**Pilgrimage Prayers and Poems**

# A PILGRIM BLESSING

(*The text of a medieval rite dated 1078 preserved in the Missal of Vich Cathedral, Barcelona, Spain. At the Abbey of Roncesvalles the blessing is used at the end of the Mass for the blessing of pilgrims passing through.)*

Blessing of the Pilgrims Emblems

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

R: *Who made heaven and earth.*

C: The Lord be with you.

R: *And also with you.*

Let us pray.

O Lord whose word makes all things holy, bless we beseech you these emblems, rucksacks and staffs to be used on this pilgrimage. May all those who carry them arrive safely at the shrine of St. James the Apostle, the objective of their journey. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R: *Amen*

Presenting the Rucksacks

(*When presenting the rucksacks the priest says: “In the name of the Lord”)*

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, shoulder these rucksacks which will help you during your pilgrimage. May the fatigue of carrying them be expiation for your sins, so that when you have been forgiven you may reach the shrine of St. James full of courage, and when your pilgrimage is over, return home full of joy. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R: *Amen*

Presenting the shells and other emblems

Receive these shells and medals, as signs of your pilgrimage. With God’s grace may you behave as true pilgrims throughout your entire journey and be able to reach your objective, which is to visit the shrine of St, James and gain indulgences. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

*R*: Amen

Blessing the Pilgrims

Lord Jesus Christ, you taught us through the Apostle St Paul that here below we have no lasting city and must always seek the heavenly city. Hear our prayers for these pilgrims we 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. May they thus make their pilgrimage in the true spirit of penance, sacrifice and expiation. May the same spirit purify their minds from every evil thought. May he defend their hearts and give them the constant help of his protection so that they can reach the objective of their journey safely and by means of this pilgrimage they are now starting merit to come one day to the heavenly Jerusalem. You who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

R: *Amen*

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

*R*: Amen

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

R: *Amen*

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

R: *Amen*

And may almighty God bless you, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

R: *Amen*

Go in the peace of Christ

*Translated from a French version of the Latin original by Brother David Leo fsc.*

*Copies available from the Confraternity of St James* [*www.csj.org.uk*](http://www.csj.org.uk)

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**Pilgrim's Prayer to St. James**  
**An ancient prayer that comes at the end of the Pilgrim Mass said along the Camino de  
Santiago:**

**"**O God, who brought your servant Abraham out of the land of the Chaldeans, protecting him in  
his wanderings, who guided the Hebrew people across the desert, we ask that you watch over us,  
your servants, as we walk in the love of your name to Santiago de Compostela.  
  
Be for us our companion on the walk,  
Our guide at the crossroads,  
Our breath in our weariness,  
Our protection in danger,  
Our albergue on the Camino,  
Our shade in the heat,  
Our light in the darkness,  
Our consolation in our discouragements,  
And our strength in our intentions.  
  
So that with your guidance we may arrive safe and sound at the end of the Road and enriched  
with grace and virtue we return safely to our homes filled with joy.  
  
In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.  
Apostle Santiago, pray for us.  
Santa Maria, pray for us.

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**A different version of the Roncesvalles Blessing**

**"**Oh God, You who took up your servant Abraham from the city of Ur of the Chaldeans, watching over him in all his wanderings.  
  
You who were the guide of the Hebrew people in the desert, we ask that You deign  
to take care of these your servants who, for love of your name, make a pilgrimage  
to Compostela.  
  
Be a companion for them along the path, a guide at crossroads, strength in their  
weariness, defence before dangers, shelter on the way, shade against the heat, light in the darkness, a comforter in their discouragements, and firmness in their  
intentions, in order that, through your guidance, they might arrive unscathed at the end of their journey and, enriched with graces and virtues, they might return safely to their homes, which now lament their absence, filled with salutary and lasting joy.  
Through Jesus Christ Your Son, Who lives and reigns with You, in the unity of the  
Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

May the blessing of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, descend on you.

All: Amen.

Priest: May the Lord direct your steps with his approval, and be your inseparable companion on the entire Camino.

All: Amen.

Priest: May the Virgin Mary grant you her maternal protection, defend you in all  
dangers of soul and body, and may you merit to arrive safely at the end of your pilgrimage  
under her mantle.

All: Amen.

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

All: Amen."

"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, receive this pouch, habit for your pilgrimage, so that, castigated and corrected, you hasten to prostrate at Saint James' feet, where you yearn to arrive and, after having completed your journey, you come to us delighted with the help of God, who rules over the world without end.  
Amen.

Receive this staff as support for the journey and your efforts during your pilgrimage so that you are able to defeat the throngs of enemies and thus arrive safely at Saint James' feet and, after having completed your journey, you come to us delighted with the consent of the same God, who lives in and rules over Heaven without end.

Amen. II

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

R: Who made heaven and earth.

C: The Lord be with you.

