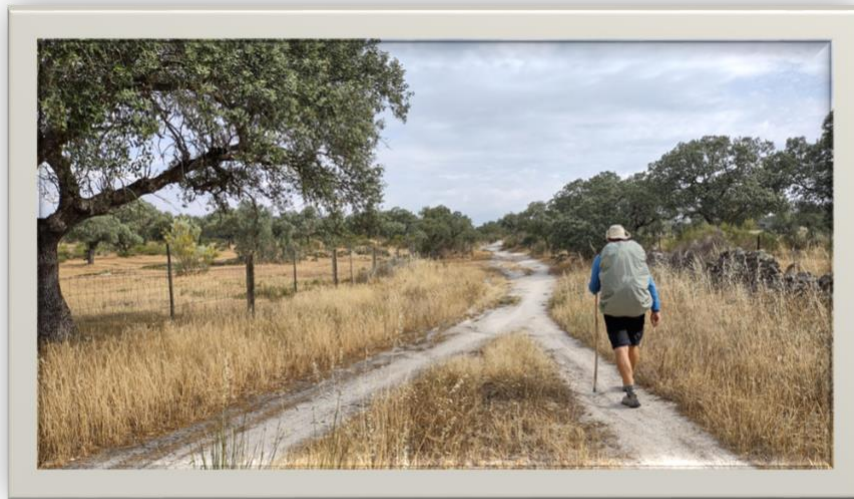


# *Ultreia et Suseia! The Newsletter.*

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**Vol. 4. No. 2.**

**April, 2024, Christchurch Camino Group**



‘The difference between pilgrim and tourist is the intention of attention, the quality of the curiosity. The practice you pursue will determine the quality of the pilgrimage.’ Phil Cousineau.

## **Editorial**

### **What Is an Authentic Camino Pilgrim?**

Have you ever wondered if you are an authentic pilgrim? Last year I rode a bus on at least 3 occasions and still walked 1240 km of my Mozarabe/via de la Plata/Sanabres Camino. Does that invalidate my pilgrimage? I carried my pack the whole way, surely that’s a plus? Oh and I occasionally stayed in hotels and slept on crisp white sheets and dried myself on fluffy white towels. I made it to Santiago to kneel at the tomb of St James. So was I an authentic pilgrim? Is an authentic pilgrim on: a quest, a Hero’s Journey, a pilgrimage, completing a Rite of Passage, or taking a very long walk? What I do know is that once the intention is set then the decisions that follow will be in alignment and as the quote above says will determine the quality of the pilgrimage. There are many factors at play. Some pilgrims may have work commitments, a need to comply with Schengen regulations, or have incurred serious injury and opt to take a bus. Others may not be able to carry their pack, and/or have a need for reserved accommodation. What is important is what is in the pilgrim’s heart and mind.

Ultreia et Suseia  
Philip.

**Image;** via de la Plata

‘**Real Pilgrims – Us and Them on the Camino de Santiago**’ robscamino, YouTube, [11.41]

### **This Newsletter Includes:**

- Noticeboard – Remaining meeting dates p 2
- April Meeting Follow up p 3
- Featured Topic: Steps to Making Your Camino a Pilgrimage p 5
- Article: Utilising the Labyrinth as an Aid to Reflection and Meditation p 7
- Article: Inner Journey Guidebook p 8
- Article: Useful Christchurch City Libraries Pilgrimage References p 8
- Article: The Camino as a Hero's Journey p 9
- Article: Hero's Journey References p 10
- Article: Information Overload Conundrum p 11
- Article: Taking a Closer Look: John Brierley's Guide to the Inner Camino p 11
- Article: Utilising the Christian Heritage Available on the Camino Journey p 12
- Article: Things to Do In: Valenca/Tui p 14
- Camino Story: A Seven Day Post Camino Indulgence p 14
- Camino Tip: Walking Proactively p 5
- Camino Poem: Pilgrimage p 15
- Reviews p 15
- Article; Previous Newsletter Articles Relating to the Inner Journey p 16



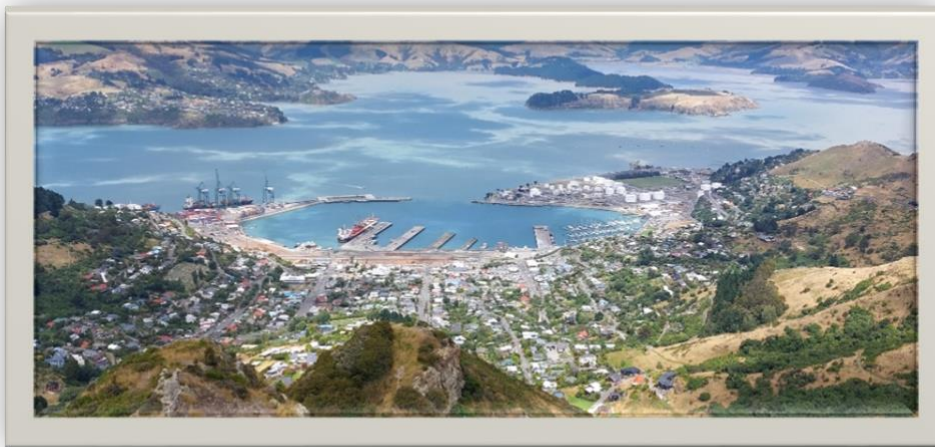
### **Noticeboard**

#### **Scheduled 2024 Christchurch Camino Group Meeting Dates**

The following are the remaining scheduled gathering dates for 2024: Monday 26 August, Monday 25 November.

