

**The Spirituality of Pilgrims:
A Study of an Australian Experience of *El Camino de Santiago de Compostela***

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ABSTRACT

The Spirituality of Pilgrims: A Study of an Australian Experience of El Camino de Santiago de Compostela

This research investigation into the spirituality of pilgrims arises from the intense mobility that characterizes contemporary society and from the new emphasis that is now being placed on pilgrimage. In the face of these trends the Holy See's Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People has called for appropriate pastoral responses based on "a clear theological foundation and *praxis*" whereby pilgrimage can be "transformed into an experience of deep and mature faith."

The specific contribution that this thesis makes to developing the many-layered pastoral response to contemporary pilgrimage for which the Pontifical Council calls, has been to document, codify and analyse the particular stories of mobility recounted by a sample of twenty-three Australian Catholic pilgrims who had walked the *Camino de Santiago de Compostela*. All twenty-three had been interviewed after completing the *Camino* pilgrimage, while three of these had also been interviewed before commencing, and again in real-time while walking the *Camino* itself.

The objective of this research, therefore, was to discover what is expressed "first hand", as it were, through the pilgrims' experiences and responses, and to bring this to expression. An iterative engagement with the literature of pilgrimage was central to this task, as was locating the discussion within a broader range of theological, psychological and cultural reference.

The first outcome was the development of a foundational framework showing the constitutive elements of the human person in her/his journey through life. This framework, which corresponds to the Church's insight that "pilgrimages symbolise the

experience of the *homo viator* who sets out, as soon as he leaves the maternal womb, on his journey through the time and space of his existence,” provides an overarching structure within which this research into the spirituality of Australian pilgrims on the *Camino* could be conducted.

A comprehensive mapping exercise was then undertaken, focussing on the pilgrims’ actual experiences of the *Camino*. Language was selected and codified, leading to the presentation of a second framework, a provisional taxonomy of pilgrimage, by which the pilgrims’ experience could be assessed, and then employed to formulate pastoral solutions for the future. Finally, concepts drawn from structural, evolutionary psychological theories generated new insights into how the pilgrims changed – during and after the *Camino*. This led to the construction of a third framework which, taking the form of a staged, holistic, re-generative model, can also serve in the development of a suitable pastoral response, helping people to embrace the opportunities that pilgrimage offers to break out of their “embeddedness” in constraining patterns and to move into new ways of living.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project has taught me about the life-journeys of twenty three wonderful Australians through the lens of pilgrimage. I was given the rare privilege of being invited into the deep intimacy of their search for their God by way of *El Camino de Santiago*. I trust that I have reported their stories truly. More importantly, I will always hold them dear to my own heart and in my prayers for their deepening of my own journey.

It has been an honour to work over such an extended period under such fine academics as Dr Joyce and Dr Canning. More recently I have been given the pleasure to engage with the gifts of scholarship and priesthood of Rev Anthony Kelly CSsR.

Finally, I wish to thank the person with whom I have loved sharing my life, Mary, and my children and grandchildren, Rachel, Genevieve, Paul, Felicity, Lily and Isla.

This thesis contains no material which has been submitted for examination in any other course, or accepted for the award of any other diploma, in any tertiary institution, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written to another person, except where due reference is made in the text.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Neil Harrigan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Neil Harrigan
1 December 2010

CONTENTS

RESEARCH TOPIC: The Spirituality of Pilgrims: A Study of an Australian Experience of *El Camino de Santiago de Compostela*

ABSTRACT

FRONTISPIECE: Christ the Pilgrim	1
CHAPTER 1: RESEARCHING A PILGRIM PATH	2
CHAPTER 2: TOWARD A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE DATA	32
CHAPTER 3: A PHENOMENOLOGY OF PILGRIMAGE	49
CHAPTER 4: THEOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL LANGUAGE OF PILGRIMAGE	61
CHAPTER 5: A LARGER FRAMEWORK OF THEOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL REFERENCE	84
CHAPTER 6: FROM EXPERIENCE TO INTERPRETATION: TAXONOMY OF PILGRIMAGE	147
CHAPTER 7: FROM INTERPRETATION TO LIVED SPIRITUALITY: DYNAMICS IN <i>ONEING</i>	205
CHAPTER 8: FUTURE DIRECTIONS	251
Epilogue: A Pilgrim's Way	264
References	265

Appendices	273
Appendix A: Information Letter to Participants	273-275
Appendix B: Questions for <i>the three</i> before during and afterwards	276-279
Appendix C: Questions for the twenty participants who have already walked the Pilgrimage	280-282
Appendix D: Consent Form (14)	283
Appendix E: Consent form (3)	284
Appendix F: Evidence of pilgrim (9) scrutineering	285
Appendix G: Evidence of pilgrim (8) scrutineering	286
Appendix H: Evidence of pilgrim (20) scrutineering	287
Appendix I: Evidence of pilgrim (4) scrutineering	288
Appendix J: Evidence of pilgrim (5) scrutineering	289
Appendix K: Example of transcript approach to data codification (9)	290
Appendix L: Example of transcript approach to data codification (4)	291-292
Appendix M: Section of the interactive matrix	293-294
Appendix N: Section of the matrix which relates to <i>the three</i>	295
Appendix O: Fowler’s model of stages of faith combined with his model of “recapitulation”	296
Appendix P: Kegan’s model of the constitutions of the self	297
Appendix Q: data matrix: Pilgrim codes, including lived <i>oneing</i>, and <i>the three</i> x taxonomy, General Dimension aggregations, specific pilgrim aggregations, and totals	298
Appendix R: External Scrutineer	299
Appendix S: Human Research Committee Approval	300
Appendix T: Varieties of Qualitative Research	301

FRONTISPIECE

Christ the Pilgrim



While still a little baby, Jesus is a pilgrim at the temple of Zion to be presented to the Lord; as a boy, with Mary and Joseph, he goes to his Father's house. His public ministry which takes place along the roads of his country slowly take the form of a pilgrimage towards Jerusalem which is portrayed, especially by Luke, as a long journey whose destination is not only the cross but the glory of Easter and the Ascension. His Transfiguration reveals to Moses, to Elijah and to the apostles his impending Paschal "exodus". The other evangelists, too, knew this exemplary itinerary, along which the disciple must walk: "If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me" and Luke specifies "every day".

Pope John Paul II, The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee

Picture: Christ the Pilgrim, Cathedral, Santiago de Compostela

CHAPTER 1

RESEARCHING A PILGRIM PATH

This thesis is entitled, “The Spirituality of Pilgrims: A Study of an Australian Experience of *El Camino de Santiago de Compostela*”. What, then, is being investigated, and why is it timely? How might such investigation be best conducted in view of the realities concerned – spiritual and psychological, cultural, geographical, and the highly personal experiences of all involved?

The scope of this research is bounded by four parameters:

- *El Camino de Santiago de Compostela* (hereafter, the *Camino*)
- Australian Catholic pilgrims on the *Camino*
- Experiences of the pilgrims: the spiritual dimension
- Construction of frameworks of interpretation

The material covered in this chapter is appropriately presented under the following five headings:

1. The *Camino* itself: history and Australian connection;
2. Rationale for the research;
3. Literature review: the state of the question;
4. Framing the research;
5. Julian of Norwich’s concept of *oneing*
6. Conclusion

We begin then with a description of the *Camino*, and the Australian involvement in it.

1. The *Camino* itself: history and Australian connection

This *Camino* is becoming well known in Australia. It is an ancient pilgrim trail predominantly in the north-east of Spain. Certain of its features make it suitable for an

investigation of how Australian Catholics experienced it and found it a meaningful journey. In this respect, Tony Kevin's *Walking the Camino*¹ is a useful reference.

In the present era there has been an exponential growth in travel in its many forms. Catholic pastoral concerns as documented in *The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee* see contemporary society as “characterised by intense mobility” (2).² The figures on travel by Australians³ paint a similar picture. More particularly, Australians find special meaning in travelling to places such as Kakadu, Uluru, Kokoda, and Gallipoli. The interest of the present research, however, is travel to the Holy City of *Santiago de Compostela* by walking the pilgrim trail, the *Camino*.

A second point of Australian interest for this research is theological and pastoral. In recent years there has been a consistent decrease in church attendance amongst Catholics in this country, as is fully documented in the research of Robert Dixon.⁴ How then does such falling off in institutional practice affect the spirituality of Australian Catholics – and the pilgrim participants in this research?

We shall have occasion to note the range of understandings and language in regard to the notion of “spirituality”. Clearly, there is a plethora of usages in this respect. The following statement, from *The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee*, suggests the particular spiritual perspective central to this research: “Pilgrimages, a sign of the condition of the disciples of Christ in this world, have always held an important place in the life of Christians” (3). The actual practice of pilgrimage, it is suggested, is an acting

¹ Tony Kevin, *Walking the Camino: A Modern Pilgrimage to Santiago* (Melbourne: Scribe Publications, 2007).

² Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, *The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee* (Vatican: Holy See, 1998). For ease of access for the reader, paragraph numbers have been shown enclosed in round brackets after quotations from *The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee*.

³ For an understanding of the reasons for, and levels of, movement by Australians, go to Ch. 5.

⁴ Robert E. Dixon, *The Catholic Community in Australia* (Adelaide: Open Book Publishers, 2005).

out of a basic condition of the Christian life itself. It is a movement toward a God-given goal, a journey through time and experience to the all-fulfilling destination.

This research project reflected on data collected first from three pilgrims in the course of undertaking the *Camino* in Spain, and then from the twenty others on the completion of the pilgrimage. The focus throughout was on Australian Catholics and on how they reported what they had experienced and how this related to their spiritual lives. In short, there are four quite fundamental considerations: being a human person, an Australian, an Australian Catholic, and having an experience of the *Camino*. Each of these sections provides the opportunity to define the project more clearly and to refine the categories employed in it. We begin, then, with the history of the *Camino* with special consideration of Australian involvement.

The *Camino* was selected as the topic of this research. Apart from the personal reasons emanating from the researcher's own experience (see below), is the richness of historical and spiritual associations embedded in this particular pilgrim trail, inviting exploration from many different perspectives. A comprehensive treatment of the *Camino* can be found in *Pilgrim Stories: On and Off the Road to Santiago* by Nancy Louise Frey, an anthropologist and author.⁵ Nancy has spent many years living and researching the *Camino*. At times she has lived at villages and cities along the way, interviewed pilgrims, and at times been a volunteer helping others as a *hospitalera* in some of the many *refugios* providing accommodation. The atmosphere of the *Camino* experience can be observed in the reflections of a pilgrim-author, Edward Mullins, who followed the trail

⁵ Nancy Louise Frey, *Pilgrim Stories: On and Off the Road to Santiago* (Berkeley: University of California, 1998).

from Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris to *Santiago de Compostela* as far back as 1974. He reports,

There is of course a deep spiritual need which the pilgrimage seems to satisfy, particularly for those hardy enough to tackle the journey on foot. There is something about walking, and walking a long distance, which can lift you out of your cares of the modern world and put you in touch with an older, quieter way of life. It is a cathartic experience that more and more people have come to value as the world becomes increasingly hectic. The Santiago pilgrimage offers an extra reward in that it is also a walk through history; each day you encounter some relic or some great monument that reminds you that you are treading in the footsteps of an extraordinary past, when millions of people walked the same journey – out of love, out of punishment, duty, fear, or out of simple blind faith. And this, even to the non-believer, is a deeply moving experience. It is a journey peopled by ghosts – the ghosts of great men, of paupers and criminals, minstrels and visionaries, stone masons and painters, saints and princes. All human life was once there, treading along that road.⁶

Such words capture the interests and direction of this research. For example, Mullins notes the deep spiritual need met by pilgrimage, the bodily aspects of walking, of being on foot, that sense of walking through history. These are deeply moving experiences – described as “cathartic”. His last sentence, “All human life was once there, treading along that road”, gives a sense of what has been experienced by many pilgrims, of the length and age of the *Camino*, and how it symbolises the immemorial human journey of life through time and space.

The cultural anthropologist and best-selling author of *Following the Milky Way: A Pilgrimage on the Camino De Santiago*, Elyn Aviva, walked the trail on various occasions – three times quite extensively – in the course of researching a dissertation topic on the phenomenon of modern-day pilgrimage in relation to the *Camino*. She lives in Sahagun, a city on the pilgrimage trail. The University of Sahagun is notable for its

⁶ Edwin Mullins, *The Pilgrimage to Santiago*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Signal Books, 2001), p. viii.

voluminous research on all aspects of the trail. In the introduction of her work, she argues that:

The Catholic Church and much of the scholarly literature assert that the *Camino* is a Christian pilgrimage road that began in the ninth century. When I began studying the *Camino*, however, I started meeting pilgrims who claimed to be walking other *Caminos*. Some said they were walking an ancient, pre-Christian route called the *Via Lactea*, a route that followed the Milky Way as it spreads itself over northern Spain.⁷

Her words suggest the possibility of viewing this particular pilgrim trail in relation to the *Camino* as an enduring human phenomenon. More generally, however, the *Camino* is regarded as a specifically Christian pilgrimage road. It began with the supposed rediscovery of the grave in 813 CE of *Santiago Apostol* (James, the brother of John) at Padrón, in Galicia, Spain.⁸ From that time it became a rallying symbol for Christian Spain. Some 800 years ago, in the medieval heyday of the pilgrimage, up to 250,000 pilgrims followed the *Camino* each year. As for the story of St James in Spain, Rev. Ian Palmer expresses it as follows: “Tradition has it that St James went to Spain. The story goes that he had little success in his evangelisation and so returned to Jerusalem. The New Testament tells us that he was beheaded by King Herod quite early on, in about 44AD.”⁹ The legend has it that his followers took the body and sailed through the Mediterranean where they landed at Padrón, Galicia, on the Spanish coast. His body was then forgotten for some 750 years until it was discovered by a hermit called Pelagius, in a miraculous way. And so the story continues: “The Bishop was called and a

⁷ Elyn Aviva, *Following the Milky Way: A Pilgrimage on the Camino De Santiago*, 2nd ed. (Boulder: Pilgrims' Progress Inc., 2001), p. xii.

⁸ See Chris Lowney, *A Vanished World: Muslims, Christians and Jews in Medieval Spain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 84-91. As well, for a better understanding of the richness of the cultural dimensions offered to the pilgrim on her/his journey, see David Gitlitz and Linda Davidson, *The Pilgrimage Road to Santiago: The Complete Cultural Handbook* (New York: St Martin's Griffin, 2000), p. xiv.

⁹ Rev. Ian Palmer, "Dancing with Shadows; Lines Written Along the Camino De Santiago," (Unpublished document, 2007), p. 2.

tomb with three bodies in it was found there. These bodies were immediately identified as belonging to Saint James and his followers.”¹⁰ With the miraculous discovery came increasing interest from the church and the state, resulting in the construction of a church and a small monastery. The momentum continued to build, in particular as “this opportunity was seized by the church as a rallying place to halt the spread of Islam and to assist in their struggle against the Moors.”¹¹ The site gradually took on two dimensions. It became a sacred place for pilgrimage, especially when the other two great pilgrim destinations of Rome and Jerusalem at various times became increasingly dangerous for the pilgrim. There have been times in the past when the trail to *Santiago de Compostela* was extremely popular; at other times, it came near to being abandoned altogether. In recent times, given the modern phenomenon of travel and the increased enthusiasm for pilgrimage, the site has come into favour again, and now enjoys the status of being officially recognised by the European Union. This research project, then, is one aspect of the renewed popularity of the *Camino*.

There are in fact a number of roads which converge on *Santiago de Compostela*, the most important by far being the *Camino Francés*. The main road to *Santiago de Compostela* enters Spain just north of Roncesvalles in the Navarre district of the Pyrenees. It then travels west for 750 kilometres to descend eventually on *Santiago de Compostela*. Pilgrims follow this road mainly on foot – some ride bicycles or horses – and some complete the full distance in one unbroken effort. Others undertake selected parts of it. Some go back year by year until they finish the whole way as they take one section at a time. A Tasmanian pilgrim, some years ago, spent three successive years of

¹⁰ Palmer, “Dancing with Shadows”, p. 9.

¹¹ Palmer, “Dancing with Shadows”, p. 10.

his annual leave undertaking various sections of the *Camino* until he finally entered *Santiago de Compostela*.

The road unfolds with multiple evocations. Some have speculated, as Aviva noted, that the trail was in use well before Christian times. Here, there are literary references to a pre-Christian times *Via Lactea* (the Milky Way), or the “initiativ” route marked by the goose and the gander, or again, some association with the city of Atlantis through the scallop shell and the alternative ending of the road at Cape Finisterre (the end of the earth).¹² There are the recent excavations at the Cathedral which have uncovered pre-Roman and Roman tombs, giving credence to the theory that the site was an ancient pre-Christian settlement as well as a burial ground.¹³ The road is dotted with churches, monasteries, Black Virgins, monuments, refuges, abandoned hospitals, garrisons, pilgrims, cafés, and the memories of occupations by the Celts, the Visigoths, the Moors, and incursions by Napoleon Bonaparte.¹⁴ The tapestry is so rich that Aviva was prompted to observe:

The *Camino* is a kind of palimpsest – a piece of parchment scraped almost clean and then reused. The *Camino* had been written over again and again, but the previous images, rites, and meanings have never been completely erased. They are still dimly visible beneath the surface.¹⁵

¹² For a wider appreciation of the detours and riddles in the lands and history of Spain, see Cees Nooteboom, *Roads to Santiago* (London: The Harvill Press, 1997), pp. 323-343.

¹³ Mullins, *The Pilgrimage to Santiago*, pp. 7-8.

¹⁴ For a comprehensive treatment of the cultural aspects of the *Camino de Santiago*, see Gitlitz and Davidson, *The Pilgrimage Road to Santiago*.

¹⁵ Aviva, *Following the Milky Way*, p. 18.



