

## Jesus is the Way and the Fruit of Pilgrimage

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In the summer of 2017 I walked four weeks of the Camino del Norte from Irun to Ribadeo (approx. 630 kilometres) in Northern Spain. Last summer I was able to finish the last 200 kms from Ribadeo to Santiago de Compostela and walk onwards to Muxia and Finisterra (another 120 kms to the coast or the point where one literally can't walk any further). I started this journey as an FCJ novice trying to find out whether religious FCJ life was really for me.

Most of the novitiate is lived within a community which provides for all one's basic needs, closely supervised by the novice directress, who gives input, topics to reflect on and spiritual guidance. The pilgrimage is a different type of experience, as it involves being stripped to the bare essentials with nobody to rely on. It can be a tremendous treasure when one is able to give oneself fully to this experience. Years ago I had walked part of the Camino with a group of FCJ sisters and young adults, but this time I embarked on this pilgrimage journey alone. The only but very real teacher is Jesus who is the Way, the Camino.

For a long time the idea of pilgrimage appealed to me. It seemed like a great adventure: walking in nature, meeting strangers, not knowing where to spend the night and carrying everything needed on your back. Several people had told me before about their experiences and what a life changing experience it had been for them. Pilgrimage was surrounded by mystery, and I wondered what it would do to me: would my body be able for it? Would I like it and be able to cope with the uncertainties? Would I be lonely and, most importantly, would it deepen or strengthen my relationship with God?

Continue reading Sr Els' pilgrimage story in the [Weaving One Heart: Contemporary FCJ Voices](#) blog of the FCJ Sisters



*A marker with the distance after two days walking: still 787 kms to Santiago.*



“ Untuk mempunyai Nama ini, Sahabat Setia Yesus, aku akan memberikan segalanya, segenap diriku. ”

*Marie Madeleine d'Houët*

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## Sahabat Setia Yesus

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