### **Christchurch Camino Walking Group**

The Christchurch Camino Walking Group meets on the second Sunday of the month, usually at 10 am. The walks are a mixture of flat and hill walks around Christchurch and surrounding areas. They provide an opportunity to try out



new walks, and exercise with people who share a love for the Camino. Walks are usually completed by around 3 pm. These walks are for people who share an interest in all things Camino. Please contact Cecilia for more information and to join the separate

mailing list: [chchcaminogroup@gmail.com](mailto:chchcaminogroup@gmail.com)

**Image:** Lyttelton Harbour, Dave.

## Advice Given to Pilgrims

We wish to emphasise that all information and answers given by our presenters, organisers, meeting participants and in our newsletters are provided in good faith, and have been found to work for them/us on that particular occasion.

The information provided is a starting point for your research so that there is a range of possibilities to investigate and can be adapted to suit individual circumstances.

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## *Christchurch Camino Group*

### Follow-Up

**8, April, 2024**

Our gathering was held in the **Sydenham Room of the South Library**, 66 Colombo St, Cashmere, Christchurch on the 8 April between 7 and 9 pm. Due to an increase in attendance over the last 2 meetings a reservation system was introduced. Capacity was reached 3 weeks before the meeting, and unfortunately people were turned away.

The following **apologies** were received: Elizabeth, Ralph (on the Frances beginning 16 May. Request his email if walking near that time frame.) Jan, Colleen, Ngaire, Linda. A

**Returning Pilgrims' Ceremony** for those pilgrims who have returned since our meeting in January was held. There was an opportunity for them to **recount a highlight** of their Camino. This ceremony is to provide an opportunity for our pilgrims to be publicly recognized as per "The Rite of Passage."

**A Departing Pilgrims' Ceremony** for those pilgrims departing before our next meeting in August was also held. There was also an opportunity to name their Camino and date of departure regarding their upcoming pilgrimage.



Cecilia reported on the latest activities of the **Christchurch Camino Walking group**. Walks included; Hogsbank Track, Craigieburn, and Pegasus, ~ Tuhaitara Coastal Trail, ~ to Ashley River Mouth Reserve.

**Image:** Walking towards the Ashley River Mouth.

## Presentations

Due to illness the presentation by Daphne and Colleen has been postponed.

## **'Frameworks for the Inner and Outer Journey Including Nourishing the Inner Journey Whilst Walking the Camino de Santiago.'**

The Camino is an opportunity to work on the inner journey. Not limited to the Camino. Many believe the Camino has special powers. ~ It maybe that we are hyper alert and notice things that pass us by in the ordinary world. The Celts would say the Camino is an example of a "thin

place,” It is said there are telluric presences, ley lines, and spiritual energy most noticeably at historic religious sites. People experience synchronicities etc.

[The end of Philip’s introductory story ~ I had stayed an extra night to care for a sick pilgrim. I was moved on forthwith while the sick pilgrim was given an additional night at the albergue.]

### **Philip ~ Walking the Camino as a Pilgrimage, Rite of Passage, or Quest, whilst Nourishing the Inner Journey.**

I find it useful to think in terms of a framework. Then I can ensure each section; separation, transformation, reintegration, receives the attention it requires. In this way I can make the most of journeying through the “special world.”

While on Camino we have the opportunity to cross the threshold and enter a liminal space for around 5 weeks. This involves leaving the ordinary world and entering the special world. It also includes the return to ordinary life.

**Quest** ~ traditionally searching for an external object ~ 4 stages. ~ Quester: call to journey, preparation, quest, return home.

**Rite of Passage** ~ 3 phases ~ separation, (leave familiar), time of testing, liminal (learning and growth), return (incorporation and reintegration), including public acknowledgment

**Pilgrimage Types** ~ Different types ~ Marion ~ Fatima, Lourdes where ritual is important, journey to a shrine, (medieval), today with the emphasis on the importance of the “journey” to the individual, not so much the arrival.

**Pilgrimage** ~ 4 stages ~ hearing the call and responding, preparation, journey, bringing back the boon.

My preference is for a combination of elements from all four, (Including Hero’s Journey.)

### **Nourishing the Inner Journey**

- Form intention/s ~ (be careful what you wish for!), Have some big questions, avoid expectations.
- Pre-departure preparations ~ to ensure separation ~ Normal from the Special world: cancel newspaper, divert the mail, etc.
- Leave behind as much of the normal world as circumstances allow: no playlists, discuss with relatives and friends your special journey ~ non direct contact if possible, (better email, text message), Look at own use of mobile ~ silence notifications, no “face time,” phone calls etc. compensate with blog/daily emails. Maybe text? Contact with fellow pilgrims?
- Be open, available to others, non-judgmental, seize opportunities
- Watch out for, and engage with, mentors “Camino Angels.”
- Engage the senses ~ presence meditation?
- Time for walking alone in silence, achieving a state of stillness, listening to the inner voice, letting go; of fear, misconceptions etc.
- Be prepared to persist with interior work, working to downsize the ego to realise the authentic self ~ could take you to uncomfortable places. Letting go
- Enjoy nature, become as one with it, in tune with nature’s rhythms. Avoiding transport if possible helps here.
- Place of ritual ~ light a candle, stand before wayside crosses, develop your own ritual to bring you to the here and now.
- Enjoy yourself, socialise with fellow pilgrims
- See “stuff ups” as an opportunity for growth.

