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# THE LINE

Newsletter of the Convocation Of The West  
OF THE MISSIONARY DIOCESE OF ALL SAINTS

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Warriors on the Way departing the Cruz de Ferro at early morning nautical twilight September 18th, 2018.  
Photo Credit: Steven G. Rindahl

## Upcoming Clericus 2020

The Anglican Convocation of the West will be holding their annual Clericus in Mesilla, New Mexico, February 18, 19 and 20. We are providing this early notice because, originally, we discussed holding the Clericus this October in order not to interfere with the Diocesan Synod. However, a lot of the clergy found this too difficult and our guest speaker could not be with us then.

Our guest speaker will be the Reverend Canon Mark Eldredge. Canon Eldredge will be speaking on church revitalization. We will have more information for you on this later.

## Warriors on the Way to healing

In the last weeks of September 2018, Fr. Steven G. Rindahl led a group of Combat Veterans on a PTSD and Moral Injury Healing Pilgrimage on the Camino de Santiago. The pilgrimage was organized by Warriors on the Way® and funded by generous donations from many people and organizations ensuring that every veteran on pilgrimage was fully sponsored. Traveling the roughly 180 miles between Astorga and Santiago de Compostela on the Camino Frances we started each day with a Celebration of the Eucharist and a reflection on healing to begin the day's journey.

Pilgrims have been traveling to the Shrine of Saint James (Santiago) since AD 812 when the remains of St James were discovered in the "Field of Stars" (Compostela). Known as the Camino de Santiago or the Camino or, among many English speakers, "The Way," the

Camino leads pilgrims to the Cathedral de Santiago de Compostela where the Sepulchur of St James is below the main Altar. It is safe to say that millions of pilgrims have walked the Camino since 812. Over the past few years, there has been a resurgence of interest in the pilgrimage and record numbers are walking "The Way." During the peak of the season in 2018 more than 2,000 pilgrims per day arrived at the Cathedral.

For our combat veteran pilgrims, each day was a new adventure. Beginning in the relatively rolling foothills of Astorga and climbing through the gorgeous mountainous region of Galicia we faced the physical challenge of walking 15 or more miles per day. Early in the pilgrimage, we arrived at the Cruz de Ferro (the Cross of Iron). It is customary to carry a stone which represents burden(s) you

want to leave at the foot of the Cross. The pilgrim leaves the stone at Cruz de Ferro representing leaving that burden with Jesus – literally at the foot of the Cross. Today there are so many stones at the foot of the Cross that there is a retaining wall to prevent them from spilling into the nearby road. We arrived before daybreak, shared the burdens we wanted to leave behind, celebrated the Mass, and then, just as the early morning twilight began, left our stones – our burdens – at the foot of the Cross.

Of course, we were nourished by the hearty pilgrim menus on offer all along the route. More importantly, our souls were nourished each morning with the Body and Blood of our Lord in the Eucharist. Sometimes this was done in open air environments such as the base of the Cruz de Ferro just before the sunrise. Other times it was in gorgeous church buildings where the sacristans allow priests who are leading pilgrimages access to their Altars. One such experience was at the Church in O'Cebreiro – the site of a Eucharistic miracle in the year 1300. It was such a privilege to celebrate the Mass at the very spot of the miracle.

Healing was the intent and healing was achieved. One pilgrim who had not slept through the night was sleeping normally within a few days into the pilgrimage. Another pilgrim spoke of how weighed down he felt ever since returning from combat. Once he left those burdens at the foot of the Cruz de Ferro, he felt the weight lifted. An additional pilgrim explained, while sitting in the Catedral de Santiago that he had not gotten what he expected but what he did receive was much more valuable. Beyond the positive verbal feedback, there are the stats.

