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Finding our Camino

By TJ Bogan
For The Catholic Moment

How we find our way in life is a question that many have asked before they have walked the Camino de Santiago. When someone says they are going to walk the Camino people don't always realize what that means, but there are some pilgrims from the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana that have experienced the answer they might not have known they were looking for.

Walking the Camino can be a hard thing for a lot of people to fathom; long, hot and rainy days—especially if you walk the entire 800km—but even walking a shorter distance on the Camino is to see God's presence in each pilgrim you meet and an accomplishment like no other.

Elva Reyes, a parishioner from the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Pastorate in Carmel, walked the Camino to celebrate her daughter's college graduation in Madrid. However, the main reason

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Father Jeff Martin, Parochial Vicar of the St. Boniface/ St. Lawrence Pastorate in Lafayette, celebrates Mass on the Camino with pilgrims from the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana.

(Photo by TJ Bogan)

Striving to be disciples in Christ

By Katharine Sanders
For The Catholic Moment

This past March, Bishop Timothy Doherty announced after prayerful discernment, the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana would shift from a mission programmatic in nature, to a mission focused on service and leadership.

"As we seek to fulfill this Mission of Service and Leadership, let us not forget our mission as disciples in Christ, which is to bring all souls to Him," Bishop Doherty said in his March statement.

Striving to be disciples in Christ is part of the mission and vision for the diocesan Uniting in Heart 2030 Pastoral Plan. In doing this, the diocese seeks to increase collaboration and decrease isolation. Creating this collaborative

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The Serra Club of Kokomo recently hosted their annual Priests vs. Seminarians softball game at Kokomo Municipal Stadium on June 14. The priests beat the seminarians 22 to 5. View more photos from the game on pages 9-10.

(Photos by Chad Krockover/Krock Photography)

FOCUS ON: SUMMER RETREATS

'You have a vocation to bring people to Christ'

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community, means providing both clergy, staff and laity with not only physical resources, but support in both Church management and development.

On June 18, Chancery and Catholic Pastoral Center (CPC) staff members gathered at the Saint Joseph Retreat & Conference Center in Tipton for a day focused on both Mission and Service, to gain a better understanding of how their talents and gifts given to them by God can be used while navigating change within the Church.

This "Mission of Service" day was led by Jim Lundholm-Eades, a senior consultant for the Catholic Leadership Roundtable. The Leadership Roundtable is an organization that is made up of laity, religious and clergy, working together to help promote best practices, accountability and development of the Catholic Church in the United States.

"I'm here because you've gone through significant change," Eades said. But, the Church has been undergoing change for decades now.

"In the 1960s we [the Church] expanded the bureaucracy of the Church; that's when Chancery's became big," he explained.

In the late 80s and early 90s, there was a huge downsizing of this bureaucracy because the Church couldn't sustain what was built.

"What we [the Church] did then, was [it] tried to do the same work with about one-third of the people," Eades said. "We then started to change and say, 'we can't do everything anymore, we have to make priorities.' We could no longer afford to be all things to all people. What I'm trying to say is that change in ministry is normal now."

Eades' background is in diocesan work. Before his 18-years in pastoral-centered work, he was the director of Catholic Charities for his previous diocese and he has also worked in schools as both a teacher and administrator.

"My background is something I found I never would



Jim Lundholm-Eades, a senior consultant for the Leadership Roundtable, spoke to diocesan staff on June 18 at the Saint Joseph Retreat & Conference Center in Tipton about "Mission and Service" in the Church. The Leadership Roundtable is a nonprofit organization that specializes in promoting best practices, accountability and development in the Church.
(Photos by Katharine Sanders)



Staff participated in a day of reflection, small group discussion and prayer. Together, they navigated through the topics of relationship building, best practices, leadership support and evangelization.

have planned," he said, "and I have found that people in ministry don't plan a career, it happens according to God's call."

While change in dioceses across the United States is normal—whether it be in office structures or procedures—it still can create dissonance and disintegration within work in ministry.

It's important to remember that our job, as disciples in Christ, Eades said, is to progress and move the Church forward.

"We are people of the Resurrection," he said. "We have an Easter. We do rise again. This causes faith."

The "Resurrection" and "Easter" stage that Eades spoke about is an example that he shows to help others articulate the current state of their diocese and/or parish. The stages occur in cycles, beginning first with Dissonance, Disintegration, Dark Nights and Resurrection.

"Our job is to move the diocese in whatever stage it is in towards the Resurrection," he explained. "It doesn't matter what your role. You have a vocation to bring people to Christ."

Diocesan staff spent time reflecting on Scripture, small group discussion and prayer. Together, they navigated through the topics of relationship building, best practices, leadership support and

evangelization. Highlighting these topics will further help staff enhance their gifts and talents to better support parishes within the diocese and beyond, helping all fulfill the mission of the Church.

"This meeting is to help us focus on what our mission is and what it is that God needs us to be doing," Bishop Doherty said. "We are never perfect. That doesn't excuse short-comings, but it is something we deal with and it is part of our maturing."

This meeting, Bishop Doherty described as a micro-synodality, as staff wasn't just presented with ideas but could exchange and listen together as a group.