R: And also with you.**"**

**Let us pray.**  
**"**O Lord whose word makes all things holy, bless we beseech you these emblems, rucksacks and bikes to be used on this pilgrimage. May all those who use them arrive safely at the shrine of St. James the Apostle, the objective of their journey. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen**"**

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**PRAYER**  
**"**All-powerful God, you always show mercy toward those who you love and you are never far away for those who seek you.

Be with your servants on this pilgrimage and guide their way in accord with your will.

Be a companion for them along their journey, a guide at crossroads, strength in their weariness, defence before dangers, shelter on the way, shade against the heat, light in the darkness, a comforter in their discouragements, and firmness in their intentions, in order that, through your guidance, they might arrive unscathed at the end of their journey and, enriched with graces and virtues, they might return safely home; through Jesus Christ Your Son, Who lives and reigns with You, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.**"**

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**Together we say the Pilgrims ' Prayer:**

**"**St James, Apostle  
Chosen among the first  
You were the first to drink  
The Cup of the Master  
And you are the great protector of pilgrims;  
Make us strong in faith  
And happy in hope  
On our pilgrim journey  
Following the path of Christian life  
And sustain us so that  
We may finally reach the glory of God the Father  
Amen**"**

## **Padre Nuestro** (Our Father in Spanish)

Padre nuestro, que estás en el cielo,

Santificado sea tu Nombre;

Venga a nosotros tu reino

Hágase tu voluntad en la tierra comoc en el cielo.

Danos hoy nuestro pan de cada dia,

Perdonna nuestras ofensas,

Como tambien nosotros perdonamos

A los que nos ofenden;

No nos dejes caer el la tentacion,

Y libranos de mal.

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# The pilgrim prayer - *Thomas Merton*

My Lord God,  
I have no idea where I am going.  
I do not see the road ahead of me.  
I cannot know for certain where it will end....  
Nor do I really know myself,  
and the fact that I think I am following your will  
does not mean that I am actually doing so.  
But I believe that the desire to please you does  
in fact please you.  
And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.  
I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.  
And I know that if I do this,  
You will lead me by the right road, though   
I may know nothing about it.  
Therefore will I trust you always though  
I may seem lost in the shadow of death.  
I will not fear, for you are ever with me,  
and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.

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###### **St. Gildas 5thC Pilgrims’ Prayer**

In health may I and all of my companions

Safely arrive with no harm or injury –

May my boat be safe in the waves of the ocean,

My horses safe on the highways of the earth,

Our money safe as we carry it with us

To pay due heed to our poor necessities.

May our enemies fail to do harm to us,

However evil the counsels which inspire them,

In the eternal name of Christ our Master,

May my roads all lie plain before me,

Whether I climb the rugged heights of mountains,

Or descend the hollow depths of valleys,

Or trudge the lengthy roads on open country,

Or struggle through the thickets of dense forest:

May I walk always in straight ways and shining

To longed-for places . . .”

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**Prayer for Saint James**

O glorious Apostle, Saint James,  
who by reason of thy fervent and generous heart was chosen by Jesus  
to be witness of His glory on Mount Tabor, and of His agony in Gethsemane;  
thou, whose very name is a symbol of warfare and victory:  
obtain for us strength and consolation in the unending warfare of this life,  
that, having constantly and generously followed Jesus,  
we may be victors in the strife and deserve to receive the victor's crown in heaven.  
Amen.

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**In defence of pilgrimage:**

**St Jerome**: “We do not worship, we do not adore for fear that we should bow down to the creature rather than to the Creator, but we venerate the relics of the martyrs in order the better to adore Him whose martyrs they are.”

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**Thomas Merton**:

in *Mystics and Zen Masters*:  
"Our task now is to learn that if we can voyage to the ends of the earth and there find ourselves in the aborigine who most differs from ourselves, we will have made a fruitful pilgrimage. That is why pilgrimage is necessary, in some shape or other. Mere sitting at home and meditating on the divine presence is not enough for our time. We have to come to the end of a long journey and see that the stranger we meet there is no other than ourselves - which is the same as saying that we find Christ in him.”

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"The geographic pilgrimage is the symbolic acting out of an inner journey. The inner journey is the interpolation of the meanings and signs of the outer pilgrimage. One can have one without the other. It is best to have both." ~Thomas Merton. 1964

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Who can free himself from achievement,

And from fame, descend and be lost

Amid the masses of men?

He will flow like the Tao, unseen...

Such is the perfect man:

His boat is empty.

Tomas Merton:

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**“Blessed are those whose strength is in you, who have set their hearts on pilgrimage.”  (Psalm 84:5)**

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But in moments of silence, of meditation, of enlightenment and peace, one learns to live in the atmosphere of solitude even in the midst of crowds. ...One opens the inner door of his heart to the infinite silences of the Spirit, out of whose abysses loves wells up without fail and gives itself to all. In His silence, the meaning of every sound is finally clear.