And what happens when we re-enter the normal world? Well that’s another story!

Philip illustrated his presentation with a number of key books he found very useful in helping understand his own inner journey. Those list are available from Christchurch City Libraries; Alexander John Shaia, Richard Rohr, Christine Valters Paintner, Eckhardt Tolle, Thich Nhat Hanh, Phil Cousineau, Joyce Rupp, John Brierley, David Richo.

**Liz ~ The Hero's Journey. A call to do something bigger than myself. ~ Trials and Triumphs on the Portuguese.**

Liz presented us with an outline of Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey. She then related the stages of the framework (see similar symbol on p 11) to her recent Camino Portuguese, commencing at Porto.

**Call to Adventure/ Refusal of the Call.** ~ Initially Liz had doubts about her ability to walk in a foreign country by herself. Her family chimed in with their doubts. These doubts were rebuffed. Things were further complicated by a broken wrist 3 weeks before she was due to leave but fortunately the cast was removed the day before she left.

**Crossing the Threshold** ~ Liz met interesting people, formed a Camino Family and everything went well. She crossed the border into Spain and the **Road of Trials** began. Liz missed the turn off for the Variante Espiritual. Due to a bad case of blisters, Liz had sent her pack on to an albergue on the Espiritual! This was her second trial and was readily resolved by a series of fortunate events including a very kind albergue owner and taxi driver. Later she met a pilgrim friend from her 2019 Camino in a café, received a scallop shell for a necklace from a special pilgrim with whom she still corresponds and met other interesting pilgrims, so wasn't displeased with her change of route.

Her second "story" saw her descend into the **abyss**. Liz was bitten on the leg by a spider a day out from Santiago de Compostela. She was under the impression her pain and swelling was caused by some kind of sprain. Things became worse. She finally made it to her hotel conveniently located a block from the cathedral. Veronica and Jennifer, her two walking companions (Camino family) helped her get to her bed and later to outpatients. A further blow was that her travel insurance hadn't been extended to cover her previously extended travel time. After a week, which included Veronica abandoning her own travel plans to care for Liz, and three 8 hour hospital visits for IV treatment for her sepsis she was fit enough to fly home.

**The Ultimate Boon** ~ So what did she take away? Liz was able to find a silver lining in her Hero's Journey. An abyss can teach you a lot. There is no limit to the kindness of others. Be open to the yellow arrows of life. They don't always point the way you expect.

The evening concluded with the ever popular **Small Group Discussion**.

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**Featured Topic**

**Steps to Making Your Camino a Pilgrimage**

'The object of pilgrimage is not rest and recreation, - to get away from it all. To set out on a pilgrimage is to throw down a challenge to everyday life.' Huston Smith.

'A journey becomes a pilgrimage as we discover, day by day, that the distance travelled is less important than the experience gained.' Ernest Kurtz.

'With a deepening of focus, keen preparation, attention to the path below our feet, and respect before the destination in hand, it is possible to transform the most ordinary trip into a sacred journey.' Phil Cousineau

'A pilgrimage is an intentional journey into this experience of unknowing and discomfort for the sake of stripping away preconceived expectations.' Christine Valters Paintner

The key message contained in the quotes above is that a pilgrimage has a stated intention, or purpose. The journey is to be more than an adventure or trek across a beautiful land.

The traditional pilgrimage according to Phil Cousineau has four distinct stages, namely: hearing the call and responding, preparation, the journey – where tests are endured and obstacles are overcome, bringing back the boon, maybe an insight or gifts where these are utilised for the benefit of society.



**Image:** A day's walk from Santiago de Compostela on the Camino Sanabres

His book, **'The Art of Pilgrimage, The Seeker's Guide to Making Travel Sacred'**, can be somewhat daunting! I found the approach which worked for me was to study the 'Table of Contents,' and identify Cousineau's key stages. Then I noted pertinent points under each stage. Hence: The Longing, The Call, Departure, The Pilgrim's Way, The Labyrinth, Arrival, And Bringing Back the Boon.

Cousineau illustrates key points with countless stories of past adventures from all around the world. Keeping track of these adventures could mean key points are overlooked so I focused on the basic messages. He has some beautiful prose that make wonderful quotes:

'The purpose of this book is to see with the 'eyes of the heart' and transform the inevitable ordeals of your journey into opportunities to learn something about yourself and the wild world around you.'

'What matters most on your journey is how deeply you see, how attentively you hear, how richly the encounters are felt in your heart and soul.' p xxxi

'The real journey is about overcoming obstacles, daily practice of slowing down, lingering, savouring, and absorbing each of its stages, to encourage mindfulness, or soulfulness, having the ability to respond from the deepest space.' p xxix

'Through simple acts of Intention and attention, the journey can be transformed into a soulful one.' p 71

Cousineau's book is a great book to dip into, savour and be inspired. I had to tease out guidance regarding the "how to," of inner work. The framework above may assist with the unpacking of key points. After previewing a copy in a bookshop I purchased my own book and recommended the library purchase copies.