Map copied from the website of the Confraternity of St James, outlining the many choices of trail pilgrims may wish to take on the road to Santiago

Over time from its Christian beginnings, the number of pilgrims slowed. From the early 1980's, however, with the worldwide renewed interest in pilgrimage, the *Camino* has again attracted huge numbers of pilgrims. In 2004, a jubilee year for the pilgrimage site, up to 250,000 pilgrims, including this researcher and some 576 pilgrims from Oceania, were estimated to have been on the road, while some eight million people, travelling by various means, walked through the Cathedral doors. Today, *Santiago de Compostela* is regarded, after Rome and Jerusalem, as the third most popular Catholic pilgrim site.

The *Camino* pilgrimage has been attracting more and more Australians. In 2003, for the first time, the travel agency Harvest Travel organised a walking pilgrimage of the *Camino*, covering some 200 kilometres of the road with 28 pilgrims. The Archdiocese of *Santiago de Compostela* reports on Oceania, the smallest region concerned, that in 1999 – the first time figures were available – there were 119 pilgrims, then 792 in 2005, and 983 in 2008. For the Holy Year 2004, there were 577. The number of pilgrims from Oceania is thus accelerating year by year.

2. Rationale for the research

The idea for this research arose out of the writer's own experience, and hence it is appropriate briefly to intrude a personal note. In the large ecclesial and theological field, new questions were stirring on the significance of pilgrimages themselves, and of the pilgrim condition of human life itself.

The researcher and this project: a personal note

A motivation to undertake this research was the personal journey of the researcher in his quest to explore the spiritual significance of pilgrimage. This personal note suggests the background out of which this study emerged. At the same time it is a kind of foreword in regard to the content and concerns the direction of the thesis itself.

Ideas for this research project began to form when the writer walked the *Camino* as far back as 2002. Since that time I have returned on four occasions. I was encouraged to begin this project and began to formulate what the content and method might be so as to contribute to the developing area of pilgrimage studies. My experience and further reflection suggested new perspectives on the spiritual life itself, and how our

understanding of it could be re-orientated in today's world. Here the major factor was the influence of "movement" as I had experienced in my various travels. It meant living out a personal spirituality while "on the road". This in turn meant being exposed to other people and cultures in new or at least unpredictable circumstances, and so arose the need to grow in the ability to communicate with the other, and to integrate such a challenge into one's personal spirituality and habitual way of life. This is especially the case when one finds oneself in situations where one is divested of any status or control. For example, there was a major bomb scare on a flight to Europe during which I experienced in a dramatic way the company of people I did not know as we all found ourselves at the mercy of crucial decisions that the flight-crew had to make. Such an in-flight experience heightened the awareness of the quality and direction of my spiritual life.

When it came to communicate the experiences of the *Camino* and the deeper aspects of travel, it became clear that there was the lack of a language in which to communicate the spiritual dimensions of such experience, and that there was an absence of categories in which to frame the experiences involved so as to interpret or communicate them accurately. In other words, this project of interpreting a particular experience of pilgrimage began when I realised that I had little capacity to express what had happened to me personally through this extensive experience.

As has already been mentioned, a resource emerged in a number of the Catholic Church's pastoral documents which had been concerned with appropriate responses to the experience of increasing mobility, transition and change. New pastoral strategies were becoming necessary – both to meet the needs of people and to respond to the promise that new opportunities opened up. The Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants

and Itinerant People in *The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee* expressed its interest this way:

Since the very first moment of their appearance on the stage of the world, human beings have always walked in search of new goals, investigating earthly horizons and tending towards the infinite ... in contemporary society, which is characterised by intense mobility, pilgrimages are experiencing a new emphasis. To offer a suitable response to this reality, the pastoral care of pilgrimages must be able to avail of a clear theological foundation that explains it and develops a solid and permanent praxis in the context of general pastoral care. (1)

And then my connection with official Church agencies provided a further impulse in the conduct of this research project in the fields of spirituality and pilgrimage and their mutual influence. In particular, the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People had contributed to a growing body of documentation in this area and suggested possible frameworks to shape our investigation into pilgrimage and allied themes. Modern mobility in all its manifestations was clearly far too large a phenomenon to be integrated into a project such as this. On the other hand, if this global experience were focused on the experience of the *Camino*, one particular phenomenon of mobility, change and challenge, it could throw light on the immense manifold of human transitions. More precisely still, by focusing directly on movement inherent in walking pilgrimages, there was the possibility of reflecting both on spiritual growth and meeting pastoral concerns arising out of this new era of mobility.

During the European summer of 2005, while on a personal pilgrimage of sacred sites in Italy, I obtained an audience at the Vatican with Monsignor Agostino Marchetto, Secretary of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, and several of the Council's senior staff. That meeting made me realise how serious was the Church's concern for the personal dimensions of all the different kinds of journeys

undertaken by peoples all over the world. The volume of literature which emanated from this particular Pontifical Council was testament to this, as was the establishment of the Pontifical Council itself. For example, in a recent publication from this particular Pontifical Council it was noted that, as early as 1952, Pope Pius XII had established several structures within the Roman Curia to attend to these concerns. In consequence, “In view of the rising significance of human mobility in all its aspects and components, and with the intention of remedying the dispersed manner in which spiritual assistance was provided, Paul VI judged it opportune that these diverse initiatives should be brought together.”¹⁶ The number of different areas to be covered under the headings laid down by the Pontifical Council gives an indication of the world-wide spread of *People on the Move* – the title given to the magazine it publishes. The various sections include migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons, international students, tourism, pilgrimages and shrines, people of the sea, civil aviation, nomads, Shinti, Romany, circuses, carnival people, and apostleship of the road.

While the growing phenomenon of movement was permeating human behaviour around the world, a further significant change was occurring, at least in first world countries. This is the decline in church attendances. In Australia, as noted earlier, Robert Dixon explained, in regard to Mass attendance, that “the rate in 1996 was close to 18 per cent. The drop to 15.3 per cent in 2001 meant that attendance fell by just over 100,000 in five years.”¹⁷ On the sacrament of penance, he stated that “there was a time when large numbers of Catholics took part in the sacrament of penance ... In the last forty years, this

¹⁶ Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, *Pontificale Consilium De Spirituali Migrantium Atque Itinerantium Cura* (Vatican: Holy See, 2006), para. 1.

¹⁷ Dixon, p. 97.

practice has declined dramatically.”¹⁸ The same pattern of decline is reported by Dixon on other sacraments such as marriage and baptism. Given the decline in the influence of traditional spiritual resources, where might Catholics (and other Christians) turn for spiritual inspiration?

What form would this one particular pastoral response take? In secular fields of inquiry there has been work on developing language and models to assist an analysis of the contemporary phenomenon of mobility. It is not unusual to find the language of pilgrimage used in reference, say, to Kokoda or Gallipoli. Our aim then is to call on resources drawn for this larger field of investigation in the conduct of our specific project focused on a particular experience of pilgrimage.

3. Literature review: the state of the question

Literature on the *Camino* extends from the early Middle Ages, and in recent years has become much more extensive, and is still growing. There are several Institutes engaged in studies of the road, one in particular being the Centre for Studies into the Pilgrim’s Route to Santiago, Leon, Spain.¹⁹ Furthermore, because of their direct relevance to the *Camino*, we have already made mention of the influential writings of Frey, Mullins and Aviva.

A subject of such broad reach meant that decisions with regard to how the literature review was to be approached needed to be taken, bearing in mind the intended outcomes of the project, viz., developing three frameworks – (1) articulating the scope of pilgrim life, (2) framing lived spirituality through pilgrimage in an appropriate language,

¹⁸ Dixon, *The Catholic Community*, p. 109.

¹⁹ See, for example, www.Unileon.es.

and (3) engaging in introductory conceptual development of change. Keeping in mind this intention of developing the three frameworks, the obvious body of potential literature for review was that specifically focussing on pilgrimage of some kind or another, and as well, given that “pilgrimages symbolise the experience of the *homo viator* ... on his journey through the time and space of his existence” (43), the whole human person, her/his reason for existence, indeed the very purpose of the cosmos, all demand to be included. The benefit of a longitudinal and iterative study such as this has allowed for expansion and refinement in choice of literature as the study progressed.²⁰ Necessarily, references had to include general works on spirituality, particular works related to the theme of pilgrimage, specifically Australian writings, and those reporting the experience and reactions of pilgrims themselves, especially in view of the change they felt in relation as they went through the process of pilgrimage.

Sean Slavin’s work represents an important Australian contribution to the study of the *Camino*. This current research project, however, goes well beyond the reach of Slavin’s study, and has, in fact, taken a quite different approach in terms of scope and methodology – particularly through its use of three particular frameworks designed to further a form of education for pilgrimage in terms of spirituality and pastoral preparation and response. But Slavin has made two significant contributions to the development of the three frameworks we have adopted. His first contribution is found in the anthropological study contained in his doctoral thesis at the University of New South

²⁰ While the specific aims of this research project have placed restrictions on the literature used, it is important to point out the rich and voluminous literature that exists well beyond the confines of this current work. A useful example is the 1996/4 edition of *Concilium* which was dedicated to pilgrimage. This edition covers such topics as pilgrimage as an enduring ritual of humanity, issues for the modern pilgrim between tradition and post-modernity, the anthropology, history and tradition of pilgrimage, the arguments for and against a specific spirituality of pilgrimage, and opportunities for pastoral practice. See Virgil Elizondo and Sean Freyne eds., *Pilgrimage* (London: SCM Press, 1996).

Wales,²¹ with its specific focus on Turner's notion of *communitas*.²² A feature of Slavin's study was his collection of information related to the investigation of Turner's theory in regard to forty-four randomly chosen pilgrims on the *Camino*. Of particular interest here is Slavin's treatment of the experience of "the stranger" as a catalyst for change. This understanding of the stranger has affected this project when interviews were being conducted on the pilgrims' experience. Here we refer especially to Chapter 5. Slavin's second publication takes on the character of a retrospective in regard to his previous work. It focuses on Turner's interest in "how pilgrimage produced liminal identities in pilgrims and liminoid social spaces in relation to surrounding society". While his analysis is in this context more technical with its application of the notion of liminality to pilgrimage, Slavin's main aim was to "attempt to address the spiritual experiences of pilgrims from the point of view of the walking body".²³ This is a particular useful reference for our research when reflecting on the place of the body in spirituality, and its relationship to the bodily experience of pilgrimage (see Chapter 7).

There are various documents emanating from Church agencies of a more directly pastoral and theological character. A significant statement here comes from *The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee*:

In contemporary society, which is characterised by intense mobility, pilgrimages are experiencing a new emphasis. To offer a suitable response to this reality, the pastoral care of pilgrimages must be able to avail of a clear theological foundation that explains it and develops a solid and permanent praxis in the context of general pastoral care. (2)

²¹ Sean Slavin, "Journeys with the Sacred: An Anthropological Investigation of the Contemporary *Camino De Santiago*" (PhD, University of New South Wales, 1997).

²² Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process* (Chicago: Aldine, 1969), p. 107.

²³ Sean Slavin, "Walking as Spiritual Practice: The Pilgrimage to Santiago De Compostela," *Body & Society* 9, no. 3 (2003): pp. 1-2.

Clearly, the concern here is an adequate theological formulation of the meaning of making pilgrimages in a manner designed to inform a widespread practice in a critical and pastoral manner. Yet there is a deeper symbolic meaning to be appreciated:

Pilgrimages symbolise the experience of the *homo viator* who sets out, as soon as he leaves the maternal womb, on his journey through the time and space of his existence (43).

There are, then, two converging concerns. The first seeks to illumine the experience of pilgrimage with an appropriate theological understanding. The second relates the particular experiences of pilgrimage to universal and permanent features of the human condition.

As will be detailed in Chapters 4 and 5 below, there are many other works dealing with the phenomenology of pilgrimage, the experience of pilgrims along the way, their expression of such experience and their response to it in a larger context, especially when the focus is on the psychodynamics of change. Of particular importance among these are Robinson's²⁴ anthology of pilgrimage and Coleman and Elsner's²⁵ review of pilgrimage past and present in the world religions. Also, Gitlitz and Davidson's²⁶ evaluation of the cultural opportunities for the pilgrims and their effects, and Nancy Louise Frey's²⁷ study of pilgrims' lives and pilgrimage's aftermath, help shed light on particular aspects.

With specific reference to understanding the dynamics of change (see Chapter 7 below), Robert Kegan's²⁸ use of staged, evolutionary growth theory and his consequent

²⁴ Martin Robinson, *Sacred Places, Pilgrim Paths: An Anthology of Pilgrimage* (London: Fount Paperbacks, 1998).

²⁵ Simon Coleman and John Elsner, *Pilgrimage: Past and Present in World Religions* (London: British Museum Press, 1995).

²⁶ Gitlitz and Davidson, *The Pilgrimage Road to Santiago: The Complete Cultural Handbook*.

²⁷ Nancy Louise Frey, *On and Off the Road to Santiago* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998).

²⁸ Robert Kegan, *The Evolving Self: Problem and Process in Human Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982).

construction of a model of the evolving self have been a guide for our own analysis and modelling. Kegan's articulation of the stages of latency and embeddedness, then progress through experienced imbalance, and finally separation from old ways leading to new growth, is of particular importance. James Fowler's²⁹ application of staged evolutionary growth theory to his conceptual work on faith development has been similarly deployed in our analysis. White and Epston's³⁰ theoretical study of blocks to growth through dominant cultural influences has also been particularly valuable. Finally, the growing influence of theories, such as that of Damasio,³¹ on the capacity of consciousness and mindfulness to assist change will also be explored, as will the insightful application of these concepts by David Ranson³² in his process model of spiritual growth.

Thus, while Chapter 3 focuses specifically on the phenomenology of pilgrimage, Chapters 4 and 5, as has just been signalled, identify and rehearse a range of theological and psychological concepts and language which both builds on the dimensions presented in our first interpretative framework – viz., Pilgrimage through space and time: *Homo Viator* – and contributes to the project of the participants in this research in exploring their situation and seeking to understand their pilgrim experience. This unfolding process will issue in the development of two further Frameworks. It will now be outlined in an introductory way how these three models frame this research project as a whole

²⁹ James Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning* (Blackburn Vic: Collins Dove, 1987).

³⁰ Michael White and David Epston, *Literate Means to Therapeutic Ends* (Adelaide: Dulwich Centre Publications, 1989).

³¹ Antonio R. Damasio, *The Feelings of What Happens: Body, Emotion and the Making of Consciousness* (London: Random House, 2000).

³² David Ranson, "Spirituality and Leadership," in *Faith Based Leadership* (Mary MacKillop Place, North Sydney: Catholic Health Australia: Conference Notes, 2007).

4. Framing the research

A central aspect of the method employed in this project is a construction of three frameworks related to the pilgrims' experience in past, present and future dimensions. The frameworks deal, first of all, with the character of pilgrimage as a passage through space and time – the human being as ever “on the way”, *Homo Viator*. Secondly, there is the movement from experience to interpretation. This entails the development of categories and concepts apt to provide a linguistic resource for the pilgrims themselves and for those in communication with them. Therefore, a certain taxonomy is implied, applicable to the experience of pilgrimage and the ways it can be articulated. Thirdly, we give attention to the development of a suitable model for capturing the holistic dimensions of the pilgrim experience, and suggesting at the same time possibilities of its integration into the developing experience and life of the persons concerned.

These three frameworks constitute one aspect a critical pastoral and theological response to the Church's call at the end of the second millennium in *The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee* for a “clear theological foundation that explains and develops a solid and permanent *praxis* in the context of general pastoral care for the growing number of people going on pilgrimage in all its forms” (2).

This project finds its focus as an investigation of Australian Catholic pilgrims. The data collected from the pilgrims has been used to develop the three frameworks just mentioned. Miles and Huberman note the possible variety and flexibility of such constructions:

A conceptual framework explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main thing to be studied – the key factors, constructs or variables – and the

presumed relationships among them. Frameworks can be rudimentary or elaborate, theory-driven or commonsensical, descriptive or causal.³³

Frameworks are part of the larger process of “mapping” the area being researched. In this respect, an interactional methodology has been employed. It entails an effort to hold together a critical awareness of relevant literature, the reactions and reflections of the pilgrim participants, and the tracking process³⁴ developed for this purpose (to be explained below). But first, we offer a brief presentation of the three frameworks referred to.

a. Framework 1: Pilgrimage through space and time: *Homo Viator*

This general framework outlines the scope of the research topic so as to dictate the structure of the research and its component elements. The framework derives from an interaction between relevant literature, the reactions of the pilgrims and the researcher to what has been experienced. As part of a co-authoring process, eight of the pilgrims had the opportunity to examine this framework as it was developed and to respond to it. [cf. Appendices F-J]

This Framework 1 was progressively fine-tuned in the course of the investigation so that the pilgrims’ actual experience was appreciated in an increasingly refined manner. The diagram below offers a visual presentation of the scope of the area of research, and of the interrelationship of the various factors that influence it. The frame on the left of the diagram shows the fundamental dimensions of human personhood, within the overarching ambit of a person’s sense of meaning and purpose in life. The thinking,

³³ Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 1994), p. 18.

