

Selections of a larger journal...



OLG Teacher Excellence Award  
2010-2011  
Camino de Santiago, Spain

## Day 1: Leon to Astorga

Leon is a mix of old, medieval town and new, modern city. The old town is surrounded by a stone wall, built in the medieval ages. The town is dedicated to Saint Isador (patron saint of farmers) because of his devotion to the people of the town. There is a small, simple church devoted to Isador (la Capillia del Isador). Also in Leon is a huge Catholic Cathedral – Catedral de Nuestra Senora. The cathedral is made mostly of stained glass. It actually has more stained glass in it than walls or marble.

On the first day of riding we did a short ride from Leon to Astorga (about 40km). As I rode through the villages & countryside, I had time reflect on the many ways we God wants us to really enjoy our lives. God's hope for us is that we really have fun with everything in our lives. That we are filled with the joy of his love, and see the beauty of all of Creation. In order to do that, we have to slow down and actually LOOK at everything around us – the smallest of leaves, the tiniest bugs; the biggest of mountains & trees; the smiles of strangers, the laughter of friends.

I realized that often I find myself speeding along without really seeing the gifts of creation. On the Camino, God called me to slow down and really love ALL of Creation. I had the chance to be truly awed by the landscape, the people, and the communities I encountered along the road...and I was so grateful for the gift of life, and the gift of Creation.

Reflection/Sharing: List the things in Creation that you absolutely LOVE (people, places, critters, natural wonders, pets, etc.). For what are you grateful today?

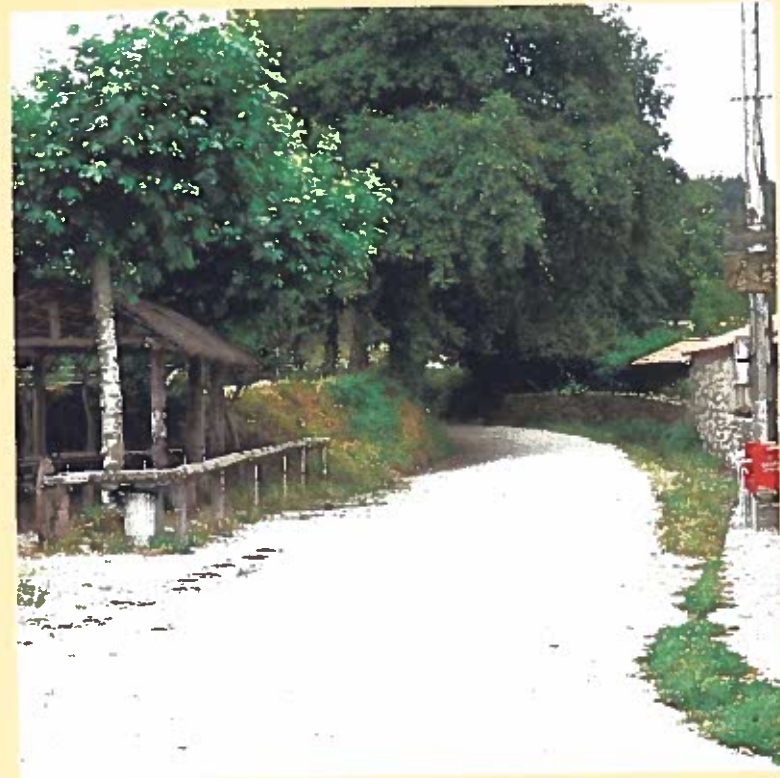
Prayer: Thank you, God of Creation, for ALL of the beauty of the world! Help us to always recognize your love for us in the amazing gifts you have given to us. Help us slow down so that we may see & hear the beauty of the world around us.

This and other reflections were shared with students at OLG as they experienced their own "walk"





San Nicolas Church, Portomarin  
The church was moved, stone-by-stone, from its original riverside location, to the hilltop town of "new" Portomarin, so the river could be flooded to provide water for crops.



A roadside cafe provides pilgrims respite during their journey.



May you always hear the voice  
of God, and know that your  
voice is heard (even in the  
howling winds).

May you find  
peace in your heart.

May you  
recognize the presence of God  
in all things.

May your spirit  
soar with joy & laughter finding  
beauty in the small things  
around you.

May loving people  
always surround you.

And may  
your life be one, great...  
Buen Camino...good journey!

Amen