## Reference

'The Art of Pilgrimage, The Seeker's Guide to Making Travel Sacred,' Phil Cousineau, 203.5 COU, Christchurch City Libraries, (3 copies).

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## Article

### Utilising the Labyrinth as an Aid to Reflection and Meditation

Prior to the 2011 Earthquake it was possible to walk a labyrinth inside St Luke's church, Manchester Street, Christchurch. It was laid out on the floor using plastic sheeting. I clearly remember the evening I was invited to walk. Earlier there had been a Taize service in a side chapel. I could feel an energetic charge as I entered this holy space and set off. I remember halting at several turns in the path to gaze at various features of this beautiful church. I remember the silence.

Upon hearing that a Labyrinth had been constructed from brick in the now open space I decided to walk this version. Recently I read that the St Luke's section had been sold and the White Chairs Earthquake Memorial had been dismantled. (It had occupied an adjacent space.) While in the city I recently took the opportunity to walk it again and capture its beauty before it disappeared forever. (The land is being development for apartments. )

### What is a Labyrinth?

The labyrinth represents a journey or path to our own centre and back again out into the world, a metaphor for life's journey. It can be utilised as a tool in meditation and prayer. There is a rather neglected one alongside St Thomas church in Motueka which I walk when passing through.

### Camino de Santiago and Labyrinths

A Labyrinth has recently been built in a park which straddles the Camino Frances in Palais del Rei, (in Spanish: labirinto del dedalo) on the Camino Frances.



**Image:** The Labyrinth at former St Luke's, Manchester Street.

## Inner Journey Guidebook

In her book, **'The Soul of a Pilgrim: Eight Practices for the Journey Within,'** Christine Valters Paintner provides a 'how to manual' (or Camino guidebook) on taking an *inner pilgrimage*. In place of embarking on a physical journey she commences with a mediation. During this the seeker visualises the threshold and brings to mind what the heart desires. Reading and practising this prior to walking a pilgrimage would be most useful. She also offers creative exploration through photography and writing. A key practice is that of *lectio divina*, a detailed study of the text.

**The eight practices are:** The Practice of Hearing the Call and Responding, The Practice of Packing Lightly; The Practice of Crossing the Threshold, The Practice of Making the Way by Walking, The Practice of Being Uncomfortable, The Practice of Beginning Again, The Practice of Embracing the Unknown, The Practice of Coming Home.

## Conclusion

In her book each of the eight stages is discussed fully and I found the explanations and examples greatly increased my understanding. ie. coming home not with all the answers rather with better questions.

'Pilgrimage leads us home again, but that home is deep within each of us. We will cycle throughout our lives, meeting old themes, being invited to release, to walk forward in trust, to embrace mystery many times.' Christine Valters Paintner.

## Reference

**'The Soul of a Pilgrim: Eight Practices for the Journey Within,'** Christine Valters Paintner, 263 PAI, Christchurch City Libraries, (3 copies).

This book has a religious/spiritual basis. It is highly recommended.

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## Useful Christchurch City Libraries Pilgrimage References

**'Returning From Camino,'** Alexander John Shaia.

**'The Art of Pilgrimage, The Seeker's Guide to Making Travel Sacred,'** Phil Cousineau

**'Pilgrimage A Medieval Cure for Modern Ills,'** Dave Whitson,

**'The Soul of a Pilgrim: Eight Practices for the Journey Within,'** Christine Valters Paintner.

**'Walking With Sam, A Father, A Son, and Five Hundred Miles Across Spain,'** Andrew McCarthy, (2023,) 791.43028 MCC, Christchurch City Libraries, [ 5 copies]

**'The Longest Way Home, One Man's Quest for the Courage to Settle Down,'** Andrew McCarthy, Christchurch City Libraries, 791.43028 MCC

I requested the library purchase this book when I heard Andrew reference the Camino de Santiago and the crucial role it played in freeing him from fear ~ his crippling limitation. (See You Tube video below.) What I didn't realise was his life changing journey on the Camino would feature on only 4 pages! The rest of the book is about places he visits in his new career as a travel writer. Eg. Patagonia, Amazon, Kilimanjaro.

This is a wonderful example of personal transformation arising from his Camino.

[**'Walking the Camino de Santiago with Andrew McCarthy,'** Rudy Maxa's World, You Tube, 2021, [40.15] Andrew McCarthy. Actor, director, writer, (Pretty in Pink, St Elmos Fire, walked the Camino Frances with Sam his 19 year old son. Andrew's book (above) is referenced in the You Tube video.]

## You Tube

**Camino de Santiago - Hike or Pilgrimage?** robscamino October, 202, You Tube  
Rob puts forward several points regarding his definition of pilgrimage.



**‘Pray and Go to the Ends of the Earth. Camino de Santiago.’** Kristof Jaxa-Kwiatkowski, You Tube, October, 2021, [1:02:05]

Kristof makes a pilgrimage from Poland, via Czech Republic, Germany, Switzerland and France and on to the Norte in Spain, a total of 3469 km over 4 months to Finisterre. He provides a wonderful commentary. He reflects upon his inner journey as scenes from his journey are shown. He almost always pitches his tent for his overnight stays. An opportunity to share the journey of a practising Catholic.