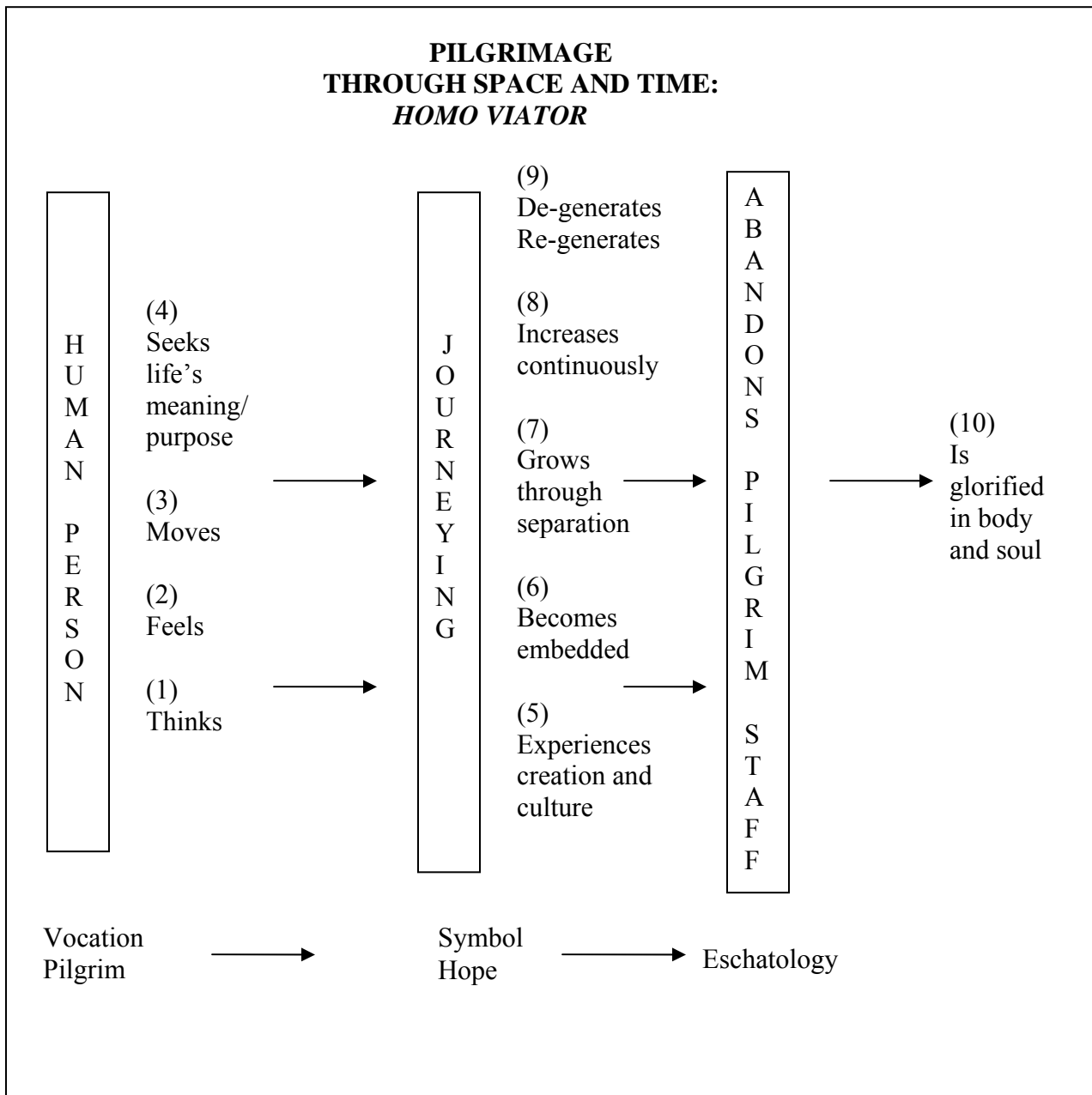
³⁴ For a full explanation of the characteristics of the tracking process and the steps followed, proceed to Chapter 2: Toward a qualitative analysis of the data.

feeling, moving person is in search of meaning and purpose in life. He journeys throughout space and time. It is a journey from birth to death in the milieu of a particular culture and in the context of a particular history, which reaches beyond this world in hope for the ultimate fullness of life in God. In this course of life there is growth through separation, degeneration and regeneration, all the phases of life until the vision of God and the resurrection of the body, described in the words of the creed, as “the life of the world to come”.

This first Framework relies for its theological categories on Catholic tradition as expressed in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and *The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee*. The following five themes figure prominently:

- Vocation: “At every time and every place ... (God) calls man to seek Him, to know Him, to love Him with all his strength” (*Catechism* 1);
- Pilgrim existence: “*Homo viator* sets out, as soon as he leaves the maternal womb, on his journey through the time and space of his existence” (*Pilgrimage* 43);
- Pilgrimage as Symbol: “Pilgrimages symbolise the experience of the *homo viator*” (*Pilgrimage* 43);
- Hope: “When we reach it (the Heavenly Jerusalem), the gates of the Kingdom will open, we will abandon the travelling attire and the staff of the pilgrim and we shall enter our house definitively ‘to stay with the Lord for ever’ ” (*Pilgrimage* 43);
- Eschatology: “The righteous will reign for ever with Christ, glorified in body and soul. The universe itself will be renewed” (*Catechism* 1042).

Framework 1: Pilgrimage through space and time: *Homo Viator*



b. Framework 2: From experience to interpretation

Following on the review of relevant literature and the interviews with the pilgrims, a language of communication emerged, and with it, a taxonomy by which to measure and express the scope and significance of the pilgrims' experience. This second framework was further refined both in the course of the pilgrimage concerned, and as this project progressed. Eight of the pilgrim participants were invited to comment. Through this interaction, they were able to be co-authors of the framework in its final form.

c. Framework 3: An holistic, re-generative model

The development of this framework progressed in two stages: firstly, the construction, and secondly, the application of the framework to six aspects of the pilgrims' experiences. Framework 3 differs from the other two frameworks in that it introduces a psychological, theoretical focus with particular reference to phases and stages of change. This psychological growth framework is treated at length in Chapter 7. However, a brief outline is provided here. As a framework expressive of experience and change in the context of pilgrimage, it appealed to the theoretical orientations of Kegan and Fowler, and is based on the insights of Hide into Julian of Norwich's concept of *oneing*.

A fuller description of this framework would be "Stages in lived *oneing*: an holistic, re-generative model". While *oneing* is not a common word, it was eventually chosen after extensive discussion with the pilgrims as the preferred name for describing the scope and integration of the pilgrims' records and interpretations of their spirituality in the course of their pilgrim experience. We proceed now to give a fuller presentation of the meaning and extent of the notion of "oneing".

4. Julian of Norwich's concept of *oneing*

Julian of Norwich's term *oneing* came to take a central role in expressing the scope of the spirituality of the pilgrims. Of all the presentations of spirituality reviewed, it was Julian's concept of *oneing* as articulated by Kerrie Hide that proved the best fit to the Australian pilgrims' reports and reflections on their experiences of the *Camino*. In includes undeniably traditional elements of Christian spirituality. For example, following the teachings of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*,³⁵ the essence of the relationship between God and the human heart, is described in these words:

The desire for God is written in the human heart, because man is created by God and for God; and God never ceases to draw man to himself. Only in God will he find the truth and happiness he never stops searching for. The dignity of man rests above all on the fact that he is called to communion with God. This invitation to converse with God is addressed to man as soon as he comes into being. For if man exists it is because God has created him through love, and through love continues to hold him in existence. He cannot live fully according to truth unless he freely acknowledges that love and entrusts himself to his creator. (27)

The desire for God written in the human heart, and the invitation to converse with God in love and trust, clearly resonate with the concept of *oneing* employed by Julian of Norwich. Kerrie Hide, on the basis of her research into Julian's thought in this regard, published as *Gifted Origins to Graced Fulfillment: The Soteriology of Julian of Norwich*, serves as a guide to the complexity and nuances of Julian's use of the idea of *oneing*. Hides writes,

Julian's concept of *oneing* is virtually untranslatable. To be *oned* in Middle English means to be one, united, joined, blended, or fused, yet none of these words conveys the sense of this primordial interpenetration of the divine and the human that preserves difference in identity ... There is something mystical and

³⁵ Holy See, *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Homebush, NSW: St Pauls, 1994). For ease of access for the reader, paragraph numbers have been shown enclosed in round brackets, after quotations from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

indefinable about the union that *oneing* conveys ... *Oneing* gathers human beings and makes them holy ... *oneing* continues the process of profound identification until the union we share with Christ is complete.³⁶

Several points can be noted about this description. Firstly, *oneing* conveys the sense of a “primordial interpenetration of the divine and the human”. Secondly, differentiation of identity is preserved at the same time as interpenetration. Thirdly, there is a process of journey, of pilgrimage, of movement towards the ultimate fulfilment of this relationship, continuing the “process of profound identification until the union we share with Christ is complete, and God “shall make everything well”.

Hide takes her explanation further in the following words:

At creation humanity is *knit* and *oned* to the Trinity and kept in this inviolable *oneing*. Humanity is always one with divine love. God never disengages from this original *oneing* in any way that would separate the divine and the human. Yet *oneing* also increases and fulfils this destiny of being one with God. The movement is paradoxical. We are one and are becoming more completely one.³⁷

Hide then turns to Julian’s understanding of the human person:

An anthropology based on substance and sensuality enables Julian to develop a unique anthropology that envisages salvation as the coming to wholeness of both the spiritual and bodily aspects of human nature in God. Though Julian’s lack of clarity in defining exactly what she means by substance and sensuality is frustrating, there is enough evidence based on her use of the terminology to conclude that the words express her attempt to overcome the body/spirit split and spiritualisation of the human person that was so prevalent in her day and that still scars theological anthropology. Reframing our understanding of human beings as substance (who we are in God) and sensuality (how we exist in the world) enables us to appreciate that our destiny is for divine life in God as spiritual/embodied beings. The journey to God is towards participation in divine life by our becoming fully Christ-like in the fullness of Christ’s humanity. This does not mean an abandonment of the most human aspect of ourselves, our sensuality, but a full integration of it. Because we are sensual beings, enfleshed spirits, physical matter is our unique and special means of reaching spiritual perfection. Julian can inform

³⁶ Kerrie Hide, *Gifted Origins to Graced Fulfillment: The Soteriology of Julian of Norwich* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 2001), p. 53.

³⁷ Kerrie Hide, *Gifted Origins to Graced Fulfillment*, p. 54.

contemporary society about the holiness of the body, sensual knowing and experiencing.³⁸

In other texts, Hide applies these conceptual orientations to real life situations. For example, in *A Woman's Healing Song*, she reflects on the plight of separated and divorced women and on their recovery in the light of Julian's insights. In her view, "Julian plays a dominant role as a model and guide for grieving women because her life was so united to God."³⁹ A further example of Hide's application of Julian's teaching to real life situations is her reflection on the spirituality of those degenerating into dementia. The author is mindful that "one of the introductory characteristics of Christians is that we are people with a long memory. Authors of the sacred scriptures remember stories of relationship with divine presence." As she further notes: "You have to begin to lose your memory, if only in bits and pieces, to realise that memory is what makes our lives."⁴⁰ Hide's discussion of memory also supports her ideas on the spirituality of those with dementia. Her aim is to show "how Christian theology does have a response to make to people who, having forgotten, are in danger of becoming forgotten." Under the heading "Abiding in Love" Hide expands Julian's understanding of *oneing* in applying it to dementia:

Although a clear perception of this relationship of *oneing* may evade people with dementia (and people without dementia for that matter), there is at the depths of our being an irrevocable union or *oneing* with God that can never be destroyed ... Deeper than all the confusion and darkness, is a vision of a God of compassion who draws us to God's self.⁴¹

The language of *oneing* has the potential to make a major contribution to this

³⁸ Hide, *Gifted Origins to Graced Fulfillment*, p. 213.

³⁹ Kerrie Hide, *A Woman's Healing Song: Prayers of Consolation for the Separated and Divorced* (1993: Twenty-Third Publications), p. 4.

⁴⁰ Kerrie Hide, "Symbol, Ritual and Dementia," *Journal of Religious Gerontology* 13, no. 3/4 (2002): p. 79.

⁴¹ Hide, "Symbol, Ritual and Dementia", pp. 80-81.

current research project on the spirituality of pilgrims. The *Camino* pilgrim trail offers an abundance of opportunities for experiencing *oneing*, in particular through symbols and ritual. Regarding symbols, Hide explains:

For Christians symbols mediate meaning in a way that touches into conscious and unconscious truths igniting invitation and evocation. They are potent and dynamic. They are catalysts that invite participation in a fullness that is beyond words and images. Symbols participate in and point to immanence and transcendence of the divine. They reveal the essence of human existence enabling us to penetrate into the primordial ground of our being. Symbols evoke paradox. They simultaneously reveal and conceal. They mediate absence as well as presence. Thus symbols orientate us to the living wholeness of our relationship with God, from our origins in God to our fulfilment in God.⁴²

A typical experience for pilgrims to *Santiago de Compostela* at the end of a day's walking is to attend the evening Eucharist. It is here, in the Church, that the pilgrim can view iconography, signs and symbols related to being a pilgrim, and experience, through the ritual and the acknowledgments by the principal celebrant and the congregation, her/his special status as one who walks with God.

On the subject of ritual, Hide takes the opportunity to provide an operational framework for people suffering from dementia. She writes:

Ritual is a way of expression that has a familiar pattern, set repetitive objects, actions and words. Our lives are full of everyday rituals that give meaning and security. Within Christianity there are formal rituals of the Church, liturgy and sacraments, but these flow from and express what is of most value to us in our every day rituals. In the context of people with dementia I want to concentrate on seemingly insignificant everyday rituals that if consciously and sensitively engaged with can assist them to be in touch with God who dwells in the ground of their being.

Hide then gives examples of how this framework of action towards liturgical practices can be implemented:

Throughout his life, Fred always loved the Eucharist. Fortunately Fred belonged to a parish where people noticed his absence at Eucharist when the first signs of

⁴² Hide, "Symbol, Ritual and Dementia", pp. 82-83.

dementia set in. Members of the parish continued their relationship with Fred. They were committed to journeying with him through the final stages of life and death. Aware of Fred's love of Eucharist, Norah continues to bring him communion. She continues to bring the sacrament even when he can no longer swallow, and all she can do is place the host in his hand. When Fred holds the host, Norah gains a sense that in some mysterious way Fred knows that this piece of bread, Christ's body broken and shared, is his story.⁴³

Julian's concept of *oneing*, as explored by Hide, can play a useful role in conceptualising aspects of the *Camino* in terms of the process of how *oneing* occurs.

Hide observes,

Julian's use of 'making again or re-creation in Christ' ... When Christ becomes human he draws us into the process of being re-created. A critical point to notice is that re-creation does not occur only once. 'Making again' has the dynamic of 'continuous increasing'. It occurs again and again ... Christ engages in a process of continual *oneing*."

Hide expands on Julian's use of "continuous increasing":

In popular usage 'increasing' suggests making something greater or more numerous. It specifies growth. The way Julian uses the word "increasing" gives it an energy that conveys the dynamic, renewing relationship that Christ sustains. She bestows a specifically theological meaning through relating "increasing" to Christ's work of *oneing*.

The most relevant point of this presentation of the idea of *oneing* in the context of this project treating of the spirituality of pilgrimage is Hide's further elucidation of Julian's approach to "increasing". She writes,

Increasing, however, is not simply saving creation. There is an evolutionary sense of perfecting creation. Increasing has a transformational, evolutionary outcome that makes the god/human relationship more complete than it was before the fall."⁴⁴

Julian's conceptualisations of continuous increasing through evolutionary stages, her notion of transformational, emergent outcomes, and her sense of re-creation are easily related to the theory of evolutionary stages of development and return as developed by

⁴³ Hide, "Symbol, Ritual and Dementia", pp. 85-87.

⁴⁴ Hide, *Gifted Origins to Graced Fulfillment*, p. 92.

Kegan and Fowler.⁴⁵ In fact, this interconnection has served the development of the theoretical concept dealing with the dynamics of the experiences of the pilgrims, namely, Framework 3: Stages in lived *oneing*: an holistic, re-generative model, as treated extensively in Chapter 7.

Framework 3 was then utilised in examining the interview data on change in the experience of the pilgrims. Three pilgrims were interviewed during their actual pilgrimage, and these and twenty others were interviewed after their *Camino* experience. The three have been described throughout the text as *the three*. The data pertaining to *the three* is particularly important because of its real-time aspect. Once Framework 3 had been constructed it was then applied to six particular aspects of the pilgrims' experiences. During this specific application, five pilgrims, including two of *the three*, provided co-authoring feedback.⁴⁶

As this project developed, it unfolded in seven stages. A word on each of them provides an overview of the research as a whole:

- Researching a pilgrim path (Chapter 1)
- Toward a qualitative analysis of the data (Chapter 2)
- A phenomenology of pilgrimage (Chapter 3)
- Theological and psychological language of pilgrimage (Chapter 4)
- A larger framework of theological and psychological reference (Chapter 5)
- From experience to interpretation: taxonomy of pilgrimage (Chapter 6)
- From interpretation to lived spirituality: dynamics in *Oneing* (Chapter 7)
- Future directions (Chapter 8)

⁴⁵ See Kegan and Fowler's staged evolutionary conceptualisations in Chapter 5.

⁴⁶ See Appendices F-J.

5. Conclusion

The contemporary trend of global mobility has produced an array of literature. Figures already quoted indicate a widespread Australian participation in this modern-day phenomenon. It has also been noted that the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People has observed these trends and called for appropriate pastoral responses based on “a clear theological foundation” (2). Furthermore, the Pontifical Council looks to benefits of such an enterprise when these pilgrimages “are transformed into an experience of deep and mature faith” (2). After gathering data from the pilgrims, the project constructed and employed the three frameworks to explore respectively the experience of pilgrimage in relationship to the course of life itself, and a developmental model of change. Research such as this has the potential to open up new opportunities for pastoral response. For example, the three frameworks, if presented to prospective pilgrims, can significantly enhance their pilgrimage experience. The primary benefit for the pilgrims in this research project would be a greater understanding of themselves as human beings, and of how they perceive their spiritual lives. Further, they have contributed significantly to the development of the three conceptual frameworks, and, in so doing, have made pioneering contributions, as co-authors of this project, to the praxis and understanding of pilgrimage. This concludes the discussion on the four key aspects of the research undertaking, namely, (1) The *Camino* itself: history and Australian connection, (2) Rationale for the research, (3) Literature review: the state of the question, (4) Framing the research, (5) Julian of Norwich’s concept of *oneing*. This research project now proceeds to Chapter 2, a qualitative analysis of the pilgrims’ reflections, which outlines the rationale and methodology for collecting the reflections and experiences of the pilgrims. Details are

given of the procedures followed for mapping and auditing these responses in order to compile a data base. This data will then be used to continue the development of the three frameworks which constitute the findings of the research. This first chapter was necessarily introductory. It presented the scope of the project and its content and shape in terms of methodological frameworks. The chapter to follow treats more fully the manner in which the data were collected and interpreted, with special reference to the pilgrim participants and the parameters of the interview process and the consequent involvement of these participants in the course of this project.