Each veteran participating in the Warriors on the Way pilgrimage did a PTSD assessment before, during, and after the pilgrimage. Using the PCL-5 (a validated test instrument for monitoring symptom change during treatment) to determine any change of severity in their PTSD symptoms, the pilgrims demonstrated clinically significant improvements. The average reduction of the total symptom severity score was a reduction of 70%. The pilgrim who demonstrated the lowest amount of change experienced a still significant reduction of 30%. What made the Warriors on the Way pilgrimage so successful? It is surely a combination of factors. There is significant peer-reviewed research which demonstrates the PTSD Healing efficacy of multiple facets of the design of this pilgrimage. Simply spending time outdoors has been shown to reduce symptoms. Being with other veterans with the same or similar experiences tends to reduce symptoms. Engaging in positive

spiritual practices has been proven to reduce symptoms common to PTSD (What can be more positive than prayer and the Eucharist?). And, lastly, physical exercise and exertion have been demonstrated to mitigate PTSD symptoms. The Camino provides all of the above combined into one. There is a saying – The Camino may not always give you what you want, but the Camino does give you what you need.

We are now preparing for the 2019 pilgrimage. In the last 2 weeks of September 2019 we will once again lead combat veteran's struggling with PTSD and Moral Injury find healing on pilgrimage. Please pray for these vets that Christ makes His presence known to them, they respond to His grace, and their souls are healed. Once again, we want to make sure that every veteran is fully sponsored so that economic conditions do not prevent a veteran from participating in this healing opportunity. We also need people, parishes, and businesses who can sponsor or help sponsor a Combat Veteran on the pilgrimage. All donations are Tax-Deductible according to IRS 501c3 regulations.