**‘Camino de Santiago Faith Walk with Kristin and Peter,’** Spirit and Nature Productions. 39 videos, You Tube,

These 39 episodes have been edited to produce an award winning film which is not currently available on You Tube. With their marriage in trouble Kristin and Peter set out with clear intentions to remedy this and draw closer to God.

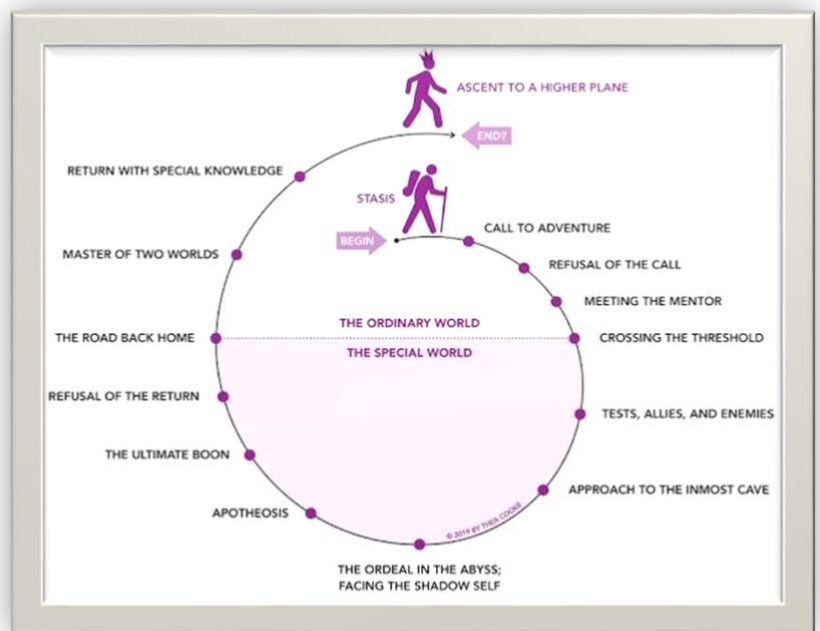
Excellent cinematography and a thoughtful commentary.

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### **Walking the Camino As a Hero’s Journey**

Readers will be familiar with the arc of the story known as the Hero’s Journey. Both the movies

‘Castaway,’ with Tom Hanks and ‘Indiana Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Arc,’ amongst many others follow this outline. The protagonist is called to go on a journey to a distant land, they accept the challenge by crossing the threshold. They meet a number of challenges, overcome them, and return home changed or transformed. In all 12 stages of this journey have been discerned. In its basic form there are 3, notably; departure, initiation, return, the remainder being sub stages. Pilgrims when undertaking their Camino may go on a similar journey. They will face challenges and be helped by ‘Camino Angels’ in the process learning lessons if they are open to them. In this modern age with so much information available prior to departure it might prove difficult to set off and step into an unknown world! If



everything is sorted by “Dr Google,” the challenges might be few and far between. In fact Alexander John Shia counsels against finding out too much prior to making the journey. Nancy Frey suggests pilgrims wishing to maximise the chances of their having a transformative experience leave their Smart phones at home and substitute them for a mobile with only call and messaging functions. Or restrict the use of Smart phones during the journey.

Reference: Nancy Frey [www.walkingtopresence.com](http://www.walkingtopresence.com)

**Image:** ‘The Hero’s Journey Spiral,’ © 2019 Thea Cooke

### **Camino Documentary Illustrating The Hero's Journey**

Alexander John Shaia in his book, **'Returning From Camino,'** provides a structure for planning, walking, and homecoming. His book focuses on the inner journey. A one page summary of the Hero's Journey is included. In the 'Resources' section he promotes as worthwhile viewing the documentary, **'The Way, One Man's Spiritual Journey Along the Camino de Santiago,'** by Mark Shea, 2008, [1:15:38] It is over 10 years old, and a remastered anniversary edition is available from Mark's Overlander.tv website for AU\$12. The original version is available free on You Tube. On his website Mark explains that he didn't realise his journey and script followed the arc of The Hero's Journey. He had thought his documentary was a failure. It has had 1.5 million You Tube views. Excellent and essential viewing.

### **Reference:**

**'Returning From Camino,'** Alexander John Shaia, 263 SHA, Christchurch City Libraries, [1 copy]

**'The Seven Basic Plots, Why We Tell Stories,'** Chapter Four: The Quest, Christopher Booker, eBook, Libby App, Christchurch City Libraries [1 copy]

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### **Hero's Journey References**

**'Follow the Ancient Path: Body/Soul/Spirit Transformation on the Camino de Santiago,'**

Mary Elizabeth Baldrige, 2018, Amazon, (Out of print ~ mine was purchased second hand via Amazon, December 2022, NZ \$17.41 including postage.)

This is a guide to the Camino utilising the three stages of the Hero's Journey: separation, transformation, re-integration. Unlike conventional guidebooks this one is focused on the inner journey as the notional pilgrim walks from Oviedo to Santiago de Compostela along the Primitivo. The guide includes physical, mental and spiritual practices and fourteen daily readings from saints, mystics, and philosophers who are in some way associated with Spain or the Camino.

One of the few Camino books I've come across focusing on the Hero's Journey and the Game of the Goose.

**'Alexander John Shaia, 'Returning From Camino, - A must-read for walking the Camino!'**

Camino Café, You Tube, [58 mins].