CHAPTER 2

TOWARD A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

After collecting the basis data and outlining the three frameworks, there will be the need to interact with previous research and the literature in which it is found. Likewise, this project must unfold with an explicit consciousness of the responses of the pilgrims, during and after their pilgrimage; and this will enable a deeper and more reflective methodological phase, as the researcher profits from the assistance of pilgrims who understand themselves to be co-authors in the construction of this project. In the previous chapter, we sought to establish the state of the question in regard to pilgrimage studies and referred to a number of influential authorities in this area. This chapter outlines the methodological procedures followed for the second and third interactive elements, namely, the collection and organisation of the information gathered from the pilgrims, and the process of reflecting on this data with the assistance of several pilgrims. The material covered by this chapter is grouped under nine headings relating to the technical and ethical strategies used for the development of the data-base from the responses gathered from the pilgrims.

1. Participants
2. The choice of grounded theory: a qualitative technique
3. Guidelines for collecting data
4. Choice of manual over computer-generated techniques
5. Applying purposive sampling techniques
6. Co-authoring and co-auditing
7. Interview process
8. Data reduction
9. Data display and audit trail

1. Participants

This research is an exploratory project based on information-rich methodologies. Miles and Huberman state that “qualitative researchers usually work with small samples of people, nested in their context and studied in-depth.”¹ In fact, the twenty-three participants in this project were volunteers who were known to the researcher. Each was approached by him personally. As well, an information letter was provided to the participants so that they were formally informed of the characteristics of the study, the questions they would be asked, and how the information would be collected, held and used.² All of the participants gave formal consent to participating in the research.³ The participants came from various parts of Australia, were men and women with varying life experiences, with an age-range of 33 to 60 years, and self-identified as Catholics. Three pilgrims were interviewed before, during and after the *Camino* pilgrimage, and a total of twenty-three pilgrims, including *the three* captured in real-time, were interviewed twelve months or longer after they had walked the *Camino*.

For the sake of identifying the three pilgrims captured in real-time, the title of *the three* has been given to them. This title is used throughout the text. While they were undertaking the *Camino*, *the three* were companioned by the researcher, for the purposes of capturing real-time data. *The three* had first been interviewed before leaving Australia. This initial interview focussed on

- *the three*'s understanding of themselves,
- the characteristics of Australian culture,

¹Matthew Miles and Michael Huberman. *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Source Book*. 2nd Ed. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 1994, p. 27.

² See Appendix A.

³ See Appendices D and E.

- their images of themselves as Catholics,
- their understanding of their relationship with God,
- what all of these had meant for their own perception of themselves.

The same questions were repeated during the *Camino*, with the inclusion of additional questions on what they were experiencing while on the pilgrimage itself. This same format was then applied to the twenty-three (which included *the three*) when interviewed a year or more after their experiences. This questioning of the twenty-three included their experiences while on the *Camino*, and what their understandings and experiences were now that some time had passed. The benefit of including *the three* in the sample of twenty-three was to ascertain whether there were differences in their reflections from those of the other twenty after a period of time had elapsed from their experience of the *Camino*.

2. The choice of grounded theory: a qualitative technique

The choice between qualitative and quantitative techniques has been discussed in detail by a number of authors. For example, Denzin and Lincoln, under the general heading, “Qualitative versus quantitative research”, have a section titled “Research styles: doing the same things differently”.⁴ In this paragraph, they argue for choice, based on a number of factors, in deciding not only between the two methodologies, but also between different approaches within each. Miles and Huberman present in graphic form⁵ the range

⁴ Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, *Strategies of Qualitative Enquiry*, 3rd ed. (Los Angeles: Sage, 2008), p. 7.

⁵ See Appendix T.

of available tools in undertaking qualitative research, one of which is that of grounded theory.⁶ In discussing “grounded theory”, Strauss and Corbin state:

There are many valid reasons for doing qualitative research ... one reason is the nature of the research problem. Some areas of study naturally lend themselves more to qualitative types of research, for instance, research that attempts to uncover the nature of persons’ experiences with a phenomenon, like illness, religious conversion, or addiction. Qualitative methods can be used to uncover and understand what lies behind a phenomenon about which little is known.⁷

This description coheres with the focus and style of this research project. Denzin and Lincoln, in an earlier text, divide qualitative techniques into three distinct positions. They argue that in the first the words of the interview and the resultant transcript are the most accurate data. Regarding the second they state: “The second position maximises researcher interpretation, editorial control, and ownership by introducing researcher coding and analysis in the form often referred to as ‘grounded theory’.” The third position that they describe, however, has most relevance to this current research:

... [here] the ‘coding’ procedure is established and developed by the research participants as a process of storying and re-storying, that is the co-joint construction of further meaning within a sequence of interviews. In other words, there is an attempt within the interview, or rather, within a series of in-depth, semi-structured interviews as “conversations”, to actually co-construct a mutual understanding by means of sharing experiences and meanings.⁸

For this project, qualitative methodologies have been preferred to quantitative techniques because of their efficacy in exploratory research designs and for their resilience in accommodating co-authoring approaches. Specifically, a methodology based on grounded theory offers the most apt and robust approach for the area under investigation.

⁶ Miles and Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, p. 7.

⁷ Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques* (Newbury Park: SAGE, 1990), p. 19.

⁸ Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2005), p. 126.

3. Guidelines for collecting data

Miles and Huberman, in outlining the characteristics of “well-collected qualitative data”, state that:

- The focus is on naturally occurring, ordinary events in natural settings so that the researcher has a strong reminder on what “real life” is about.
- The data is collected in close proximity to the specific situation.
- There is a richness and holism, with strong potential for revealing complexity.
- It is most suitable for lived experience – “of locating the meanings people place on the events, processes, and structures of their lives, and connecting these meanings to the *social world* around them.”⁹

This research project possesses all four of these characteristics. The data was collected from twenty-three pilgrims experiencing a “naturally occurring event ... in natural settings.” For *the three*, in particular, the data was generated in “close proximity to the specific situation.” Their experiences were wide ranging, full of “richness” and “complexity”. Fourthly, for all of them, the data reflected “lived experience”.

4. Choice of manual over computer-generated techniques

The use of computer-generated techniques was considered for this project. In the light of Miles and Huberman’s discussion of the use of such techniques in research of this kind,¹⁰ two considerations weighed against such a technique for this current project.

Firstly, the qualitative, methodological instruments available for this exploratory research

⁹ Miles and Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, p. 10.

¹⁰ For a detailed analysis of the issues in choosing manual or computer-generated techniques, see the chapter headed “Computer Use” and, in particular, the discussion under the sub-heading, *Issues and Decisions*, in Miles and Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, pp. 43-44.

are not capable of producing computer-driven analyses such as multiple regressions and/or correlation coefficients, so judgments of cause and effect have to remain of a subjective, qualitative nature. More importantly, however, given the precise scope of our exploratory project, the researcher was obliged to consider the lack of an established language base for the pilgrims to present their ideas. This approach required experimentation with a range of alternative wordings which the participants may or may not have found appropriate or accurate as descriptions of their experiences. Such an interactive approach does not fit easily with computer-driven analyses. Certainly, with the first-cut of visual displays now completed in this study, the opportunities are there for further research to avail itself of these tools, particularly where larger samples are involved.

5. Applying purposive sampling techniques

Miles and Huberman express the understanding that “qualitative samples tend to be purposive”.¹¹ Patton suggests as well that the goal of qualitative research “is to gather the most relevant possible information for evaluation.”¹² In accord with this, the current study employed an interview technique which allowed the participants to speak about their experiences, where possible without interruption. In this way, the knowledge gained by the researcher was expected to be specifically relevant to each interviewed person’s history, constituting what Patton has termed an “information rich resource”.¹³ At the same time, the interactive technique gave opportunities for the participants to draw out new insights into their own personal experiences as well. Beyond that, it was also judged

¹¹ Miles and Huberman, *Qualitative Analysis*, p. 27.

¹² M.Q. Patton, *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*, 2nd ed. (Newbury Park: Sage, 1990), p. 193.

¹³ Patton, *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*, p. 194.

that the “information rich resource” generated from the interview, would give a better view of the complexity of the range of opportunities and possible responses in regard to the *Camino*.¹⁴

6. Co-authoring and co-auditing

For the three pilgrims who were interviewed in real-time, *the three*, the relationship between the researcher and the participants requires further explanation. Because in these instances data was collected on a pilgrim trail, the journey of the data-collection itself has relevance. The fact that data was collected sequentially over long periods of time, with the researcher on occasions involved directly in the process other than as interviewer, has methodological consequences. Miles and Huberman offer a comprehensive review of this issue under the title of “Checking for Researcher Effects”.¹⁵ One of their recommended methods for drawing and verifying conclusions is to recruit key participants into the methodological process. Their proposal is that: “One of the logical sources of corroboration is the people you have talked with and watched. After all, an alert and observant actor in the setting is bound to know more than the researcher ever will about the realities under investigation.”¹⁶ Under the heading of “co-research”, Nosworthy and Lane offer an alternative explanation to managing this methodological issue. In their chapter titled, “How we learnt that scratching can really be self-abuse: co-research with young people”,¹⁷ they argue that the participants – in this

¹⁴Complex settings are not new to research. The field of sport in recent years has led the way in data collection in both simple and complex field environments. For some of the pioneering work, see Jeffrey Seifriz, Joan Duda, and Li-Kang Chi, "The Relationship of Perceived Motivational Climate to Intrinsic Motivations and Beliefs," *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology* 14 (1992).

¹⁵ Miles and Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, p. 265.

¹⁶ Miles and Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, p. 264.

¹⁷ Sharon Nosworthy & Kerry Lane, Ch 11, in Cheryl White & David Denborough, *Introducing Narrative Therapy: A Collection of Practice-Based Writings* (Adelaide: Dulwich Centre Publications, 1998), pp. 179-194.

case self-mutilators – held so much of the knowledge, the language to use, and the history of this cohort, that the researchers themselves would never gain this same level of data collection expertise on their own.

Their understanding, therefore, of researcher-tracking went beyond Miles and Huberman, in that they adopted the position that all of the participants would act as informants and that the process would be open and transparent. They argued that this technique, to which they give the name *co-research*, “acknowledges the ‘expert knowledge’ of the people with whom we work”.¹⁸ In the same text, Nosworthy and Lane add a further element to the application of co-research by introducing the concept of caucusing with their participants.¹⁹ This is of particular relevance to the *Camino*. Because there is often a feeling of uncertainty when it comes to maintaining contact with the trail and not becoming lost, unpredictable climatic conditions, and whether the stranger who is approaching will be friendly or not, caucusing between researcher and participant becomes a significant technique, both for survival and for the research proper.²⁰

While acknowledging that co-authoring during the process does go some way towards addressing the effect of the researcher’s influence on the actual results as well as the process, Miles and Huberman take this further by recommending that this collaborative process should be extended to feedback being provided through to final analysis. They write:

¹⁸ Nosworthy and Lane, *Introducing Narrative Therapy*, p. 181.

¹⁹ Nosworthy and Lane, *Introducing Narrative Therapy*, p. 195.

²⁰ The complexities in sport and pilgrimage are but two examples of a growing body of research facing this challenge of multidimensionality. A recent Australian text has recognised this issue. The introduction states: “Research integration is the process of improving the understanding of real-world problems by synthesising relevant knowledge from diverse disciplines and stakeholders. Methods for undertaking research integration have not, however, been well developed or explained. Here, we show 14 methods developed for dialogue can be useful for research integration.” See David McDonald, Gabriele Bammer, and Peter Deane, *Research Integration Using Dialogue Methods* (Canberra: ANU, 2009).

There are good reasons for conducting feedback after final analysis. For one thing, you know more. You also know better what you know – are less tentative, have more supporting evidence, can illustrate it. In addition, you can get feedback at a higher level of inference: on main factors, on causal relationships, on interpretive conclusions. Finally, the feedback process can be done less haphazardly. You can lay out the findings clearly and systematically and present them to the reader for careful scrutiny and comment.²¹

As well as co-authoring methodologies, Miles and Huberman make suggestions on maintenance of the integrity of research through applications of co-auditing. This research project has built on several of their recommendations in this regard. They state: “Study products are sometimes fed back to participants as a way of providing “member checks” on the accuracy of descriptions.”²² Using Miles and Huberman’s terminology, member/audit checks have been employed as part of the audit trail process in this research project. Eight of the participants, independently and privately, were invited to examine the specific contributions they had made to the data. As well, for purposes of providing a critical assessment to the researcher on his decisions, they observed which of their own responses had been included in the conceptual frameworks, and which had not. They also gave feedback during the development of the final language and taxonomy used.²³ This methodological approach of pilgrim scrutineering and advice mirrors the approach of co-authoring adopted by the researcher during data-collection while on pilgrimage with *the three*. With the scrutineers, however, the approach was taken further again. The participation by the eight pilgrim scrutineers and advisers was far more than merely their collaboration in identifying the language and the codification. They were also actively involved in forming opinions on the integrity and accuracy of the language and conceptual constructions. Their opportunity to provide data, analyse the manipulation

²¹ Miles and Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, p. 276.

²² Miles and Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, p. 48.

²³ See Appendices F-J.

and presentation of that data, and exercise their right to give a final approval to the finished product, not only presented strong co-researching engagement, but also equality in power and dignity. They originally chose to engage in pilgrimage, but they also chose to join with, and co-author, the complete textual landscape of this project research.

While this auditing approach protected the integrity of particular elements of the research, a further auditing procedure was implemented to round out the process. An external auditor with appropriate qualifications was invited to listen to a sample of the recorded data, and undertake reconciliation between the recordings and the transcripts. The auditor was given access to all transcripts in order to assure herself that all of them had been considered in the data analysis.²⁴ As a conclusion to the description of this project's application of co-authoring and co-auditing, Miles and Huberman's warning, which has been heeded in this research by following the audit procedures outlined above, can be noted:

Most fundamentally, how do researchers get from hundreds of field notes to a final report? How are the data aggregated, reduced, partitioned, displayed, analysed, interpreted? Until we can share clear descriptions of qualitative research procedures, we cannot talk about them intelligibly with one another – let alone set up conventions for verification.²⁵

7. Interview Process

A structured interview guide was used as the primary data-collection instrument. The questions designed as guides for the interview were established by the researcher, initially, on the conceptual issues emanating from the literature.²⁶ Importantly, the specified foci of the participants, namely Australian Catholics on the *Camino*, placed

²⁴ See Appendix R.

²⁵ Miles and Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, p. 281.

²⁶ For a detailed explanation of many of these conceptual issues, see Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage: Past and Present in World Religions*.

clear directional flags for questionnaire development, as did the literature, especially the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People's understanding of the opportunities available on pilgrimage. The headings employed by Robinson²⁷ offered a set of directional flags as well. The participants were expected, however, to bring their own post-hoc expert reflections to what they had experienced, in keeping with the approach adopted by the researcher of meeting the "information rich" criteria set by Miles and Huberman. The procedure to be adopted was that each participant would be taken through the same set of questions pre-determined by the researcher. Each question could be supplemented with clarification and elaboration interventions by the researcher where it was felt necessary. A maximum of three interventions on any question was adopted to facilitate a balance across participants. Before commencing the formal process of interviewing project participants, the researcher practised the interviews with relevant co-workers, and several pilgrims who were very interested in telling their story of the *Camino* but who did not form part of the research group. Through this process, the interviews were practised and refined.

Each formal interview commenced with introductory comments designed to place the participant at ease and to establish rapport. The participant was also reminded of the purpose of the research and of their status within it. Three participants, given the title of *the three*, were interviewed live (audio taped) following the structure of the relevant questionnaire before, during, and after their experience of the pilgrim walk.²⁸ *The three*, as already indicated, walked the *Camino* in company with the researcher. The twenty-

²⁷ The point of pilgrimage, the place of the Holy, preparing for the journey, the company of others, a hard road, along the way, saints before, the journey within, worship on the way and arrival, the destination, and the journey beyond. See Robinson, p. 1.

²⁸ See Appendix B.

three pilgrims, who included *the three* some twelve months or more after their *Camino*, were interviewed in privacy at a time and place at their convenience.²⁹ Four of these participants wished to have included in their statements relevant pieces of information of previously documented material produced by them. This information was treated in accordance with the guidelines set out above on data-collection and analysis. No stratification of the pilgrims was employed in this exploratory research project, e.g., different age groups. Some background information, however, can be provided. The participants' ages ranged between 33 and 60 years.³⁰ Statistics on the website of the Archdiocese of *Santiago de Compostela* for the year 2007 indicated 60% of total pilgrims were in the same age range. The median age for participants in this project was 50 compared with 45 for the total pilgrims on the *Camino* in 2007. 56% of the Australian participants were female compared with 42% of *Camino* pilgrims.³¹ All four States on the eastern sea-board, as well as the ACT, were represented in the sample. Four of the pilgrims still resided in their State of birth, and three in their city/town of birth.

8. Data reduction

Miles and Huberman state that “*data reduction* refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting and transforming the data that appear in written-up field notes or transcriptions.” They continue: “The researcher’s decisions – which data chunks to code and which to pullout, which patterns best summarise a number of chunks, which evolving story to tell – *are all analytical choices.*” They add that the process of

²⁹ See Appendix C.

³⁰ These figures describe the age ranges when the pilgrims in the sample undertook the *Camino*. They were interviewed some one to six years after they had completed the pilgrimage, and so the age ranges quoted for their interviews will differ from these.

