

Sabbatical Report

Name: Lindsey Pearson

Date of sabbatical: May-July 2019

The primary activity of my sabbatical was to complete the Camino de Santiago and through that to learn more about vulnerability and hospitality. I intended to reflect on God's call on my life and ministry, including my current ministry here in Beeston, and to explore what might be my next step in ministry.

I intended to walk the Camino as a pilgrim, by myself carrying all I need and not booking ahead. I accomplished this taking about 6 weeks, including travel there and back. I found it to be a very rewarding experience which I am still digesting. I expected it to be challenging: physically, emotionally and spiritually and I hoped to learn more about my faith and myself, and it met my expectations.

Along the way I reflected on the nature of community; I met people from all over the world and we became a community through our common endeavour. This made me think of my church back home and the challenges we face and how we can build community within the church and also within the wider community. It affirmed for me that God was calling me to return to my parish and to continue my ministry there. As one of my aims was to reflect on my future ministry this was an important point of learning.

I purposely chose to walk the Camino on my own. A phrase I had heard in my preparations when asking about how everything worked was 'the Camino will provide.' That phrase became for me 'God will provide.' And I found that God did indeed provide and when I was worried about whether I would find a bed or people to talk to, God both calmed my worries and provided for my needs.

I think I became braver on the Way. I left behind some of my English reserve and that enabled deeper conversations to be had. I also tried to become less judgemental, learning that each person was doing the Camino in the way that was right for them - my way was not the only way or the best way - it was simply the right way for me.

I also learnt about living simply, and the 'baggage' we carry through life. I hope those lessons will not be forgotten as I return to my parish.



I reflected on the experience through a Facebook page, which kept me in touch with folk back home. Those reflections and more are already finding their way into my preaching, and I will be sharing the experience with my folk shortly. I have found that they have appreciated sharing in the experience and I hope it will be a blessing to them as well as me.

Right, at the 100km to go point. I'm carrying 'Camino Ted' - given to me by a member of my church, and a little reminder of those back home.

Left on arrival in Santiago.

I could say a huge amount more and would be happy to provide more detail if you would like me to. I am extremely grateful to all those who have enabled me to do this through their support, and the grant from St George's helped to pay for the travel to and from the Camino and the costs of doing it. Thank you for your support.



Lindsey Pearson
August 2019