This discussion includes his pilgrim mentoring on his pilgrimage tours of 60 days so that Camino life becomes a habit, and his mentees don't collapse into the rat race of time once home, - that they become aware - there is Time.

The discussion included the reasons for writing and the salient messages in his seminal book **'Returning From Camino,'** which I consider to be essential reading for every pilgrim. He also discusses the Camino as 'Rite of Passage' and as a 'Hero's Journey.'

A great companion for the book.

**Returning from the Camino: An Outer & Inner Journey - Alexander John Shaia,**

Americans on the Camino, YouTube, [58.31]

A ZOOM presentation to the Americans on the Camino network in 2022.

This presentation compares Joseph's Campbell's Hero's Journey with Shaia's Right of Passage and The Four- Path Journey.

This is really excellent.

**Adam Wells on Travelling Through...**The London Podcast ~ 6 October, 2020, [45.19].

**020 The London Camino –** The London Camino – Adam Wells talks about 'The Hero's Journey,' and 'AdamWells.com'

Covers the life background of Adam Wells, his history with Spain, walking the Camino in April 2011. Briefly covers aspects of the Hero's Journey and his transition into a Life Coach. There is mention of his free webinars.

NB There has been academic disquiet with Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey concept. Some say it is simplistic and not a good fit with folklore. Others claim the Heroine's Journey has different stages, focusing on internal development. Check Wikipedia as a starting point.

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### Information Overload Conundrum

Has consideration been given to the possibility of doing too much research prior to leaving for your first/next Camino? What do I mean by this? Isn't this an odd thing to say for a group dedicated to providing information and support to aspiring and returned pilgrims?

An essential aspect of the inner journey is facing trials and tribulations while making the outer, physical journey. If these are all sorted prior to travel, or by internet while walking how will the Camino magic happen? How will the necessary learning occur?

So what is realistic preparation? Knowledge of basic things like footwear, packs, and pack weight, and guidebooks

is essential if pilgrims are to complete the journey, and in good shape. Things like albergue and trail etiquette, and rituals like carrying a stone to place at Cruz de Ferro are also good to know. Watching movies like 'The Way,' reading pilgrim memoirs, and YouTube videos prior to walking may heighten expectations and lead to disappointment. Our group though is a great source of information for returned pilgrims trying to make sense of their experiences, and sorting information for subsequent Caminos.



**Image;** Walking the Camino Mozarabe desert trail through the Sierra Nevadas was a challenge!

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### Article

#### Taking a Closer Look!

#### John Brierley's Guide to the Inner Camino, 'A Pilgrim's Guide to the Camino de Santiago.'

Not every pilgrim is enamored by the late John Brierley's guidebook. A number opine that he should just get on with providing the facts. And yet there it is on the front cover for all to see, '***A Practical and Mystical Manual for the Modern Day Pilgrim.***'

So how does he go about achieving his goal of equipping the pilgrim for their inner journey? In 'Notes to the 16<sup>th</sup> Edition,' Brierley mentions the research of Nancy Frey (Pilgrim Stories Christchurch City Libraries) into the rise of connectivity and the effects this might have on our pilgrimage.

'This constant connectivity with our familiar **outer** world can keep us disconnected from the expansiveness of our **inner** world. This disconnect is multi-layered. It can diminish our relationship to each passing moment, the camaraderie of our 'Camino family' and the connection to our divine essence.' John Brierley.

He goes on to say that dependence on external aids to avoid facing our fears and of stepping outside our comfort zone, limits our opportunities for self discovery.

'Imagine who we might meet in the space created by letting go of these distractions.' John Brierley.

I think the above two quotes are amongst the most important pieces of writing I have read in connection with the Camino!

In the **Preparation** section there is a subheading **Preparation – Inner: Why am I doing this?**

Here in 3 pages Brierley suggests that prospective pilgrims spend at least as much time on Inner Journey preparation and he suggests a mental and emotional checkup prior to departure, includes a Self – Assessment Inner Waymarks checklist, and cautions about some risks.

The practical guide has 33 stages, each begins with an inspirational quotation, an introduction to the day's Practical Path and one for the Mystical Path. For each Mystical Path paragraph he usually posits a question. He might direct our attention to a medieval carving, or exhort us to see beyond the obvious. This is followed by a Personal Reflection where he often relates an experience he encountered somewhere on that day's journey.

At the end of his guide Brierley concludes with a Returning Home: *Reflections...* p 266), Brierley provides an explanation for the book's subtitle, and how it arose out of a personal existential crisis and the urgent need for time and space to reflect on the purpose of life and its direction. It is recommend that time is taken to read these sections before during and after your Camino. Perhaps these signposts will be of some assistance on your inner Camino!

## References

### YouTube

'John Brierley – The Inner Journey + Bringing the #camino home,' The Camino Café Podcast, 2023, [57.01]. An excellent discussion covering all the bases.

### Podcast

John Brierley, 6 August, 2019, [56 min ], My Camino - the Podcast.

### YouTube

A search reveals at least 12 interviews with John Brierley. A key message is that there is not one 'correct' way to walk the Camino. It's that the choices we make will determine the kind of experience we have thus influencing the outcome.