³¹ For further statistics on the *Camino*, see www.archicompostela.org.

data reduction allows for the focusing, selecting, and prioritising of the data in order that “final conclusions can be drawn and verified.”³²

Miles and Huberman’s methodological approach to data reduction has been applied to this research. Apart from the considerable volume of reflections collected from *the three* while walking the *Camino*, the taped interviews of approximately one hour’s duration from the twenty-three pilgrims – who all together had spent up to 300 days on pilgrimage – yielded large quantities of data. Such a volume of data, combined with the openness of a semi-structured approach, allowed the pilgrims to provide reflections on a wide range of subjects most relevant to themselves – a significant benefit for an introductory piece of research seeking information rich data. Because of the quantity of the data, an approach was adopted of sifting constantly through the responses to identify a best-fit unit of language and meaning, in the process of data reduction, e.g., pilgrim time and pilgrim space. The procedure was that each participant’s transcript was given two identifiers, one unique to the participant for privacy purposes, and the second applied to each unit of meaning of each of the pilgrim’s reflections for the tracking purposes of the researcher.³³ The transcripts were subjected to a process of identifying common themes in the material, utilising an iterative data matrix.³⁴ These themes included experiential opportunities to be had by the pilgrims as well as their responses to them. This process was continually revised by the researcher’s own work and the regular feedback provided by the eight pilgrims who had chosen to be scrutineers. As each common theme emerged and was refined, the pieces of information from the pilgrims’ transcripts were allocated a place on a best-fit basis. The importance of the scrutineers in

³² Miles and Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, pp. 12-13.

³³ For examples, see Appendices K and L.

³⁴ See Appendices M and N.

this style of methodological process cannot be underestimated in that they reviewed the transcript material and the development of the codification as well.

Some relevant statistics on the pilgrims' contributions are:³⁵

Total number of pilgrim statements included in the text	328
Average number per pilgrim	14
Range per pilgrim	6-23
Range per Specific Theme	25-72

9. Data display and audit trail

The completion of the data reduction process allowed for the generation of a suitable data display. Miles and Huberman regard “the creation and use of displays, as with data reduction, part of analysis and not separate from it. Designing a display – deciding on the rows and columns of a matrix for qualitative data and deciding which data, in which form, should be entered in the cells – are analytical activities.”³⁶ On this matter, the researcher took into consideration the cautionary statements of such experts in this field as Moon, Dillon and Sprenkle who state that “field notes and transcripts are usually copied, read, coded, and categorised. The goal of the analysis is not to support an hypothesis, but to generate rich description of phenomena and discover theory.”³⁷ This process led to the unitary statements of information being bundled into first order themes entitled Specific Themes. These Specific Themes were then organised into higher order themes entitled General Dimensions. During the construction of the Specific Themes several characteristics were noted within each theme and these have been given the title

³⁵ For full details see Appendix Q.

³⁶ Miles & Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, p. 11.

³⁷ Sidney Moon, Douglas Dillon, and Deborah Sprenkle, "Family Therapy and Qualitative Research," *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* 16, no. 4 (1990): p. 230.

of, and presented throughout the text as, *orientations*. Proceeding with this approach, best-fit language and a theoretical construction were developed. From the transcripts, fourteen first order Specific Themes were isolated for the post-pilgrimage group and three separate Specific Themes for *the three*. The fourteen Specific Themes were further developed into four higher order constructions or General Dimensions; and for *the three* one General Dimension was identified. Further refinement occurred when division of data into mutually exclusive pieces of information was not always possible without losing the meaning of the text. In this case, where a particular piece of information had relevance for two Specific Themes, the one for which the piece was deemed by the pilgrim co-authors and the researcher to have most relevance was chosen.

A comment can be made about the use of the *orientations*. As explained above, for each Specific Theme the responses revealed different characteristics or nuances of conceptualisation which have been identified in the text as *orientations*. With research in the future these *orientations* may well form Specific Themes in their own right. For this current research, however, within the limits of an exploratory design, it was recognised that the integrity of the data may well have been eroded if the aggregations of the data were too small. It was considered, therefore, that individual Specific Themes presented sufficient aggregations to be given the status of integral descriptors, and that the smaller sub-aggregations of the themes be presented as *orientations* forming part of the scope of the theme. McCall advises strongly that, “owing to the relative lack of structure of participant observation studies, the relationships between the obtained data and the theoretical concepts purported to be reflected in these data has been a very difficult one to

establish.³⁸ The practical response to these admonitions was to establish an audit trail throughout the entire process. This can be followed in the summary of sequential steps in data reduction and display provided below in tabular form:

1. Verbatim transcripts of the interviews were made with each pilgrim allocated a unique identifier.
2. Prior written documentation from four participants was treated the same as for 1.
3. The transcripts were then broken into tentative, unitary statements of meaning.³⁹
 - 3.1. A matrix shell was set up to allow for compilation and refinement as the development of the preferred language and the taxonomy construction progressed.⁴⁰
4. The unitary statements were categorised into first order groupings of similar content – 17 Specific Themes.
5. Names were selected for each Specific Theme which best reflected the content.
6. *Orientations* within each Specific Theme were identified, and given tentative names.
7. Between 9 and 25 unitary statements were selected as exemplars of each theme for inclusion in the text
8. Specific Themes containing similar characteristics were bundled into higher order categories – Five General Dimensions.
9. All the data, namely, the *orientations*, the Specific Themes, and the General Dimensions, were coded and gradually folded into the emerging matrix. During the process, these components were reviewed and refined in order to increase the clarity, integrity, and robustness of the language and the taxonomy through a process of scrutineering.
10. At various intervals in the process, the draft matrix was presented to eight participants as scrutineers. This draft included their own contributions, for the purpose of incorporating a review and assurance analysis to the integrity of the modelling.

³⁸ George McCall and Jerry Simmons, *Issues in Participant Observation* (New York: Wesley: Addison, 1969), p. 230.

³⁹ Appendices K and L.

⁴⁰ Appendices M and N.

11. The external auditor sampled five tapes and transcripts, chosen randomly, identified the entries and the omissions in the reduction and presentation process, reconciled these against the matrix, and signed off the external auditing process.⁴¹
12. The assembly of the *orientations*, Specific Themes and General Dimensions into a introductory language and taxonomy was the final step in its construction into a composite conceptual framework.

Concluding summary

In summary, in the researcher's view and in that of the pilgrim scrutineers, these approaches to data-collection and data reduction gave a best-fit language and taxonomy which, over time, can be open to refinement. For this current project, it is argued that the security of the data-collection and reduction process, which came under the scrutiny of the auditor and the eight participants, met acceptable methodological standards. It is further argued that for this research the employment of techniques founded on Miles and Huberman and other writings, particularly in the use of auditing protocols and co-authoring in the design, establish a robust research design with considerable risk-averse safeguards. As well, the overarching conceptual framework constructions may place this research in a position to offer, given the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People's statement in *The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee*, some support to a "pastoral response to this contemporary phenomenon of pilgrimage" (16).

This research now moves to the next stage of the project, as we consider, in the following chapters, a phenomenology of pilgrimage, perspectives from church pastoral documents, and the emergence of a more systematic understanding.

⁴¹ Appendix R.

CHAPTER 3

A PHENOMENOLOGY OF PILGRIMAGE

This chapter explores aspects of a phenomenology of pilgrimage as it appears in Church pastoral guidelines and in other writings. Chapters 4 and 5 will then explore in detail the theological and psychological concepts present in this literature. Thus the structure of this chapter is:

1. Church pastoral guidelines
 - a. Modern day phenomenon of human movement
 - b. Elements of pilgrimage
2. Other sources
 - a. Modern day phenomenon of human movement
 - b. Elements of pilgrimage

1. Church pastoral guidelines

As is evident from Framework 1,¹ the symbolic resonance of pilgrimage and the intimate links between pilgrimage and spirituality are central to this research project: “Pilgrimages *symbolise* the experience of the *homo viator* who sets out, as soon as he leaves the maternal womb, on his journey through the time and space of his existence” (*The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee* 16).

- a. Modern day phenomenon of movement

Any review of the Church’s pastoral guidelines on pilgrimage needs to be situated within the modern day phenomenon of human mobility. These publications provide

¹ Pilgrimage through space and time: *Homo Viator*.

significant documentary evidence of the growing awareness by the Catholic Church of the phenomenon of the exponential increase of movement among peoples, and the varied ways in which this is occurring around the world. The impetus for this growth in movement can be found in a number of global developments. Not the least of these is the increasing capacity of modern transport to move great numbers quickly and comparatively cheaply. And then there is the value of developmental change and transitoriness as it esteemed by masses of people in regard to the way they wish to live their lives. Focusing on the key issue of tourism as a contemporary phenomenon, Pope John Paul II writes:

Tourism increasingly influences the lives of persons and nations, and the modern means of communication facilitate the movement of millions of travellers in search of rest, contact with nature or deeper knowledge of other peoples' cultures ... It can indeed be said that the barriers which kept peoples apart and made them strangers to each other have practically vanished. In the phenomenon of tourism, therefore, we see that the world is increasingly global and interdependent.²

The Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People regularly writes of pilgrimage simply in terms of tourism, and vice versa. Indeed, its statements on tourism far outweigh those on the theme of pilgrimage. This combined with the fact that the Pontifical Council's literature on pilgrimage very often repeats the language of tourism requires that both topics be reviewed for this current research project. The magnitude of the Catholic Church's task in responding to the contemporary reality of mobility in all its forms is brought out in the statement that "every year there are hundreds of millions of international and domestic tourists."³ According to the Pontifical Council's calculations, there were 25 million international tourists annually in

² Pope John Paul II, *Message for the 22nd World Day of Tourism* (Vatican: Holy See, 2001), p. 1.

³ Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, *Guidelines for the Pastoral Care of Tourism* (Vatican: Holy See, 2001), pp. 1-2.

the mid-twentieth century, 698 million in the year 2000, and an expected 1.6 billion for the year 2020. In this context, pilgrimage is treated as a sub-set of tourist spiritual practices.

Some idea of the wide scope of the Pontifical Council's charter can be gleaned from the number of groupings which fall under its responsibility. These include migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons, international students, tourists, pilgrimage, shrines, people of the sea, civil aviation, nomads, circus and carnival people, and people of the roads. The Pontifical Council is charged with the responsibility of offering guidelines and reflections on the theme of pilgrimages also. Here, the focus is on spiritual practices, and the pastoral responses that are necessary. The flavour of the Pontifical Council's engagement can be noted from the following:

Tourism is the ideal occasion for man to realise that he is a pilgrim in time and space: "Enlivened and united in His Spirit, we journey toward the consummation of human history, one which fully accords with the counsel of God's love: 'To re-establish all things in Christ, both those in the heavens and those on earth (*Eph* 11:10)'" ... in all men's hearts the deep restlessness of the condition of *homo viator* is manifested; the thirst for new horizons is felt; the radical certainty is experienced that the goal of existence can be attained only in the infiniteness of God. Man's search becomes obvious and explicit in tourism.⁴

The Pontifical Council's document, *The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee*, approved by Pope John Paul II on April 11, 1998, at the approach to the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000, directly addresses this phenomenon in stating that in "contemporary society, which is characterised by intense mobility, pilgrimages are experiencing a new impetus" (1).

⁴ Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People, *Pastoral Care of Tourism*, p. 26. Internal quotation from Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Gaudium et Spes*, para. 45.

b. Elements of pilgrimage

Firstly, in *The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee*, a very broad approach is taken to defining the many and varied ways of experiencing pilgrimage, from sporting events, and sacred ways, to virtual pilgrimage in this electronic age, and eventually to the more traditional understanding of Christian pilgrimage such as the *Camino*. The Pontifical Council in this same document works on a much wider canvas again, by suggesting that life itself can be viewed as pilgrimage. Thus, the human progress through space and time is presented as a theme for reflection on how human beings envisage and conduct their lives.

Since the very moment of their appearance on the stage of the world, human beings have always walked in search of new goals, investigating earthly horizons and tending towards the infinite. They navigated rivers and seas, climbed sacred mountains on whose summit the earth ideally meets the sky. They walked through time marking it with sacred dates. They considered birth as an entrance into the world and death as an exit to enter the womb of the earth or to be assumed into the divine regions. (1)

This theme of the pilgrimage of all humanity is placed at the very beginning of the document: “ ‘We are strangers before you, pilgrims only as were all our ancestors’ (1 Ch 29:15). The words King David pronounced before the Lord sketch the profile not only of the biblical person but of every human creature” (1). The central theme is sounded again at the very end: “pilgrimages symbolise the experience of the *homo viator*” (16). The document offers a sequential description of pilgrimages beginning with the *adamic pilgrimage*, then following on through the *abrahamic pilgrimage*, the *exodic pilgrimage*, the *Messianic pilgrimage*, the *pilgrimage of the Church*,⁵ and the *pilgrimage of*

⁵ Specific mention is made of St. Paul in the document under this heading. “Paul and the apostles, the missionaries of Christ, crossed the consular and imperial roads, the caravan tracks, the maritime routes, the

humankind towards the third millennium. The text pauses at this last, the pilgrimage of humankind, to suggest that, in its widest connotation, all humankind is, existentially speaking, “on pilgrimage”. Hence, the Pontifical Council appears to encourage the use of the word “pilgrimage” as a symbol for life as a whole, even as it treats of the movements of groups, masses of people, and, at times, whole populations fleeing hunger, wars, and environmental catastrophe.⁶ It includes the travelling undertaken by various individuals and groups for reasons of tourism, scientific exploration, trade, sporting or cultural itineraries. The Pontifical Council even includes virtual pilgrimages made possible through telecommunications. It can be noted from the comprehensive listing of pilgrimages in this document that the Pontifical Council views the language of pilgrimage as a valuable discourse in describing the life-journey of each and all. The ultimate goal of pilgrimage, in however many ways it is understood or imagined by every person as *homo viator*, is to reach that moment of fulfilment when “the gates of the Kingdom will open, we will abandon the travelling attire and the staff of the pilgrim and we shall enter our house definitively to stay with the Lord forever” (16).

While the document *Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee* acknowledges the pilgrim journey of all humanity, it primarily envisages Christians. The Pontifical Council states:

cities and ports of the Mediterranean” (12). Paul’s missionary activities do not form part of this current research because of its particular focus on the *Camino*. Paul holds a particular place in the wider understanding of pilgrim life and this should be acknowledged as informing this current research project. The researcher, in fact, embarked on a pilgrimage, “Following the Footsteps of Paul” during the year of Paul in 2008-2009. For an academic approach to Paul and pilgrimage, note Steve Motyer’s chapter entitled “Paul and Pilgrimage” in Craig Bartholomew and Fred Hughes eds., *Explorations in a Christian Theology of Pilgrimage* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 50-69. For an investigative approach, see Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, *Paul: A Critical Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996). For a narrative approach, see Maria Movromataki, *Paul: The Apostle of the Gentiles* (Athens: Haitalis, 2003).

⁶ See the chapter “The Immigrant Poor: On Pilgrimage to a More Human Existence” by José Oscar Beozzo in Virgil Elizondo and Sean Freyne eds., *Pilgrimage* (London: SCM Press, 1996). The chapter examines this relationship between pilgrimage and the poor and dispossessed. Amongst other topics, the article treats the issues of fugitives, economic and illegal migrants, the exodus from the countryside to the cities, seasonal migrants, and religious wanderers.

“Pilgrimages, a sign of the condition of the disciples of Christ in this world, have always held an important place in the life of Christians” (1). Hence, this current project is focussed on Christian pilgrims, namely, the twenty-three Australian Catholics who walked the *Camino* between 2002 and 2006.

2. Other Sources

a. Modern day phenomenon of human movement

Pope John Paul II’s reference to the growth and implications of the phenomenon of tourism⁷ can be borne out statistically. The United Nations World Trade Organisation (UNWTO) launched its “*Tourism 2020 Vision* long term forward assessment of tourism up to the 20 years of the new millennium”. The UNWTO established the forecast base year at 1995. The movement in tourism for 1995 was estimated at 565 million. By 2020 this figure will have risen to 1.6 billion. It is said that “East Asia and the Pacific, Asia, the Middle East and Africa are forecast to record growth at rates of over 5% per year, compared to the world average of 4.1%. The more mature regions of Europe and the Americas are anticipated to show lower than average growth rates.”⁸

Not all of these people on the move are moving voluntarily. Estimated numbers of asylum seekers, refugees and others of concern to the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) at January 1, 2007, numbered 32 million. Most of these were from the poorer, developing countries with Asia and Africa accounting for 75% of the total.⁹ One possible way of living in solidarity with these displaced people – even if only for a short time, and limited as it may be – is to go on a walking pilgrimage. It is surely

⁷ John Paul II, *Message for the 22nd World Day of Tourism, 2001* (Vatican: Holy See, 2001), p. 1.

⁸ World Tourism Organisation, *Facts & Figures: Worldwide International Tourism* (www.unwto.org, 2005), pp. 1-2.

⁹ United Nations High Commission on Refugees, "Basic Facts " (UNHCR: www.unhcr.org, 2007), pp. 1-3.

no accident that the Catholic Church places pilgrimage responsibilities under the same Council that is charged with caring for these involuntarily displaced people.

b. Elements of pilgrimage

As we have seen, the broad canvas of human movement which the Church pastoral guidelines place under the rubric of pilgrimage tends to universalise movement of any significance, including tourism, as pilgrimage. This same tendency is also to be observed in other writings on pilgrimage. The term pilgrimage may be used to refer to a specific journey to a particular site, but it may also be employed in its broadest sense to indicate the destiny of the human person. Depending on how one defines pilgrimage, the number of pilgrims and the locations of pilgrim sites over time and around the world can differ. It can also be stated, however, that the vast number of sacred and secular sites visited over long periods of time provides compelling evidence of the existence of a highly significant, universalised human enterprise to undertake journeys to meaningful places.

