fathercolinrothery@gmail.com) or call 01-4426296



## November Remembrance

Masses of remembrance will take place in our three parishes as follows:

Fri 01 Nov 7.30pm in Francis St.  
Tues 05 Nov 7pm in James's St.  
Weds 06 Nov 7pm in Meath St.



## Brams Stoker Festival

runs from Friday across the weekend and Bank Holiday. It celebrates the legacy of one of Ireland's most beloved and iconic writers and is now firmly established as one of Dublin's largest arts festivals. See <https://bramstokerfestival.com/en/>



## University Church

Traditional Irish Storytelling & Music: On Wednesday, October 30, at 6pm, Eithne Ní Ghallchobhair will be accompanied with music by world-renowned guitarist Steve Cooney for Traditional Irish Storytelling & Music Storytelling in the ancient Irish form of the seanchai, which forms part of the Gaelic oral tradition of storytelling & history.

## 30TH SUNDAY ORDINARY

### Penitential Rite

As we begin, rejoicing in Jesus our Lord,  
let us remember God's goodness.

You raise us to new life in your life.  
Lord have mercy

You are the source of hope and healing.  
Christ have mercy

You send us to be your witnesses in the world.  
Lord have mercy

May our gracious God have mercy on us,  
forgive us our sin, and bring us to life everlasting.  
Amen

### Jeremiah 31:7-9

The Lord says this: Shout with joy for Jacob! Hail the chief of nations! Proclaim! Praise! Shout! 'The Lord has saved his people, the remnant of Israel!' See, I will bring them back from the land of the North and gather them from the far ends of earth; all of them: the blind and the lame, women with child, women in labour: a great company returning here. They had left in tears, I will comfort them as I lead them back; I will guide them to streams of water, by a smooth path where they will not stumble. For I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born son.

### Hebrews 5:1-6

Every high priest has been taken out of humankind and is appointed to act for people in their relations with God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins; and so they can sympathise with those who are ignorant or uncertain because they too live in the limitations of weakness. That is why they have to make sin offerings for themselves as well as for the people. No one takes this honour on themselves, but each one is called by God, as Aaron was. Nor did Christ give himself the glory of becoming high priest, but he had it from the one who said to him: You are my son, today I have become your father, and in another text: You are a priest of the order of Melchizedek, and for ever.

### Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, Alleluia  
I am the light of the world, says the Lord, anyone who follows me will have the light of life. Alleluia

### Mark 10:46-52

As Jesus left Jericho with his disciples and a large crowd, Bartimaeus (that is, the son of Timaeus), a

blind beggar, was sitting at the side of the road. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout and to say, 'Son of David, Jesus, have pity on me.' And many of them scolded him and told him to keep quiet, but he only shouted all the louder, 'Son of David, have pity on me.' Jesus stopped and said, 'Call him here.' So they called the blind man. 'Courage,' they said 'get up; he is calling you.' So throwing off his cloak, he jumped up and went to Jesus. Then Jesus spoke, 'What do you want me to do for you?' 'Rabbuni,' the blind man said to him 'Master, let me see again.' Jesus said to him, 'Go; your faith has saved you.' And immediately his sight returned and he followed him along the road.

### Prayer of the Faithful

Father, Son and Spirit, your love opens our eyes to the wonder of who we are and the beauty of creation. We thank you. Lord hear us

Lord, may your Word give us a new vision and open our hearts to one another. Lord hear us

May we work to create a world where violence and hatred have no place. Lord hear us

We remember those who have died and in particular those who have lost their lives through violence, hunger and war. Lord hear us

Lord, open our eyes and our hearts to those in our own community in need of the basic necessities of life. Lord hear us

In silence we remember those who need our prayer and support.....Lord hear us



### Reflection

May you be blessed in the holy names of those who, without knowing it, Help to carry and lighten your pain. May you know serenity when you are called to enter the house of suffering. May a window of light always surprise you. May memory bless and protect you with the hard earned light of past travail; to remind you that you have survived before and though the darkness is now deep, you will soon see approaching light. May the grace of time heal your wounds. May you know that though the storm may rage, not a hair of your head will be harmed.