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## Article

### Utilising the Christian Heritage Available on the Camino Journey

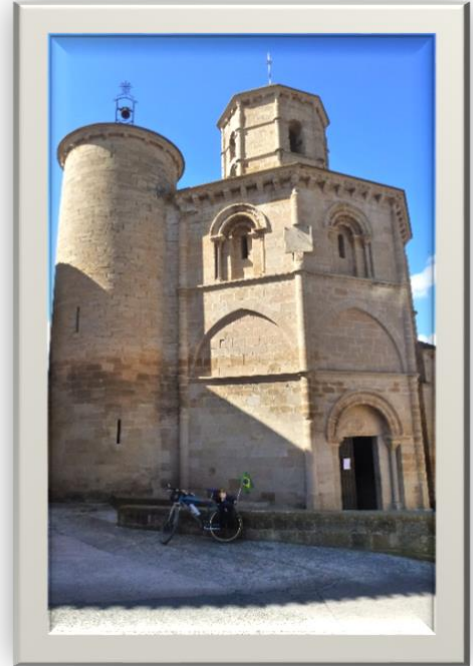
#### Before Walking:

- Check out references to memorable churches, places like convents, monasteries with religious orders on the Camino,
- Seek out the availability of accommodation in convents etc with singing, blessings, pilgrim sharing,
- Before leaving home seek out a spiritual mentor (see Alexander John Shia, 'Returning From Camino.')
- Investigate the place of ritual as a threshold to engaging with God,

- Receive a blessing before departure?
- Obtain a first stamp from the local cathedral in your credential if the originating stamp space is empty.

### **During Your Pilgrimage:**

- Attend pilgrim blessings, especially Roncesvalles (early dinner),
- Wayside crosses, and church bells – watch/listen out for, use as a signal to bring back to mindfulness.
- Observe sacred art,
- Listen to music in churches,
- Chapels/churches, reflection, Gregorian chants, pilgrim blessings are available at the conclusion of many masses,
- Candle lighting and remembering loved ones
- Experience the stillness of cloisters,
- Attend mass especially in little villages, become immersed in the sound of elderly women singing unaccompanied,
- Reflect on the sacred in quiet places,
- Enjoy the beauty of the landscape,
- Seek and mindfully touch the stones of ancient ruins,
- Visit open churches to seek out representations of St James, take time for reflection, and expressing gratitude and special churches Torres de Rio, Eunate,
- Carrion des Condes – Join singing nuns,
- Mass - Rabanal del Camino Mountain village Benedictine monastery, Gregorian chants, Retreat available,
- See God in the actions of others, eg. Acts of kindness,
- Seek out the stillness of the pre-dawn while experiencing a sunrise.



**Image:** Church at Torres del Rio **After:**

### **At Santiago de Compostela;**

- See Santiago as the “turning point.”
- Attend mass in English,
- Receive a blessing from Father Manny (available to non-Catholics - Cathedral and Pilgrim chapel at Pilgrims' Office,)
- Spend time in session with sisters from the Faithful Companions of Jesus located above the Pilgrim Office. (R6) This can assist with the transition to normal life. There in a relaxed environment pilgrims share their thoughts, memories and reflections regarding their journeys.

### **Once home;**

- Attend your home church service for thanks giving for safe return if appropriate,
- Work with mentor to unpack your Camino/experiences.

**Reference:** ‘An Article about the Spiritual side of the pilgrimage,’ [caminodesantiago.me](http://caminodesantiago.me)

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### Things to Do in: Valenca/Tui

Valenca is the last town in Portugal for those walking the Portuguese Central route. Across the Rio Minho following a short walk is the city of Tui. (See Brierley guide.)

#### Valenca

- Follow the waymarks through the old quarter to visit the Fortaleza and look over to Spain.
- Stroll through the colourful streets
- Walk through Portas da Coroad a the main entrance to the fortress town.
- Cross the bridge and take advantage of the photo op provided by the 'Espana' sign on the side of the road.



#### Tui

- Visit Catedral de Santa Maria dating from 1120
- Spend time in the medieval cathedral cloister
- Look back across the Rio Minho to Portugal.

**Image:** Looking from Portugal towards Spain.

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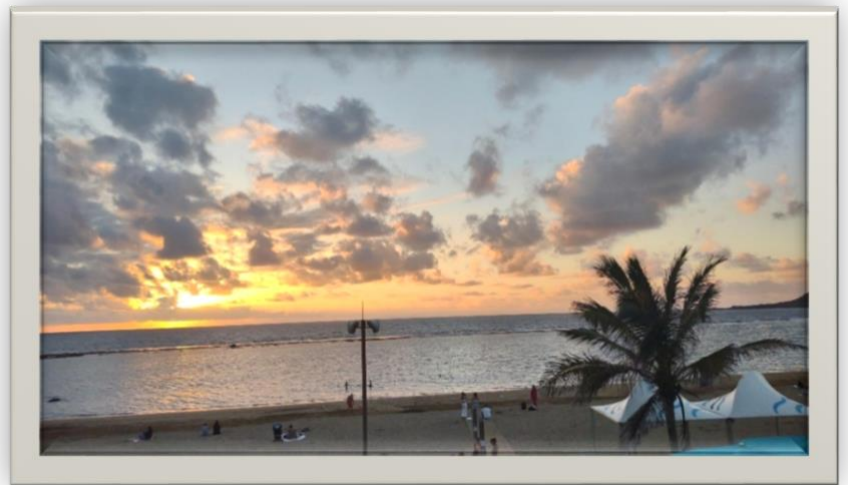
### Camino Story

#### A Seven Night Post Camino Indulgence

Anywhere exotic with a beach would do. The origin of the flight had to be Santiago de Compostela airport though. Las Palmas sounded exotic enough. Now was it located in the Mediterranean? A quick Google revealed it was in the Canary Islands which is off the coast of Africa. Perfect!