Among the most expert writers in this field are Simon Coleman (an anthropologist) and John Elsner (lecturer in classical and early Christian art). Following an inter-disciplinary conference on pilgrimage held in London in 1988, they set out

... [to] discuss the broader theoretical and comparative literature on the subject in an attempt to show the strengths and weakness of various scholarly approaches, and also provide our own suggestions as to the viability of perceiving pilgrimage as a unitary phenomenon with features that exist across different cultures and religions.¹⁰

In undertaking this task, they draw attention to the fact that at the conference were academic historians, geographers, anthropologists and theologians gathered with a

¹⁰ Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, p. 8.

common subject and a common set of questions:

Is pilgrimage in itself a single phenomenon? Can, therefore, the pilgrimage traditions of different cultures and religions be meaningfully compared? Indeed, can we even compare pilgrimages in the same religious tradition from different periods in history? Perhaps, we should limit the focus still further, and ask instead whether fellow pilgrims who attend the same site at the same time undergo similar experiences.¹¹

In response to these questions, Coleman and Elsner propose their own conceptual model of pilgrimage based on the earlier work of Eade and Sallow whose position was “that Christian pilgrimage, and perhaps the pilgrimage practices of all scriptural traditions, can be examined as combining co-ordinates of 'persons', 'texts' and 'places'.”¹² Coleman and Elsner, too, embrace the idea of a series of co-ordinates while at the same time pointing to a weakness in Eade and Sallow’s three axes model: “Precisely because these elements ['persons', 'texts' and 'places'] are present elsewhere, pilgrimage is difficult to isolate as a discrete phenomenon.”¹³ Coleman and Elsner therefore adapt Eade and Sallow’s model by proposing a fourth co-ordinate, viz., “movement”. Their argument for the inclusion of movement is developed from three points of view:

- The phenomenon of movement during the journey, and, at times also, at the destination:

Apart from involving travel across the landscape (even in those cases where the journey had no specific goal), pilgrimage practices tend to ritualise motion at a sacred site itself. Circumambulation, for instance, both echoes the broader idea of journeying and also demarcates – one can almost say encapsulates – the sacred image or object which has been the goal of the pilgrimage.

- The application of the metaphor of travel beyond physical movement, to the movement within:

¹¹ Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, pp. 196-198.

¹² Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, p. 202.

¹³ Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, p. 205.

The experience of pilgrimage, rather than being a static object or representation, involves not only movement through space but also an active process of response as the pilgrim encounters both the journey and the goal. It is the experience of travel and the constant possibility of encountering the new which makes pilgrimage distinct from other forms of ritual in religions we have examined.

- The confrontations of tensions between the local and the universal:

The “dysjunction between the ideally universal tenets of the faith, and the fact that such faith is interpreted and practised variously by members of very different societies” the pilgrim may need to face. Put another way, universalising cultures of 'belief' are placed in tension with parochial cultures rooted in 'place'.¹⁴

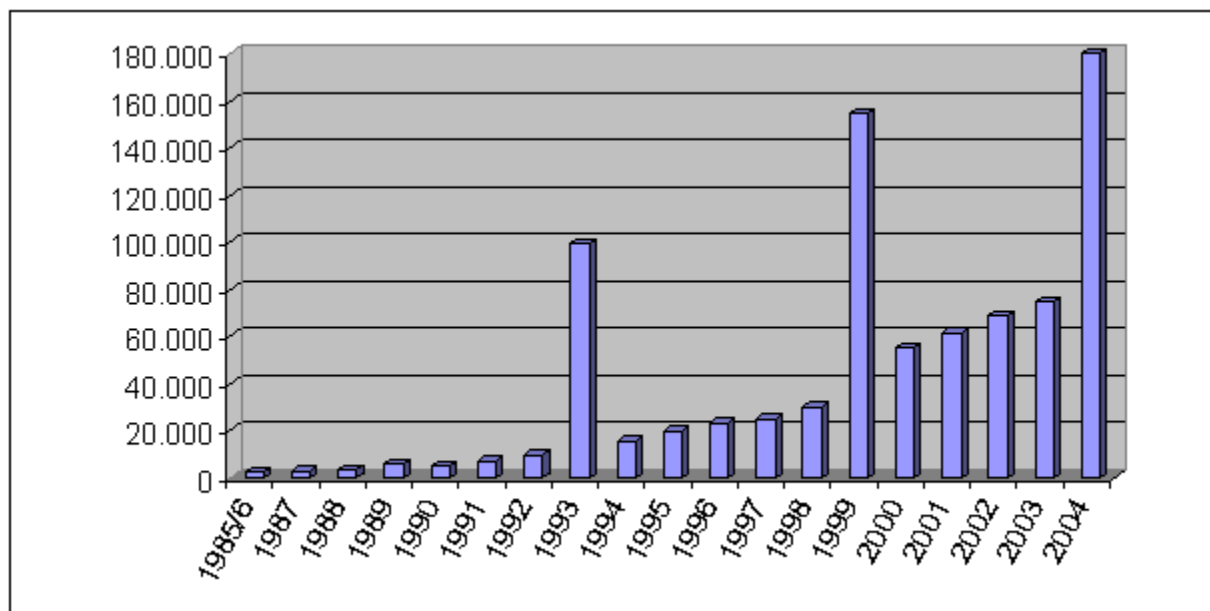
For Coleman and Elsner, pilgrimage differentiates itself from other forms of pious practices through the intrinsic thread of movement – physical, psychological, and intercultural. Coleman and Elsner’s discussion then proceeds along similar lines to the Church pastoral guidelines, namely by searching for the pastoral opportunities that pilgrimages can provide. Coleman and Elsner refer to the capacity for sacred paths “to accommodate pilgrims from many cultures and social stations”, the charisma of the shrines, “the popular aspect that sites often offer religious experiences that do not rely exclusively on textual knowledge”, the capacity to ground the pilgrims’ beliefs “in giving religious traditions concrete, tangible referents”, and finally the confrontation between regional church mores and universal ones.¹⁵ Many of the points of argument presented in Coleman and Elsner’s text are relevant to this current research. Of particular importance is their conceptual model development, which helps to make sense of the experiences of the participants in a way that can start a process of formulating a language and a framework for pilgrimage-based spirituality. For these reasons, Coleman and Elsner’s development of the notion of axes, and particularly their additional fourth axis of

¹⁴ Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, pp. 205-206.

¹⁵ Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, p. 208.

“movement” and their identifying of tensions between universalising cultures of belief and parochial cultures, are potentially important contributions to this current research.¹⁶

In regard to the *Camino* specifically, some sense of its growing significance can be seen from the following table of pilgrim numbers taken from the *Archdiocese of Santiago de Compostela’s* website.



The three years where the numbers spiked were Holy Years – when a Sunday falls on Saint James’s Feast Day, 25 July. This researcher, on one of his five pilgrimages to *Santiago de Compostela*, walked the trail in the Holy Year of 2004, where he and his companion met about fifteen other Australians on the road. The total for all pilgrims for that year reached nearly 180,000.

Several authors have compiled what they consider to be the main elements of pilgrimage. With specific reference to the *Camino*, William Melczer’s list of

¹⁶ For further insights into the attributes of pilgrimage, see Ian C. Bradley, *Pilgrimage: A Spiritual and Cultural Journey* (Oxford: Lion, 2009).

characteristics include: the society of pilgrims, the motivations of the pilgrimage, the geography of the road, companions on the road, hazards on the road, money for the journey, hospitals, hospices and monasteries, the pilgrim's outfit, departure, arrival and return, and the iconography of St James.¹⁷ With general reference to pilgrimage, Martin Robinson lists the following elements: the point of pilgrimage, the place of the Holy, preparing for the journey, the company of others, a hard road, along the way, saints before, the journey within, worship on the way and on arrival, the destination, the journey beyond.¹⁸ Robinson concludes his reflections on the personal character of the pilgrim by drawing on the poetry by John Bunyan.¹⁹

Who would true valor see,
 Let him come hither;
 One here will constant be,
 Come wind, come weather;
 There's no discouragement
 Shall make him once relent
 His first avow'd intent
 To be a pilgrim.
 Whoso beset him round
 With dismal stories,
 Do but themselves confound;
 His strength the more is.

No lion can him fright,
 He'll win a giant fight,
 But he will have a right
 To be a pilgrim.
 Hobgoblin nor foul fiend
 Can daunt his spirit;
 He knows he at the end
 Shall life inherit.
 Then fancies fly away,
 He'll fear not what men say;
 He'll labour night and day
 To be a pilgrim.

John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678)

¹⁷ William Melczer, *The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago De Compostela* (New York: Italica Press, 1993), pp. 36-70.

¹⁸ Robinson, *Sacred Places, Pilgrim Paths* p. i.

¹⁹ Robinson, *Sacred Places, Pilgrim Paths*, p. 187.

The sentiments of John Bunyan's famous 17th Century poem, "To Be a Pilgrim", continue to inform reflection on pilgrimage today. This can be observed in the way the poem dwells on the four principal activities of the human person – as thinking, feeling, moving and pursuing life's meaning. To be human is to be a pilgrim who at this life's end "shall life inherit".

This literature on the phenomenology of pilgrimage has been valuable in formulating the scope of pilgrimage and life. As such, it has informed the development of Framework 1, Pilgrimage through space and time: *Homo Viator*. This in turn has provided the basis for progressing the research through its seven stages. The review now proceeds to general and particular theoretical works which focus on psychological and theological reflections of pilgrimage and life following the structure of Framework 1.

CHAPTER 4

THEOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL LANGUAGE OF PILGRIMAGE

This chapter pushes into a more holistic understanding of pilgrimage both in theological terms, that is, in relation to the experience and expression of faith, and also from a psychological perspective on pilgrimage as a discipline of psychological integration. This chapter, then, is presented against the background of previous discussion of Framework 1, Pilgrimage through space and time: *Homo Viator*. It will be organised under the following headings and subheadings:

1. Thinking, feeling and walking
 - a. Human person: body and soul
 - b. Emotions and feelings
2. *Oneing* with the kaleidoscope of creation
 - a. Natural beauty, time and space
 - b. Culture
3. Sacred people on sacred ways
 - a. Pilgrims called to be sacred
 - b. Sacraments
 - c. Practices of piety
 - d. Christ the Pilgrim
 - e. Salvific suffering
4. Steps on the journey
5. Spirituality: life's purpose and meaning

1. Thinking, feeling and walking

a. Human person: body and soul

In 2006, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace released the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*. This text provides an apt introduction on the topic of the “human person: body and soul”. Firstly, it is of relevance to note that the document’s opening words are couched in the language of pilgrimage:

The Church moves further into the Third Millennium of the Christian era as a pilgrim people, guided by Christ, the ‘great Shepherd’ (Heb 13:20) ... to the people of our time, her travelling companions, the Church also offers her social doctrine.¹

The early part of this extensive work focuses on the human person’s place in nature and in human society. As its starting point, it turns to Scripture:

The fundamental message of Sacred Scripture proclaims that the human person is a creature of God (cf. Ps 139:14-18), and sees in his being in the image of God the element that characterises and distinguishes him: “God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them” (Gen 1:27).²

On the unity of the person, the text states: “Man was created by God in unity of body and soul.”³ The understanding presented in this document – the human person as a creature and as image of God, the image of God as both male and female, and the human person as intrinsically body and soul – is crucial to our study of pilgrimage. Pilgrimage writers,⁴ as will be explored further below, place much emphasis on the need for recognition of the body within a living and integral spirituality of pilgrimage. For some

¹ Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (Vatican: Holy See, 2004), pp. 17, 66-74.

² *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, para. 108.

³ *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, para. 127.

⁴ For example, Joyce Rupp, *Walk in a Relaxed Manner: Life Lessons from the Camino* (New York: Orbis Books, 2005), p. 56.

writers, at least, a harmony between body and soul is necessary to achieve a genuinely spiritual way of life. Since pilgrim trails place many demands on body and soul, the analysis of body and soul and their integration takes on a special interest:

The spiritual and immortal soul is the principle of unity of the human being whereby it exists as a whole – *corpore et anima unus* – as a person. These definitions not only point out that the body, which has been promised the resurrection, will also share in glory. They also remind us that reason and free will are linked with all the bodily and sense faculties.⁵

The *Compendium*, in stating that the “body ... will share in glory”, corrects an undue emphasis on spiritual transcendence alone. For many *peregrinos*,⁶ the body cannot but be intrinsic to the way of the pilgrim, and so shares the glory of the pilgrimage when the pilgrim finally enters the gates of the Sacred City. The reality of the integration of body and soul along with the influence of the spiritual soul as the principle of unity are considerations immediately applicable to the pilgrims’ personal experience.

Through his corporeality man unites in himself elements of the material world ... This dimension makes it possible for man to be part of the material world ... It is not proper to despise bodily life; rather, “man ... is obliged to regard his body as good and honourable since God has created it and will raise it up on the last day” (*Catechism*, 1193).⁷

The pilgrim is not only exposed in body to physical conditions, but also is immersed in the surrounding material world at every step of the trail. The *Compendium* summarises these relationships thus:

Therefore man has two different characteristics: he is a material being, linked to this world by his body, and he is a spiritual being, open to transcendence and to the discovery of “more penetrating truths” (*Catechism*, para. 1196), thanks to his intellect ... The Church affirms: “The unity of soul and body is so profound that

⁵ *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, para. 127.

⁶ The name given to pilgrims to *Santiago de Compostela*, rather than *palmas* given to those to Jerusalem, and *romanes* to Rome.

⁷ *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church*, para. 128. No attempt has been made to resort to inclusive language in Church Pastoral Documents. In this authors’ judgment, a critical stance towards such language is called for.

one has to consider the soul to be the ‘form’ of the body: i.e., it is because of its spiritual soul that the body made of matter becomes a living human body; spirit and matter, in man, are not two natures united, but rather their union forms a single nature” (*Catechism*, paras. 1179-1181).⁸

The language of nexus between body and soul as two integrally related components of the human person is particularly applicable to the experience of walking on pilgrimage.⁹

b. Emotions and feelings

Church pastoral guidelines thus make specific reference to the human person as “a material being, linked to this world by his body, and ... [as] a spiritual being, open to transcendence and to the discovery of ‘more penetrating truths’, thanks to his intellect.” The material and the spiritual are both recognised. There is also an acknowledgement, however, of other dimensions of the human person, especially that of feeling. While the human person is on pilgrimage, there is an interplay of all three dimensions of human life and activity – the physical, the spiritual and the emotional.

Regarding emotions, the *Catechism* uses a variety of terms: feelings, passions, affections, movements of the sensitive appetite.

Feelings or passions are emotions or movements of the sensitive appetite that incline us to act or not to act in regard to something felt or imagined to be good or evil. (1763)

The passions are located within a process whereby they form the passageway and ensure the connection between the life of the senses and the life of the mind. (1764)

It is also contended that passions or feelings contribute to moral life: “Affections have their source in this first movement of the human heart toward the good” (1766).

⁸ *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church*, para. 129.

⁹ Two particular references in this regard are: Kevin, *Walking the Camino*, pp. 267-269, and Rupp, *Walk in a Relaxed Manner*, pp. 246-252.

Furthermore:

Moral perfection consists in man's being moved to the good not by his will alone, but also by his sensitive appetite, as in the words of the psalm: "My heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God." (1770)

In a particular sense, each of these affective modes of awareness emerge as an impulse to follow the way of the pilgrim. Under the conditions of walking the trail, including both the hard times and also the more joyous and positive reactions, the pilgrims' deeply experienced emotions and moods stir in the heart as invitations to spiritual growth.

In short, from these pastoral guidelines there emerges a picture of the human person as necessarily unified being in body and soul, so that human consciousness is always a manifold of physical, emotional and spiritual experience. In terms of Christian eschatology, hope anticipates a newly integrated existence after the image of the risen Christ. Life is not dematerialised, just as the risen Christ is not disincarnated. Jesus' promise of "life to the full" (Jn 10:10) means a new mode of bodily being in a transformed cosmos. Against this eschatological background, we can now move into a deeper investigation of pilgrimage as integration of soul and body.

2. *Oneing* within the kaleidoscope of creation

a. Natural beauty, time and space

The Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People draws attention to the gifts of the natural world that become available to the pilgrim. In *The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee*, the Council refers to entering the tent of the cosmos: "Shrines are often located in places with extraordinary panorama" (41). In the same vein, Pope John Paul II says with regard to tourism,

On their travels, tourists discover other places, other landscapes and different ways of perceiving and experiencing nature. Accustomed to their home and city, the usual landscapes and familiar voices, tourists see other images, hear new sounds and admire the diversity of a world that no-one can grasp entirely.¹⁰

This sense of openness to new experiences and new dimensions of time and space is linked in the *Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee* not only to the origins of pilgrimage – “from the very first moment of their appearance on the stage of the world, human beings have always walked in search of new goals” (1) – but is also connected to the beginnings and to the salvation of the human race itself:

The pilgrimage of Adam ... reveals the full freedom with which he was gifted by the Creator. At the same time, it discloses the divine commitment to walk beside him and watch over his steps. At first sight, Adam’s pilgrimage seems to be a deviation from the way towards the goal of the holy place, the Garden of Eden. But even this route can be transformed into a path of conversion and of return. (4)

Similarly the *Catechism*, as well as stressing the preciousness of all of creation and the continuing opportunity for the human race to appreciate it more deeply in the course of life, points to the final shared destiny of cosmic glorification:

For the cosmos, Revelation affirms the profound common destiny of the material world and man ... The visible universe, then, is itself destined to be transformed “so that the world itself, restored to its original state, facing no further obstacles, should be at the service of the just”, sharing their glorification in the risen Jesus Christ. (1046)

The *Catechism* thus prepares its readers for the eternal transformation of body and soul, and of the very cosmos itself.

b. Culture

Throughout much of this pastoral documentation from Church sources relating to pilgrimage and tourism, the debate regarding culture is never far beneath the surface. The

¹⁰ Pope John Paul II, *22nd World Day of Tourism Message*, p. 2.

Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee notes in this regard that “Pilgrimages ... lead to the tent of meeting with humankind ... In every part of the earth, God himself becomes a meeting with the pilgrim and proclaims a universal convocation to participate fully in the joy of Abraham” (39). Respect, appreciation and opportunities for learning from other cultures are alluded to. For example, on the possible benefits of tourism, Pope John Paul II states,

Tourism puts us in touch with other ways of living, other religions and other perceptions of the world and its history. This helps people to discover themselves and others, both as individuals and as communities, immersed in the vast history of humanity, heirs to and responsible for a universe that is both familiar and strange. This generates a new vision of others that frees us from the risk of remaining closed in ourselves.¹¹

A contemporary understanding of cultures in their differences, similarities and interrelatedness is of great significance for any conception of the universality of the Church. In regard to the importance of culture, we read,

For the Church, it [this contemporary world] is like a new *kairos*, when the time is ripe for a new evangelisation in which the new features of culture are to be seen as both opportunities and challenges for a pastoral approach to culture.¹²

The Pontifical Council for Culture makes reference to the long history of the Church’s approach to evangelisation through culture. Christ's mandate to his disciples to go out everywhere, “even to the ends of the earth” (*Acts* 1:8), in order to pass on the truth which he had revealed, led the Christian community to recognize from the first the universality of its message and the difficulties created by cultural differences. The Pontifical Council for Culture expounds further on this nexus between evangelisation and culture:

From the time the Gospel was first preached, the Church has known the process of encounter and engagement with cultures, for it is one of the properties of the human person that he can achieve true and full humanity only by means of

¹¹ Pope John Paul II, 22nd *World Day of Tourism*, p. 1.

¹² Pontifical Council for Culture, *Towards a Pastoral Approach to Culture* (Vatican: Holy See, 1999), p. 8.

culture. In this way, the Good News which is Christ's Gospel for all men and the whole human person, both child and parent of the culture in which they are immersed, reaches them in their own culture, which absorbs their manner of living the faith and is in turn gradually shaped by it.¹³

A passage of Saint Paul's letter to the Christians of Ephesus helps us to understand that Paul too was faced with these cultural differences in his own missionary activity. The Apostle wrote: "Now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the wall of hostility" (2:13-14).

Australian pilgrims on the *Camino* confronted a culture quite different from their own, and were thus required to interpret their experiences within the framework of that culture. At the Plenary meeting of the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People and the Pontifical Council for Culture in 2007, Pope Benedict XVI addressed the assembly in the following words:

Today, more than ever, reciprocal openness between the cultures is a privileged context for dialogue between people committed to seeking an authentic humanism, over and above the divergences that separate them, and to share dialogue of the love of God who makes himself human love.¹⁴

Much has been written by these two Pontifical Councils on the insertion of the gospel into culture and the dialogue that proceeds from it. How Australian Catholic pilgrims on the *Camino* negotiated and reflected on the intercultural dimensions of their experience, and the effects this had on their spirituality, will be explored in Chapter 6.

¹³ Pontifical Council for Culture, *Towards a Pastoral Approach to Culture*, p. 1.

¹⁴ Pope Benedict XVI, *Reciprocal Openness between the Cultures Is a Privileged Context for Dialogue* (Vatican: Holy See, 2007), p. 1.

3. Sacred people on sacred ways

a. Pilgrims called to be sacred

The participants in this research project were Australian Catholics. That is, they were embedded in their particular culture, and immersed in the culture of the Australian Church. The Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People, however, exhorts them to enter into their own journey with God: “Pilgrimages also have as their goal the quest of personal meeting with God and with oneself. Lost in the multiplicity of daily anxieties and realities, people need to discover themselves through reflection, meditation, prayer, examination of conscience, and silence.” People on pilgrimage are invited to enter into their own time of sacredness so that the experience will be “not only the movement of the body but also an itinerary for the soul.” It is the Pontifical Council’s view that the benefits will not endure without this sense of discovery within: “Only in this way will pilgrims not fall back into distraction and superficiality on their return home, but will preserve the spark of that light which they received ... and will feel the need to repeat this experience of fullness in the future” (*The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee*, 41-42).

This exhortation by the Pontifical Council moves the discussion towards the particular experiences of the Australian Catholic pilgrims and the sense of discovery and renewal that may have resulted. What was discovered or renewed was not meant to be lost, but to endure as continuing inspiration over the whole of life. Chapter 7 will investigate this particular aspect.

b. Sacraments

The Catholic Church is clear that a central facet of the Christian’s existence is participation in sacramental life. For the *Catechism*, lived Christian spiritual life within

the context of the Church has as its primary focus that “the whole liturgical life of the Church revolves around the Eucharistic sacrifice and the sacraments” (1113). Catholics are exhorted to avail themselves constantly of the Eucharist and the other sacraments as a way of participating fully in the life of the Church. The Eucharist is understood as the summit and the source of the whole spiritual life. According to the *Catechism*, “the sacraments are efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us. The visible rites by which the sacraments are celebrated signify and make present the graces proper to each sacrament.” (1131) The *Catechism* also points to the presence of the action of the Holy Spirit in sacramental rites: “Sacraments are ‘powers that come forth’ from the body of Christ, which is ever-living and life-giving. They are actions of the Holy Spirit at work in his Body, the Church. They are ‘the masterworks of God’ in the new and everlasting covenant.” (1116)

Attention is also drawn to the significance of words and objects. “The purpose of the sacraments is to sanctify men, to build up the Body of Christ and, finally, to give worship to God. Because they are signs they also instruct. They not only presuppose faith, but by the words and objects they also nourish faith, strengthen, and express it.” (1123)

It will be against this background of the Church’s emphasis on sacramental participation that the spiritual attitudes of Australian Catholic pilgrims on the *Camino* will be considered.

c. Practices of piety

The *Catechism* also indicates the ways of preparing for this sacramental life. In its explanation of “Sacramentals”, the *Catechism* touches on a form of prefiguring:¹⁵

Holy Mother Church has, moreover, instituted sacramentals. These are sacred signs which bear a resemblance to the sacraments. They signify effects, particularly of a spiritual nature, which are obtained through the intercession of the Church. By them men are disposed to receive the chief effect of the sacraments, and various occasions in life are rendered holy. (1667)

Then, under the heading of “popular piety” the *Catechism* states:

Besides sacramental liturgy and sacramentals, catechesis must take into account the forms of piety and popular devotions among the faithful. The religious sense of the Christian people has always found expression in various forms of piety surrounding the Church’s sacramental life, such as the veneration of relics, visits to sanctuaries, pilgrimages, processions, the Stations of the Cross, religious dances, the rosary, medals etc. (1674)

As with the sacramentals, the orientation of these forms of popular piety towards the sacraments is also emphasised:

These expressions of piety extend the liturgical life of the Church, but do not replace it. They “should be so drawn up that they harmonise with the liturgical seasons, accord with the sacred liturgy, are in some way derived from it and lead the people to it, since in fact the liturgy by its very nature is far superior to any of them” (SC 13.3).¹⁶ (1675)

The rich tapestry of forms available under the heading of “popular piety” is brought out particularly in the *Directory of Popular Piety and the Liturgy: principles and guidelines*, published in 2001 by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. This *Directory* covers the whole history of the Church’s approach to popular piety, from complete rejection at certain times through to today when it is actively encouraged. The document draws attention to the full liturgical year and the

¹⁵ For a detailed explanation of “prefiguring”, see below.

¹⁶ Pope Paul VI, *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy: Sacrosanctum Concilium* (Vatican: Holy See, 1963).

particular forms of popular piety to be encouraged at particular times. The document continues,

Genuine forms of popular piety, expressed in a multitude of different ways, derive from the faith and, therefore, must be valued and promoted. Such authentic expressions of popular piety are not at odds with the centrality of the Sacred Liturgy. Rather, in promoting the faith of the people, who regard popular piety as natural religious expression, they predispose the people for the celebration of the Sacred Mysteries. The document proceeds to outline what constitutes popular piety under the heading, “The Language of Popular Piety”. The list includes:

- Gestures: Popular piety is characterised by a great variety and richness of bodily, gestural and symbolic expressions: kissing or touching images, places, relics and sacred objects; pilgrimages, processions; going bare-footed or on one’s knees; kneeling, and prostrating; wearing medals and badges.
- Texts and Formulae
- Song and Music
- Sacred Images: The veneration of sacred images belongs to the very nature of Catholic piety.
- Iconography: Those with responsibility for churches and oratories should safeguard the dignity, beauty, and quality of those sacred images exposed for public veneration.
- Sacred Places: Apart from the church, sanctuaries – which are sometimes not churches – afford important opportunities for the expression of popular piety, which are often marked by particular devotional forms and practices, among which the most significant is that of pilgrimage.
- Sacred Times: The rhythm associated with the change from day to night, from one month to another, or of the seasons is often associated with various forms of popular piety.¹⁷

If these icons, images, symbols and sites are stepping-stones to full liturgical expression, then the attitudes to them of Australian Catholic pilgrims on the *Camino* take on added importance. The question can be asked as to whether the pilgrim participants’

¹⁷ Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, *Directory of Popular Piety and Liturgy: Principles and Guidelines* (Vatican: Holy See, 2001), pp. 6, 9-10.

engagements in these practices of popular piety, occurring so often in the course of the *Camino*, have helped towards a greater appreciation of and participation in the sacraments, in particular the Eucharist.

d. Christ the Pilgrim

The *Camino* offers the pilgrim the image of a Pilgrim Christ. The painting hanging in the Cathedral of *Santiago de Compostela*, reproduced as the frontispiece of this research project, is an example of this image.

In the words of the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People in the *Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee*, as we have seen, “the pilgrimage of Adam ... discloses the divine commitment to walk beside him and watch over his steps” (4). Turning to Christ, the same document states:

Jesus Christ includes himself in the journey of humankind and of his people, uniting himself in some way with each of us. In fact, he descended from being “with God”, to become “flesh” and to walk along the paths of the human person. In the Incarnation, it is God who comes in Person to speak to man of himself and to show him the path by which he may be reached. (9)

In this meeting with Christ the central position of the Eucharist is specified: “The goal of pilgrimages must be the tent of the Eucharistic meeting with Christ” (37). Pilgrim leaders are exhorted to pay particular pastoral attention to the opportunities “to celebrate these special occasions by listening to the Word of God and celebrating the Eucharist.”¹⁸

An important way in which Church pastoral guidelines designate the pilgrim is as “a sign of the condition of the disciples of Christ in the world.” Other designations are

¹⁸ A more comprehensive treatment of this subject applied to pilgrimage generally, can be found in the chapter authored by Sean Freyne titled “Jesus the Pilgrim” in the 1996/4 edition of *Concilium*. Note in particular where he expands the discussion “from the pilgrim Jesus to a pilgrimage Christology”. See Elizondo and Freyne, *Pilgrimage*, pp. 25-34.

also used.¹⁹ The terms “prefigure” and its derivatives, “prefiguring” and “prefiguration”, are frequently used to express the meaning of particular actions being carried out as images and precursors of future actions.²⁰ A number of examples of this usage are reported here. As will be argued in Chapter 5, this metaphor of “prefiguration” has strong meaning for those people on pilgrimage, and even more so particularly strong associations with the *Camino*.

According to the *Catechism*, “the Church sees in the gesture of the king-priest Melchizedek, who ‘brought out bread and wine’ a *prefiguring*²¹ of her own offering” (1333). Pope John Paul II, speaking in a General Audience in 1997, stated that “the well which the ancient patriarch (Moses) had left to his sons became, in Christ’s words, a *prefiguring* of the water he would give, the water of the Holy Spirit, welling up to eternal life (cf. Jn 4:14).”²² Pope Benedict XVI, at the closing lunch for the Synod of Bishops, 22 October 2005, also uses the term in a more down to earth way:

In this moment, however, it is necessary to speak not only of “high” things that are the heart of our being together, but also to express joy and gratitude for the things of this world, so to speak. The Lord would not have chosen the image of a banquet to *prefigure* Heaven if he had not also approved of the beauty of a lunch, of being together, of eating together; the joy too of the things of this world, created by him.²³

Again, earlier in the same year, before being elected Pope, Cardinal Ratzinger in his homily on the fortieth anniversary of *Gaudium et Spes*, employs “prefiguring” to alert his congregation to the importance of nurturing this world in preparation for the world to come: “Far from diminishing our concern to develop this earth, the expectation of a new

¹⁹ Cardinal Renato Martino, *People on the Move*, no. 104 (2007): p. 1.

²⁰ A search of www.Vatican.va shows the use of “prefigures” 32 times and of “prefiguring” 24.

²¹ Italics are used to highlight “prefigure” and its derivatives for this discussion.

²² Pope John Paul II, *General Audience: True Face of the Messiah Gradually Revealed* (Vatican: Holy See, 1997), p. 1.

²³ Pope Benedict XVI, *Address to the Synodal Fathers at the Closing Lunch for the Synod of Bishops* (Vatican: Holy See, 2005), p. 1.

earth should spur us on, for it is here that the body of a new human family grows, *prefiguring* in some way the world that is to come.”²⁴ Finally, as Archbishop Marchetto states: “The dream of tourism without frontiers is gradually being realised, and *prefigures* in some sense, a system of international relations based on the principles of truth, justice and brotherhood.”²⁵

This liberal use of “prefigure” and its cognate terms in the literature of the Holy See has clear applicability in the domain of pilgrimage. This point will be taken up further in the review of literature on the pilgrim trail of St James in the following chapter.

e. Salvific suffering

The theme of salvific suffering in the Church pastoral guidelines has particular relevance directly to what was reported by *the three* pilgrims whose responses were captured in real-time.²⁶ An important part of pilgrim trails is the pressure brought to bear in many ways on the pilgrim, of which the physical issues are not the least. Beyond that, there are the shadow sides to the pilgrim’s personal history as well as to that of others known to her/him, and the emotional and interpersonal challenges of being far from home. On these points Cardinal Javier Barragán in 2005 claims that “the mystery of ‘suffering love’ enters into the very constitution of God incarnate, the Son made flesh through the work of the Holy Spirit. Since Christ is the most intimate model for every person, the Holy Spirit, the Love of God and salvific suffering enter into the actual objective, and we might say ontological, constitution of humanity.”²⁷ The *Catechism* is

²⁴ Joseph Ratzinger, *Fortieth Anniversary of Gaudium Et Spes* (Vatican: Holy See, 2005), p. 2.

²⁵ Archbishop Agostino Marchetto, *The Changes, Views, and Activities since the Last Plenary Session* (Vatican: Holy See, 2006), p. 2.

²⁶ See Chapter Seven, “Application 6: observations of *the three* in real-time”.

²⁷ Cardinal Javier Lozano Barragán, *Pain an Enigma or Mystery* (Vatican: Holy See, 2007), p. 5.

also instructive in this regard. For example, “No man, not even the holiest, was ever able to take on himself the sins of all men and offer himself as a sacrifice for all. The existence in Christ of the divine person of the Son, who at once surpasses and embraces all human persons, and constitutes himself as the Head of all mankind, makes possible his redemptive sacrifice *for all*.” (616)

A most important text in this regard is the Apostolic Letter of Pope John Paul II on suffering released in 1984. The Pope outlines two key themes of the redemptive sufferer – the sharing in the redemptive process, and the hope that salvific suffering brings. On the first, sharing in salvific suffering, the salient extract for this research project is:

Each man has his own share in the Redemption. He is called to share in that suffering through which the Redemption was accomplished. He is called to share in that suffering through which all human suffering has also been redeemed. In bringing about the Redemption through suffering, Christ has also raised human suffering to the level of the Redemption. Thus each man, in his suffering, can also become a sharer in the salvific suffering of Christ.²⁸

On the second theme, the hope for the Christian that suffering brings, Pope John Paul II states:

As a result of Christ’s salvific work, man exists on earth *with hope* of eternal life and holiness. And even though the victory over sin and death achieved by Christ on the Cross and Resurrection does not abolish temporal suffering from human life, nor free from suffering the whole historical dimensions of human existence, it nevertheless *throws a new light* upon this dimension and upon every suffering: the light of salvation. This is the light of the Gospel, that is, of the Good News.²⁹

The two themes are of particular relevance to pilgrimage. Pilgrimage inevitably entails the acceptance of tiredness, occasional ill-health, blisters, sore feet and strained muscles, but, within the context of pilgrimage, much of this suffering is clothed in the

²⁸ Pope John Paul II, *Apostolic Letter, Salvific Suffering, to the Bishops, Priests, Religious Families, and to the Faithful, on the Christian Meaning of Human Suffering* (Vatican: Holy See, 1984), p. 5.

²⁹ Pope John Paul II, *Salvific Suffering*, p. 8.

characteristic of hopeful expectation of completing the journey. These experiences, therefore, suggest a hopeful “prefiguring” which brings the light of salvation to bear on human suffering.

4. Steps on the Journey

The Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People, in the *Pilgrimage of the Great Jubilee*, outlines the steps to be taken by the person on pilgrimage:

The very dynamics of pilgrimages clearly reveal some steps that the pilgrim takes. They become a paradigm of the whole life of faith; *departure* reveals the decision of pilgrims to go forward up to the destination and achieve the spiritual objectives of their baptismal vocation; *walking* leads them to solidarity with their brothers and sisters and to the necessary preparation for the meeting with the Lord; the *visit to the Shrine* invites them to listen to the word of God and to sacramental celebration; the *return*, in the end, reminds them of their mission in the world, as witnesses of salvation and builders of peace. (32)

Monsignor Fumio, President of the Pontifical Council, recognises that the contemporary world needs no encouragement to accept the invitation to a journey, to undertake it in the company of others and then return renewed:

This has created a need for the Church to respond: We all know how the modern world is dominated by mobility; by the idea of the journey; by the urge of encounters – not imposed by the requirements of work or place of residence – in different places and with different people; and the requirements for environments to offer, at one and the same time, the opportunity to experience individual identity and to build catholicity in a world open to multi-cultural coexistence.³⁰

The twenty-three Australian Catholic pilgrim participants in this *Camino* project were involved in such a development. They took up the challenge to move out of their accustomed routines and so to place themselves in unaccustomed environments for a time; and then, having completed their journey, to return to the place from which they had set out – hopefully refreshed in body, mind and spirit.

