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ROAD TO EMMAUS

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PILGRIMAGE PRAYERS AND BLESSINGS ALONG THE VIA SANTIAGO

The following translation of the pilgrim blessing service is based on a Latin medieval rite dated 1078 from the Missal of Vich Cathedral, Barcelona, Spain. At the Abbey of Roncesvalles, the Compostela pilgrimage's major stepping-off point in eastern Spain, a modern Spanish version of the service is used at the end of Mass for the blessing of pilgrims.

Pilgrim Blessing Service

Priest: Our help is in the name of the Lord.

Pilgrim: Who made heaven and the earth.

Priest: The Lord be with you.

Pilgrim: And with thy spirit.

Priest: Let us pray.

O Lord, whose Word makes all things holy, we beseech Thee to bless these emblems, satchels, scrip, and staffs to be used on this pilgrimage. May those who carry them arrive safely at their journey's aim and end, the shrine of St. James the Apostle. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Pilgrim: Amen

Opposite: Interior of Church of Santa Maria Orreaga-Roncesvalles, where pilgrims are blessed to begin their walk to Santiago de Compostelo.

Presenting the Pilgrim's Satchels and Scrip

Priest: In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, shoulder these satchels and scrip which bear the necessities for your pilgrimage. May the fatigue of bearing them expiate your sins, so that, forgiven, you may reach the shrine of St. James full of courage, and when your pilgrimage ends that you may return home filled with joy. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Pilgrim: Amen

Presenting the Staff

Priest: Receive this staff as support for the journey and your pilgrim's striving so that you may defeat the enemies fighting against you and arrive safely at the feet of the Holy Apostle.

Pilgrim: Amen

Presenting the Shells and Other Emblems

Priest: Receive these shells and medals as signs of your pilgrimage. With God's grace may you conduct yourselves as true pilgrims throughout your journey and reach your aim, the shrine of the Holy Apostle James, and gain indulgence from Christ. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Pilgrim: Amen

Blessing the Pilgrims

Priest: Lord Jesus Christ, through the Apostle Paul Thou hast taught us that we have no lasting city on earth and need always to seek the heavenly city. Hear our prayers for these pilgrims that we now commission. May the Holy Spirit breathe his grace into their hearts; may He enliven their faith, strengthen their hope and feed the flame of their love. Let their pilgrimage be made in the true spirit of penance, sacrifice, and expiation. May the Holy

Spirit purify their minds from every evil thought, defend their hearts, bestow upon them the constant help of his protection so that they safely arrive at the aim of their journey, and by means of this pilgrimage, show themselves, at their life's end, meriting entrance into the heavenly Jerusalem. Thou who dost live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever.

Pilgrims: Amen.

Priest: May the Lord guide your steps and be your inseparable companion throughout your journey.

Pilgrims: Amen.

Priest: May our Lady of Roncesvalles grant you her motherly protection and defend you against all dangers of soul and body. Through her intercession may you arrive safely at the end of your pilgrimage.

Pilgrims: Amen.

Priest: May St. Raphael the Archangel accompany you throughout your journey as he accompanied Tobias and ward off every contrary or troublesome temptation.

Pilgrims: Amen.

Priest: And may Almighty God bless you, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Pilgrims: Amen.

Priest: Go in the peace of Christ

Pilgrim's Prayer to St. James

An ancient prayer said by priests and pilgrims at the end of the Pilgrim Mass celebrated in churches along the Camino de Santiago:

All: O Lord God, Who led thy servant Abraham out of the land of the Chaldeans and watched over him in his wanderings, Thou who didst guide the Hebrew people in the desert, we ask Thy care for us Thy servants who, for love of Thy name, make this pilgrimage to Compostela. Be a companion for us along the path, a guide at crossroads, strength in weariness, protection against danger, shelter along the way, shade against heat, light in the darkness, Comforter in discouragement, and firmness of our intentions; that through Thy guidance, we may arrive unscathed at the end of our journey, and enriched with grace and virtue, return safely to our homes filled with salutary and lasting joy. Through Christ Jesus, Thy Son, Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever.

Priest: May the blessing of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, descend upon you.

All: Amen. Apostle Santiago, pray for us. Santa Maria, pray for us.

Priest: May the Lord direct your steps by his providence and be your inseparable companion on the Camino.

All: Amen.

Priest: May the Virgin Mary grant you her maternal protection, defend you from all dangers of soul and body, and may you be found worthy to arrive safely at the end of your pilgrimage beneath her mantle.

All: Amen.

Priest: May the Archangel Rafael accompany you on the Camino as he accompanied Tobias, and protect you from every injury and obstacle.

All: Amen.

All: Holy Apostle James, chosen among the chief disciples, you were the first to drink the cup of the Master, and are the great protector of pilgrims. Make us strong in faith and joyful in hope on our pilgrim journey and along the path of Christian life. Sustain us so that we may finally reach the glory of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen. ✦

With thanks to Inna Belov for her translation of earlier Spanish versions of these services.