"There's a grace in this and I'm grateful," he said addressing all staff. "I am looking at people in terms of the totality of their lives and as [they are] called and chosen by Christ. That includes each of you. That's a good thing to remind ourselves of today, and everyday, as we gather because the Holy Spirit invited us here."



FOCUS ON: SUMMER RETREATS

Pilgrim describes walking the Camino as 'a gift that has been given to us by God'

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she found was to deepen her faith and love for God; to listen and be silent. She said this experience can help put life into perspective.

"Life can be so complicated, but it is so simple if we let it be," she said. "We just need to let the noise between our ears vanish and listen to God's voice instead of our own."

Reyes said she started on her 28-day Camino journey lost and afraid of the busy highway on the lower route from France. She was looking for pilgrims that she wouldn't see for days to come. In these moments, she knew she had to place her trust in God to let her find the way to St. James' tomb in Santiago.

Along the way, she encountered trials. For example, she struggled finding her way in the early mornings because she did not have a headlamp. While walking one early morning in darkness, a lady appeared from what seemed to be out of nowhere and helped shed light on her way. Together, they shared the light they both needed.

Another challenge she faced was the load on her back, and not knowing how much to bring with her; she was told by another pilgrim she would not make it to Santiago.

"For a few days, I continued to unload my backpack and leave belongings for others to use until I could manage the weight on my back," Reyes explained.

When she finally arrived in Santiago, after praying for silence to be closer to God, she found herself surrounded by the noise of hundreds of pilgrims that she didn't know existed—all sharing space she once was alone in.

"The noise led to my eardrum rupturing and having to go to the doctor," Reyes explained.

The rupture led her to become deaf in her ear for the remainder of her trip. This silence was what she wanted—to get rid of the noises that impeded her Christian life—but she didn't want the pain and suffering.

"Looking back, it was what God wanted me to experience to be able to appreciate his love for me, and to be silent with him in my heart and mind," Reyes

others, which was very humbling and moving," Gillen said. "Many days I waked in pain and thanked God that I was able to offer it up to others. I had my belief that all things are possible through God, and the Lord reaffirmed that in a very concrete way. I even witnessed a man who barely knew me, spend many mornings treating my feet so that I could persevere. I saw Jesus in that man and am forever grateful."

Ryan Hillman, part of the St. Lawrence/St. Boniface Pastorate, who leads a men's group where a lot of the pilgrims came from, said that the Camino can act as a reminder of how much we can be transformed if we let God work in our lives. He said the act of detachment from the outside world is sometimes all we need. He was one of the 15 pilgrims on this journey to Santiago.

"Having to simplify the things we packed helped because we had to carry everything, which called us to remember to refocus on detachment," Hillman said. "Detachment from self and many others that keep us from growing closer to Christ and to rely on his love for me."

Hillman reminded us all that to pray, suffer, laugh and share experiences with each other is to be thankful for our Catholic faith and the overpowering amount of God's love for us. "This is a gift that has been given to us by God."

"Santiago succeeds admirably in conveying its message: 'Go out there to Holy places in God's beautiful world to grow in relationships with others and with God,'" he said.

TJ Bogan, who helped lead these pilgrims this past May, is planning on leading another Camino this September. Bogan has traveled the Camino four times. The next callout for this trip will be a virtual meeting on July 11 at 6:30 p.m., where people can sign up or receive more information about the Camino. Please contact info@followmycamino.com for more information.

said.

Father Jeff Martin, Parochial Vicar of the St. Boniface/St. Lawrence Pastorate in Lafayette, recently shared a similar love for the Camino with 15 other pilgrims this past May. They embarked on their journey on May 19 and returned on May 31. Their experiences are a reminder of the noises between our ears that prevent us from listening to God more intently.

All men, from various churches in the diocese, embarked on long days—walking at night and early mornings—through the cold and rain, to embark on their journey in trusting in both God and each other to find their way along the Camino.

Don Stinson of the St. Boniface/St. Lawrence pastorate said, "My primary reason for walking the Camino was that I wanted a deeper relationship with God. I felt like I needed to grow closer to him, and that a pilgrimage walk was a great way to get started on it."

These men spent time in Oviedo, along the Camino Del Norte, another route that started the Camino centuries ago. They walked for eight days, praying over 300 intentions through the rosary, Divine Mercy Chaplet and in Mass. Sometimes, the group began with a quick Hail Mary before they would start to walk for miles on the Camino.

Among the pilgrims present was Mick Gillen. Gillen walked the Camino asking for the Lord to cure his wife and daughter of their health issues. However, along the Camino, he was struck with blisters all over his feet less than halfway through.

Even this would not stop him from glorifying the Lord. He received an answer to his prayers when his wife called and told him she had done something physically that she had not done in a very long time—just walk. His pain was lessened by the love God had shown him on the Camino.

"I carried with me the prayer requests of dozens of

CAMINO FRANCES - LEON
SEP 13TH - 29TH

WALK THE CAMINO!
Join us as we walk in the footsteps of devout pilgrims from centuries past on an exciting journey of faith. Admire the beautiful cities and magnificent churches of Spain, immersed in prayer and fellowship.

Find out more by signing up for the virtual meeting on July 11th, 2024

Sign up online!
FollowMyCamino.com/callout

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