And a bonus, there was a direct flight to Madrid, my point of departure. A review of Airbnb listings resulted in accommodation at Las Canteras beach and right on the promenade directly opposite the sea. But was the sea warm? I'd had enough of the freezing Atlantic at Finisterre! From my balcony I could see people wallowing in the water.

Surely a good sign. On average I had 5 swims per day. There was a supermarket around the corner, and I managed a daily beach walk before the heat set in.



On two occasions I made the journey by bus to Playa del Ingles which has almost 3 km of golden sand, clear water and good wave action. All in all a great way to recuperate after two months walking.

**Image:** Sunset from my balcony, Las Canteras beach, Las Palmas, Canary Islands.

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### Camino Tip

#### Walking Proactively

Really listen to your body. Remove your footwear immediately if something is not right. Check for a pebble, or sock wrinkle. If there is a hotspot cover it with tape.

**‘Listen to your Body on the Camino de Santiago and Avoid Injury,’** robscamino, YouTube, [6.46]

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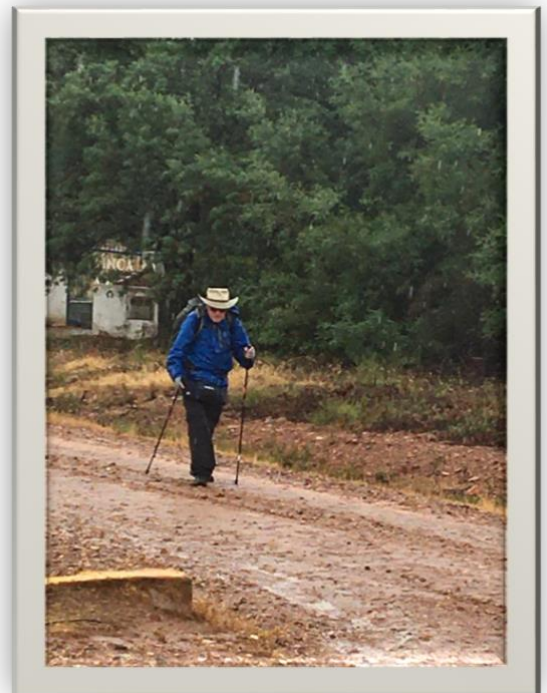
### Camino Poetry

#### Pilgrimage

Early morning cold, and shadow  
envelopes the pilgrim in crisp, cool air.  
Glints of sunshine appear as dawn breaks.  
Jackets and gloves are shed  
wide brimmed hats are donned, the order of the day.

Positivity and cheerfulness  
are the hallmarks of the peregrino.  
‘Buen Camino,’ greetings lift the spirits  
of giver and receiver as those with rapid gait blaze past.  
A break for water, a rest on a convenient rock, or bench  
revives strength and determination,  
and maybe a lifelong friendship is kindled.

Open churches provide an oasis of peace,  
and allow for the giving of thanks  
for a safe journey.  
Distant shapes assume recognisable form  
as today's destination gradually fills the landscape.  
Good fortune, a bed awaits!



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**Image:** A pilgrimage along the Via de la Plata.

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### Reviews

#### Books

**‘Pilgrimage, A Medieval Cure for Modern Ills,’** Dave Whitson, (2022), Christchurch City Libraries, [3 copies]

Dave made his first pilgrimage on the Camino Frances in 2002. He has written 3 Camino guidebooks, and hosts The Camino Podcast, an occasional podcast which has pilgrimage as its focus. This volume is a synthesis of different pilgrimages and sources from across the globe. Highly recommended as is his podcast.

**‘Lessons: Losing Twenty-first Century Fears on an Ancient Pilgrimage,’** Deborah Terra Weltman, (2022), Kindle, (US \$7.20)

Although published in 2022, Deborah walked her Camino in 2011, the year of her 60<sup>th</sup> birthday. It takes 86 pages to alight on the Camino.

Deborah Weltman interviewed on YouTube regarding her book, '**Lessons: Losing Twenty-first Century Fears on an Ancient Pilgrimage**', and also the concept of 'Pilgrimage Mindset,\* heroscaminos.com

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### **Previous Newsletter Articles Relating to the Inner Journey**

Article: Threshold and Liminality on the Camino de Santiago, Vol 2. No. 1.

Article: 'The Camino as a Path of Mindfulness, Vol 2. No. 1.

Featured Article: The Camino as a Rite of Passage Vol. 2. No. 4. And The Camino de Santiago – Reasons for Walking ~ A Trek, Adventure or a Pilgrimage?'

[Back copies of the newsletter have been archived on our website. [www.chchcamino.net](http://www.chchcamino.net)]

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'A quest of any kind is a heroic journey. It is a rite of passage that carries you to an inner place of silence and majesty and encourages you to live more courageously and genuinely.' Denise Linn



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