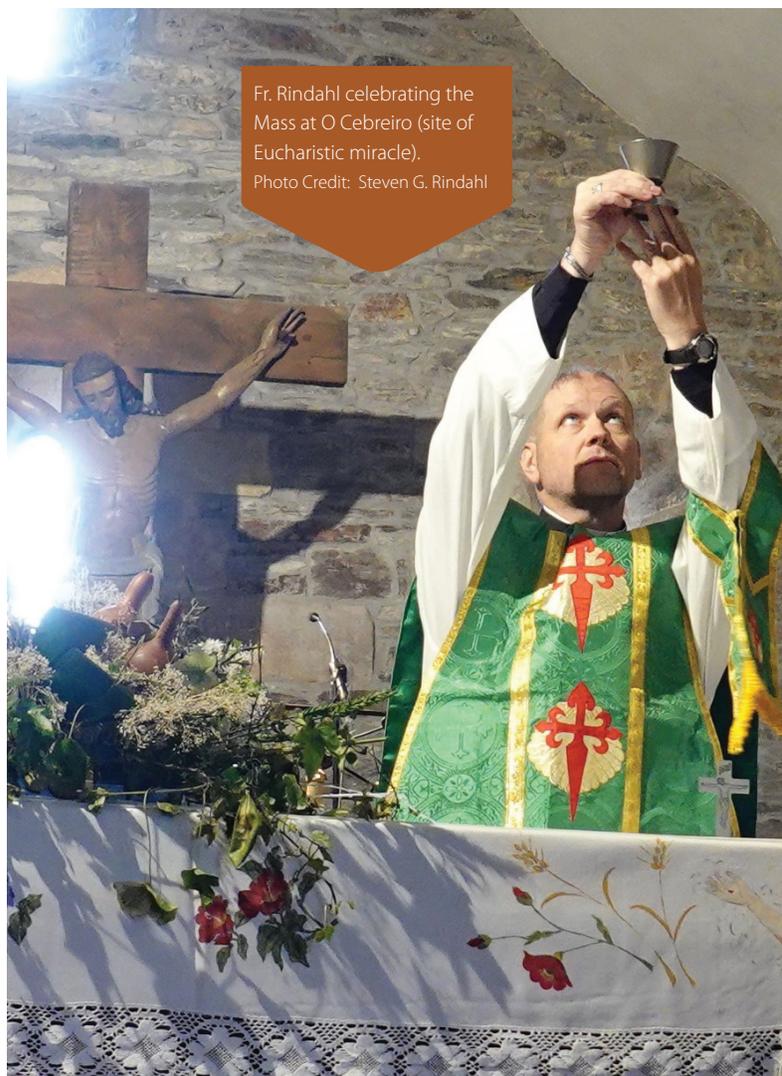
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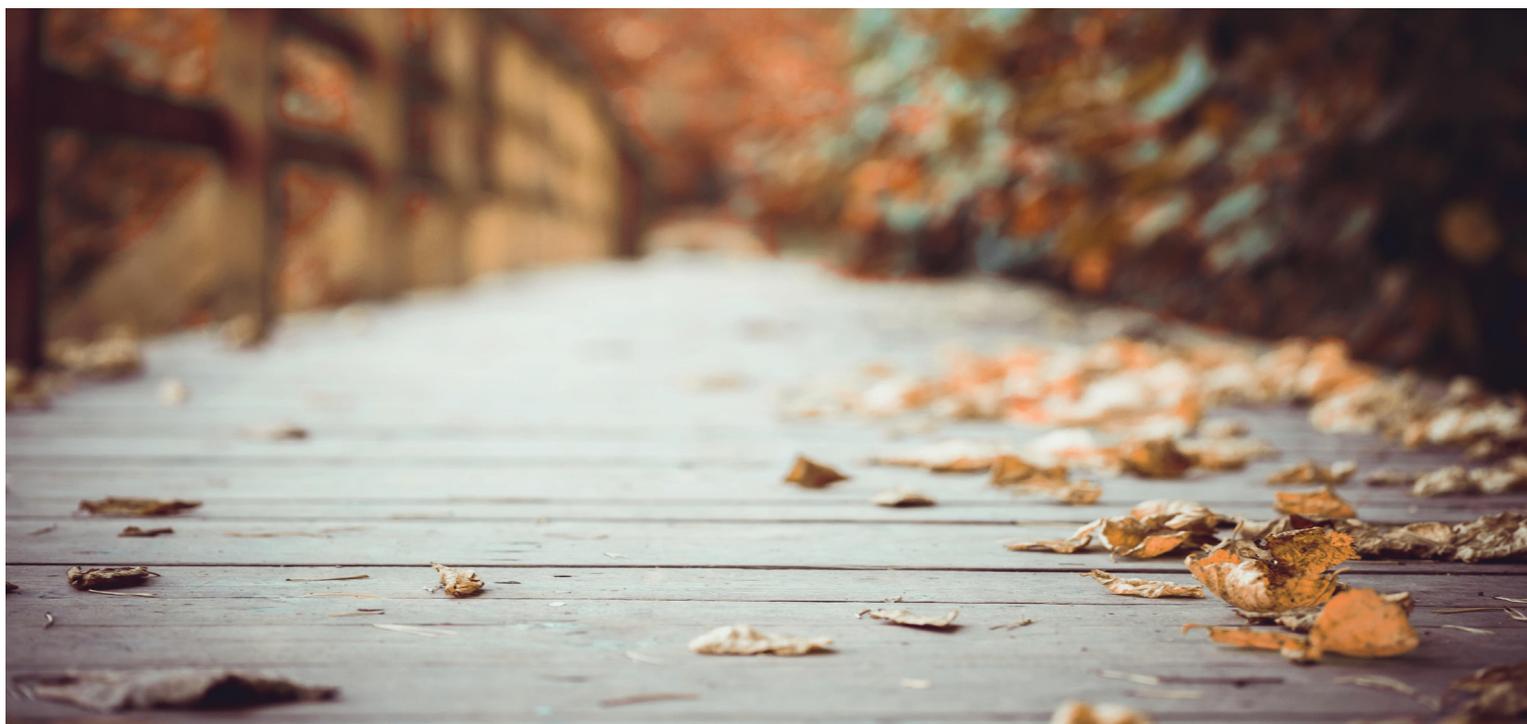
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Warriors on the Way 2018, Group  
Photo at the Cathedral de Santiago, September 27th, 2018.  
Photo Credit: Steven G. Rindahl



Fr. Rindahl celebrating the Mass at O'Cebreiro (site of Eucharistic miracle).  
Photo Credit: Steven G. Rindahl



## A new season with a new focus.

By Vicar-General Michael Penfield

I have a confession to make: I am now a retired teacher. That means that for the first time since the mid-1990s, I only have one “job”. And that “job” is Vicar-General. Of course the word “job” has to be within quotation marks because, being Vicar-General is not just a job; it is also a calling. Although I was chosen, elected as it were, by my fellow clergy to perform this administrative position, it also is part of being a priest. I am called to serve. I am called to follow the instructions of God as well as my Bishop and serve all the people within this Convocation. In other words, I am a pastor for the priests, deacons, and laity within our Convocation. And, as such, being a Vicar-General does not follow the normal rules of a job.