Thomas Merton. Love and Living.

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**Pope John Paul II** said,

"To go in a spirit of prayer from one place to another, from one city to another, in the area marked especially by God's intervention, helps us not only to live our life as a journey, but also gives us a vivid sense of a God who has gone before us and leads us on, who himself set out on man's path, a God who does not look down on us from on high, but who became our travelling companion."

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**Blessing and Prayer for the Pilgrim:**

Dear Lord Jesus Christ, who brought your servant Abraham out of the city of

Ur protecting him through all his travels and wandering, and who was the

Hebrew nation's guide through the desert, we ask you to bless these children of yours who, for the love they bear your name, are on a pilgrimage to Rome.

Be for them their companion on the way, their guide at the cross-roads, their fortress in danger, their shelter on the road, their shade in the heat, their light in the darkness, their comfort in weariness, their consolation during sadness, and their resolve in intentions.

So that through your guidance they arrive safely and unhurt at the end of their road, and, enriched with grace and spirit, secure and filled with happiness return home healthy and full of worthy virtues.

Apostle Peter, pray for us Holy Virgin, pray for us

# “We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience.”

[**Teilhard de Chardin quotes**](http://thinkexist.com/quotes/teilhard_de_chardin/)©

(**From Saint Anthony's Messenger, Aug. 7, 2002)**  
  
1. Blessed are you, pilgrim, if you find that the Camino opens your eyes to the unseen.  
2. Blessed are you, pilgrim, if what concerns you most is not arriving, but arriving with the others  
3. Blessed are you, pilgrim, when you contemplate the sights of the Camino and find them full of names and of new dawns.  
4. Blessed are you, pilgrim, because you have discovered that the true Camino begins at its end.  
5. Blessed are you, pilgrim, if your backpack empties of things as your heart doesn't know where to fit so many emotions.  
6. Blessed are you, pilgrim, if you discover that a step backwards to help another is more valuable than one hundred forward without awareness of those at your sides.  
7. Blessed are you, pilgrim, when you have no words to give thanks for all the wonders in every nook of the Camino.  
8. Blessed are you, pilgrim, if you search the truth and make of your Camino a life and of your life a Camino, after Him who is the Way, the Life, and the Truth.  
9. Blessed are you, pilgrim, if in the Camino you meet yourself and make yourself a gift of time without hurry so that you may not neglect the image of your heart.  
10. Blessed are you, pilgrim, if you find that the Camino is rich with silence, and the silence is rich with prayers, and the prayers are encounters with the Father that awaits you.  
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All-powerful God, you always show mercy toward those who you love and you are never far away for those who seek you. Remain with your servants on this holy pilgrimage and guide their way in accord with your will. Shelter them with your protection by day, give them the light of your grace by night, and, as their companion on their journey, bring them to their destination in safety.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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**Peace Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi:**

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace;

where there is hatred, let me sow love;

when there is injury, pardon;

where there is doubt, faith;

where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;

and where there is sadness, joy.

Grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;

to be understood, as to understand,

to be loved as to love;

for it is in giving that we receive,

it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

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**The Padre Pio Foundation: Prayer for Pilgrims**

Three Powerful one liners: (Known as "The Pilgrim's Prayer." It was prayed during the Middle Ages, silently, mile after mile, day after day, by pilgrims on their way to the Holy Land.)

"Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner."

"Sacred Heart of Jesus, Thy Kingdom Come."

"Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in Thee."

(Jesus encouraged Sister Faustina and the whole world to pray "the Chaplet of Mercy." Jesus says to us: "I desire to grant unimaginable graces to those Souls who trust in My mercy.")

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### *Reflection on a Pilgrimage*

Living stones, Father, we are as You have made us - living stones for You - not walls of stones for rejecting others, but rather stepping stones to Your Kingdom. May we come to rejoice in each others’ uniqueness - gifts and weaknesses. There Lord, You will have Your way with us, for it is only through You and by You and in You that we have our true being, not for our sakes, but for Your glory.

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Travellers

*"The breviary [in 1908] contains Prayers for travelers that have received the consecration of the Church and of centuries -- the "Itinerary," which priests seldom fail to recite for themselves and their companions as often as they begin a journey. As it may seem rather long for general use, we give an abridgment for the use of those who may wish to know, and learn it.*

May the almighty and merciful Lord direct us on our journey; may He make it prosper and maintain us in peace. May the Archangel Raphael accompany us along the way and may we return to our homes in peace, joy, and health.

Lord, have mercy on us! Jesus Christ, have mercy on us! Lord, have mercy on us!

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***One Step Now***

Pilgrim steps, I pray  
are but one at a time today.  
For if more might be required  
I will see it as not desired  
to even begin the way in prayer  
less I fall into some despair.  
But God asks only this somehow  
for me to take one step with my God now.

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