I have a second confession to make: for a long time I have felt pulled in two directions. There was so much I wanted to do or knew I should be doing, but couldn’t do because of the demands of teaching at a public school. I knew well Jesus’ admonition that no servant can serve two masters, and yet I tried. Well, no more. You now have me on a full-time basis. And this brings me to the purpose of this article. Because of my newfound freedom, I will be more hands-on and more reachable.

Of course, this reminds me of the musical, “Fiddler on the Roof”. In it, one of the characters approaches the rabbi and asks, “Rabbi, is there a prayer for the Czar?” And the rabbi retorts, “Yes, of course. ‘Dear Lord, please bless the Czar and keep him as far away from our village as possible.’” I have often used

this quote to describe the opinion of some Anglican parishioners when it comes to Bishops. But it is equally applicable to Vicar-Generals.

In other words, it has occurred to me that some of you may view my announcement with trepidation. You may fear a micro-managing Vicar-General who will interfere with your church functions. However, I hope this article will allay your fears. I truly see my role as servant and pastor, and for that purpose, I have decided to make our Convocation more dynamic.

The first thing I will start doing this month is calling each of the rectors of the Convocational churches once a month and to the other clergy as needed. It is very important that I become more of a pastor to the pastors instead of an administrator. We are so far-flung and some of us may feel quite isolated. I am hoping a call once a month will keep us connected and keep me more in tune with each of you and the churches that you serve. This should not be dreaded but rather should be seen as a call from a friend. We can talk about issues you may be having or not. But it will be your opportunity to speak with me about anything that may be on your mind. And, in the end, I want everyone to know that they are not alone. We are connected.

The second item is something I already have started doing, and that is my annual visit. Now, here you will have to excuse me. After 19 years as a student and 21 years as a teacher, my

## Welcome to Our New Newsletter!

This is our very first publication of our new newsletter, and we are very excited about it. However, a newsletter is only as good as its circulation. So please share! Print it; put it in your narthex (if you have one); and let's get it out there to all our parishioners.

Also, I would like to thank Doug Bennett who is our new publisher. Thank you Doug for all your hard work and professionalism.

concept of a year is NOT a calendar year. It is a school year. So, during the "year" (i.e. August to June) I will visit each church regardless of size or location. And for those who are in struggling missions, do not fret about financing my trip. Just like the early church, I see our resources as pooled. Those who can compensate do so. Meanwhile the tithes of the churches to the Convocation pay for the trips to our missionary and/or struggling churches.

But the third thing is that I would like to do is start compiling information regarding resources such as educational and musical resources. We may be able to start a web-resource so that churches can list things they have used – programs that have worked and those that have not. Until that is up and running, however, we can use part of our time at clericus for putting out resources to one another.

Our mission as a church is to reach an unbelieving world and to show them what the love of God truly is. We are to be an evangelical, missionary convocation. We are to show, through the beauty of our catholic worship, a glimpse of heavenly things. And we are to give an opportunity to all sinners to be in communion with God, a mystical communion unfathomable by most modern people. And I am here to serve you in any capacity I can to help each of your churches in this great mission.

Although I have listed three things, there are more. But if you think of some thing that you would like to see, please tell me. Speak to me. After all, I am your servant.

Amen.

## Upcoming Synod

The Missionary Diocese of All Saints will be holding their 2020 Synod in Ocean City, Maryland March 26, 27 and 28. This is an extremely important Synod. We will be electing a new Bishop Coadjutor who will be leading MDAS after Bishop Ilgenfritz retires. Therefore, we need to see as many as you as we can!

Additionally, the Anglican Convocation of the West will be holding their Meeting of the Convocation at the same time and the same location. Our meeting will be the morning of March 26. This means that those members of the Convocation who will be attending need to arrive by the evening of March 25.

We hope to see you all there!