³⁰ Monsignor Fumio Hamao, *Keynote Address: For Pilgrimage Coordinators and Shrine Directors from the United States* (Vatican: Holy See, 2003), p. 2.

From this review of the phenomenology of pilgrimage implicit in the pastoral guidelines related to pilgrimage, it is clear that the Church wishes to promote, in the contemporary context, an awareness of the sacramental life of Christian faith, and to present its attractiveness. The extent to which pilgrimage achieves this end becomes the measure of its capacity to offer a full pastoral response to human beings on the move. Superficially at least, the sacramental resonances of pilgrimage are readily recognised:

- being initiated into a journey;
- engaging in and being enriched on the journey;
- culmination in a ceremony of closure and new life;
- many supportive devotional practices and sacramentals, such as signs, symbols, churches, ceremonies, as well as sacramental roles enacted by local people and fellow *peregrinos*, are always before the pilgrim.

An important consideration, therefore, for this research project, was to explore how well prepared the pilgrims were to understand their pilgrimage as an immersion into the Church's sacramental life. That would presuppose that those concerned had been fully initiated into the meaning and praxis of sacramental existence. For Australians, too, there was a cultural question: how well had the Australian Catholic Church's own involvement in sacramental and devotional practices found a response in the pilgrims concerned? The basic question, therefore, is whether Australian Catholics, prior to embarking on pilgrimage, had been given any understanding the pilgrimage before them as a path to a deeper sacramental and liturgical experience of their faith? Even if the *Camino* offered a definite orientation in that direction, did these Australian pilgrims bring with them a language and interpretative structure to enable them to express the full

range of what they would experience? Were those pastoral strategies as envisaged by the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People, in place for them? The aim of such pastoral strategies envisaged an enriched experience of faith, participation in the Church, and the experience of pilgrimage itself – so that, “in the light of the Word of God and of the age-old tradition of the Church, everyone may share more fully in the spiritual wealth found in the experience of pilgrimages” (1)?

The *Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee* concludes with advice to the pilgrim taken from *A Pilgrim's Way* by an anonymous Russian author:

“By the grace of God, I am a human person and a Christian; by my actions, a great sinner; by my condition as a pilgrim without a roof, of the lowliest species that goes wandering from place to place. My possessions are a sack on my shoulders with a bit of dry bread and a Holy Bible that I carry under my shirt. No other things do I have.” (43)

In short, the Church documents referred to place an emphasis on pilgrimage as a journey of discovery on many levels, supported by “solid and permanent *praxis* in the context of general pastoral care” (2). We now turn to discovery in terms of the pilgrims' interior journey.

5. Spirituality: life's purpose and meaning

The spirituality here referred to is that of the twenty-three Australian Catholic pilgrims who have walked the *Camino* and provided the data for this project. The theological component of the framework of interpretation has been provided by documents dealing with pastoral guidelines for pilgrimages and, more generally, the lineaments of cultural change occurring in the contemporary world. The first words of the

Catechism provide the background for any discussion of spirituality in this particular context:

God, infinitely perfect and blessed in himself, in a plan of sheer goodness freely created man to make him share in his own blessed life. For this reason, at every time and in every place, God draws close to man. He calls him to seek him, to know him, to love him with all his strength. (1)

For the Catholic Church, seeking, knowing, and loving God establishes a framework for the development of spirituality throughout the life cycle. Christian spirituality manifests itself in a mode of experience and understanding:

Faith and the practice of the Gospel provides each person with an experience of life “in Christ,” who enlightens him and makes him able to evaluate the divine realities according to the spirit of God. (2038)

Pope John Paul II’s understanding of spirituality is more specific. At the conclusion of a week of spiritual exercises for the Roman Curia in 1997 he began: “I join you in thanking the Lord for these Spiritual Exercises, which were an extended *experience of intimacy* with the Holy Spirit: He speaks to our heart in silence.”³¹ Also in January 1997, at an ecumenical gathering, John Paul II stated: “Allow me to express to you, above all, my sincere thanks for your kindness and for your expressions of esteem and respect that you have addressed to me. I wish to assure you that I too, feel very pleased to be with you and share this spiritual experience, feeling that Christ, our Master, the Lord, the Redeemer, Christ our hope, is in our midst.”³² Continuing this emphasis on experience in spirituality – now in a new context – the document, *The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee*, states that:

It is necessary to keep in mind, first of all, that evangelisation is the ultimate reason for which the Church proposes and encourages pilgrimages, such that they are transformed into an *experience of deep and mature faith*. (1)

³¹ Pope John Paul II, *Address at the End of the Spiritual Exercises* (Vatican: Holy See, 1997), p. 2.

³² Pope John Paul II, *Address to Participants in an Ecumenical Meeting* (Vatican: Holy See, 1979), p. 1.

And in the following paragraph the document continues:

Through the reflections in this document, it is hoped to offer an aid to all pilgrims and people in charge of the pastoral care of pilgrimages, so that in the light of the Word of God and of the age-old tradition of the Church, everyone may share more fully in the *spiritual wealth found in the experiences of pilgrimages*. (2)

These several examples give some insight into how the Church pastoral guidelines present their understanding of experience in relation to spirituality. There seems to be no intention to offer any kind of narrow definition. In fact, it could be argued that the language moves through several dimensions. Experience as related to spirituality can be used to describe either a single experience or an experience extended over a period of time. Common to all the above references is a theocentric orientation and an eschatological dimension. God draws the believer into deeper intimacy with himself, and promises a fulfilment of our journey through time and space in the life of the world to come. In this respect, the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People offers an understanding of the human person as called by God and, through God's gift, enabled to understand and response to the divine initiative.

The *Catechism's* reference to “waiting for what God has promised: new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness will be at home (2 Peter 2:13)” leads to two crucial questions. Firstly, what is the future of humankind? And secondly, given the earlier reference to the human person as intrinsically connected to the material world, what is the future of the earth itself? As is also stated in the *Catechism*:

At the end of time, the Kingdom of God will come to its fullness. After the universal judgement, the righteous will reign for ever with Christ, glorified in body and soul. The universe itself will be renewed. (1042)

A continuity of body and soul is clearly specified “after the universal judgment” and, secondly, the renewal of the universe is signalled in some shape or form. The *Catechism* continues to emphasise these eschatological dimensions. With regard to the human person, it states that: “for man, this consummation will be the final realisation of the unity of the human race, which God willed from creation” (1045). Finally, the *Catechism* is careful to define the future of the human body. It states:

“We believe in the true resurrection of this flesh that we now possess” (Council of Lyons II: DS 854). We sow a corruptible body in the tomb, but he raises up an incorruptible body, a “spiritual body” (cf. 1 Cor 15:42-44). (1017)

In simply stating that God “calls man to seek him, to know him, to love him with all his strength” (1), the *Catechism* gives a clear description of what the purpose and meaning of life is until that eternal home is reached.

All of this has a bearing on pilgrimage. The essential dignity of the person, body and soul, and the hope for a transformed creation bears on the identity of pilgrims – their sense of self, and of the ultimate destiny toward which they are moving. The path of the pilgrim is both a place and a movement. In the consciousness of the pilgrim, a sense of God’s creative presence, the integrity of our human experience, the human immersion in the cosmos, and the hope for transformation in life eternal, converge. To that degree, the pilgrim path is one of spirituality and contemplation, promising at every step a fuller integration of the physical and the spiritual, the human and the cosmic, the transcendent and the immanent.

The potential spiritual wealth of pilgrim experiences is not to be underestimated. When pilgrims on the *Camino* set out on the pilgrim way, they are immersed, without the customary boundaries, in the immediacy of that part of the cosmos surrounding them.

Through their pilgrim attire and their role as people on the way they show visible signs which evoke the image of the pilgrim Christ, and they walk a trail which is redolent with a sense of sacred time, place and space. The totality of their experience is encapsulated when they place their footprints on the scallop shell in the *Plaza del Obradoiro*, located immediately in front of the sacred destination, the Cathedral of Santiago. They leave from this pilgrim world to return to their old world in a new way, wearing the signs of their experience and the spirituality that attends it.

Our presentation of the theological and spiritual dimensions of pilgrimage has relied heavily on pastoral statements emanating from various Catholic Church offices. We have yet to address a further stage of theoretical reflection dealing with the taxonomy of responses and reactions on the part of the pilgrims involved (Chapter 6), and the psychodynamics of change (Chapter 7). We now move on to a larger frame of reference so as to prepare a comprehensive sense of pilgrimage and to develop language adequate to it.

CHAPTER 5

**A LARGER FRAMEWORK OF THEOLOGICAL
AND PSYCHOLOGICAL REFERENCE**

Having sketched the theological framework in the Church pastoral guidelines on pilgrimage, culture and allied topics, we now enlarge the field of reference although, as will be clear, the material treated in this chapter parallels to a considerable extent the division employed in the previous chapter, 4. This somewhat lengthier exposition is shaped in accordance with the following seven main headings, and the various subheadings included:

1. Thinking, feeling and walking
 - a. Human nature: psychological considerations
 - b. Thinking, feeling, and walking: some theorists' views
2. Oneing with the kaleidoscope of creation
3. Steps on the Journey
 - a. The hallowed traditions of the *Camino*
 - b. Iconography and symbolism: the Apostle James
 - c. Iconography: an excursus on St Mary MacKillop
 - d. Shadows
 - e. Salvific suffering
4. The call, the journey
5. Culture
 - a. Tourism and movement by Australians

b. Australian culture

c. Australian Catholic culture

6. Three theories on how people change

7. Spirituality

1. Thinking, feeling and walking

There is no universally agreed position on what constitutes a human person. Behavioural researchers extensively treat of a variety of developmental models focused on such issues as the dynamics of being human, the development of the human person over time, and the phenomenon of change in the individual's course of life. Depending on the philosophical/ theological outlook of the researcher, hypotheses are entertained as to the existence or otherwise of an integrated self, the actual points of change-readiness, the various forms of intervention that can be used to promote change, and the efficacy or otherwise of these interventions. The authors referred to below are expert representatives in these fields, and so figure as prime points of reference in this research topic. Nonetheless, in keeping with the exploratory style of this project, an interactive process continues between theoretical positions as found in the literature and the growing body of experiential material collected from the pilgrim participants. As outlined already, the methodology adopted included some pilgrims as co-authors¹ of the project. These pilgrims were able to assist in identifying parallels to what commentators and experts were proposing in their research on a more theoretical or analytical plane.²

¹ The growing interest in active participant involvement in qualitative research has spawned a language to express the types of involvement. In Chapter 2 the words chosen in this research were co-authoring and co-auditing. However, other expressions have been used which have proven useful and in future work may be adopted, e.g., collaborators.

² See Chapter 2 above for a more detailed explanation of co-authoring. See also Miles and Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, p. 34.

a. Human nature: psychological considerations

The work of Haberman and Stevenson³ nicely sums up the common debates amongst psychologists on the subject of human nature. Their work recognises the idiosyncratic tendencies of theoreticians in this field. Importantly, the authors referred to acknowledge that the characteristics of particular theories of human development can and need be tested against the subjective experience and self-knowledge and self-expression of individuals, especially of those committed to reflect on such issues. That is to suggest that in personal consciousness and self-awareness and in our capacity to reflect on the experiences of life, each individual can be regarded as an expert on their own existence, and be in a position to contribute self-reflectively to theoretical developments in the formation of theories regarding the status and constitution of the human person. Haberman and Stevenson's recognition of the value of such an interactive process has had applications in the methodology of this research. Our project attempts, as far as possible, to balance the contributions of expert theories with the data collected through personal stories.

Haberman and Stevenson cast their net wide. They consider the human person in such diverse contexts as the thought of Confucianism, Hinduism, the Judaeo-Christian Scriptures, Plato, Kant, Marx, Freud, Sartre, Skinner and Lorenz. From this emerges a sense of the range and diversity of thought on the most personal and intimate of topics – what it means to be an individual human being. Under the heading “Rival Conceptions of Human Nature”, they write:

³ David Haberman and Leslie Stevenson, *Ten Theories of Human Nature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 89.

So much depends on a conception of human nature, for individuals, the meaning and purpose of our lives, what we ought to do or strive for, what we may hope to achieve or to become; for human societies, what vision of human community we may hope to work towards and what sort of social changes we should make. Our answers to all these huge questions depend on whether we think there is some true or innate nature of human beings. If so, what is it? Is it different for men and women? Or is there no such “essential” human nature, only a capacity to be moulded by the social environment, by economic, political, and cultural forces?⁴

They then proceed to articulate the view that, whatever one’s theory is of the human person, that view is not neutral, but can be constitutive – i.e., bringing with it subordinate precepts and demands on the human person’s life. In other words, any such view can be more than constitutive, even potentially subjugative and oppressive:

Different conceptions of human nature lead to different views about what we ought to do and how we can do it. If an all-powerful and supremely good God made us, then it is His purpose that defines what we can be and what we ought to be, and we must look to Him for help. If, on the other hand, we are products of society, and if we find that our lives are unsatisfactory, then there can be no real solution until human society is transformed. If we are radically free and can never escape the necessity for individual choice, then we have to accept this and make our choices with full awareness of what we are doing. If our biological nature predisposes or determines us to think, feel, and act in certain ways, then we must take realistic account of that.⁵

In their survey of select theories of human nature, Haberman and Stevenson make the point that all the theories treated exhibit elements of a common structure:

- a background theory about the world;
- a basic theory of the nature of human beings;
- a diagnosis of what is wrong with us;
- a prescription for putting it right.

They then proceed to group theories according to such themes relating to the soul, mental powers and operations, states of consciousness, social conditioning, physical activity, evolutionary development and emergence, emotional states, and physiology of the brain.

⁴ Haberman and Stevenson, *Ten Theories of Human Nature*, p. 3.

⁵ Haberman and Stevenson, *Ten Theories of Human Nature*, p. 4.

Given this spectrum of possible perspectives, Haberman and Stevenson are led humbly to conclude, “To hope to finish this book with some final or complete truth about human nature would be foolish. Final truths do not seem to be given to us finite human beings.”⁶ Not alone amongst commentators, they stress the importance of the human person, and the life-learnings which give each person the particular lived theory of who they are:

At the end of a book that presents such a lot of generalizing and theorizing, it is worth reminding ourselves how much understanding of human nature we acquire in a practical non-theoretical way from our experience of particular cases. Foremost, of course, come our own individual experiences of life – the people we have had dealings with, and the communities and cultures we have lived in.⁷

Before proceeding to our own analysis based on available theory, we enter a caution deriving from the particular character of this project. This exploratory project does not differentiate between factors such as age or gender. However, we do note that theories of human nature can impact on certain groups in different ways. Theoretical models, in defining certain attributes, exclude others. Most theoreticians do this in some way or another. The exclusions can range from women, to the intellectually impaired, to the mentally ill, to minority groups. For example, Haberman and Stevenson write about their own text:

Feminism demands more of a response than the very minimal adjustment we made in the second edition. But it seemed difficult to pick out a single representative feminist figure or theory for consideration. What we have tried to do is to indicate what each of the theories says or implies about women, and we have used gender-neutral language throughout.⁸

⁶ Haberman and Stevenson, *Ten Theories of Human Nature*, p. 225.

⁷ Haberman and Stevenson, *Ten Theories of Human Nature*, p. 231.

⁸ Haberman and Stevenson, *Ten Theories of Human Nature*, p. 4.

It can be noted here, following Haberman and Stevenson's line of thought on privilege, that a number of the participants in this research drew attention to privilege in their own lives as Australians resulting in personal capacities and resources enabling them to consider undertaking such a costly and lengthy exercise as the *Camino* in Spain.

b. Thinking, feeling, and walking: some theorists' views

Further to the reflections on thinking, feeling and walking that were presented in the previous chapter in relation to Church pastoral guidelines, the views of a number of other theorists can now be rehearsed.

An example of a particular *thinking* style promoted by neuropsychologists and others has been that of "mindfulness". Three authors are of note. Thich Nhat Hanh published on this topic in 1988, with a foreword by the Dalai Lama who wrote: "Thich Nhat Hanh begins by teaching mindfulness of breathing and awareness of the small acts of our daily lives, and then shows us how to use the benefits of mindfulness and concentration to transform and heal difficult psychological states. Finally he shows us the connection between personal, inner peace and peace on Earth."⁹ Secondly, representative of recent scholarship on mindfulness is *Mindfulness and Psychotherapy* which offers several insights relevant to this research:

The term *mindfulness* is an English translation of the Pali word *sati*. Pali was the language of Buddhist psychology 2,500 years ago, and mindfulness is the core teaching of the tradition. The short definition of *mindfulness* is (1) *awareness*, (2) *of present experience*, (3) *with acceptance*.¹⁰

Thirdly, an example of recent research interests into mindfulness can be summed

⁹ Thich Nhat Hanh, *Peace Is Every Step: The Path of Mindfulness in Everyday Life* (London: Random House, 1991), p. vii.

¹⁰ Christopher Germer, Ronald Siegel, and Paul Fulton, *Mindfulness and Psychotherapy* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2005), p.5.

up as follows:

The publication by Teasdale et al. in 2000 of an effective mindfulness-based treatment for chronic depression kindled interest in mindfulness among cognitive-behavioural researchers. The potential of these mindfulness and acceptance-based approaches is ushering in a new wave of empirically based treatments for familiar problems. (Hayes, Follete, & Linehan 2004; Hayes, Masuda, Bissett, Luoma & Guerrero, 2004)¹¹

From a more socio-biological point of view, approaches to an understanding of the various orientations of brain activity and cognition have received major emphasis from the new technologies in brain-activity mapping, through such techniques as Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI). Some of this work has also placed a focus on what is described as consciousness, with parallels to mindfulness. *The Scientific American Book of the Brain* includes three contributions under the title of “consciousness”.¹² All three papers agree “that conscious experience is at once the most familiar thing in the world and the most mysterious.” Horgan notes that “a growing number of scientists have dared to address what is simultaneously the most elusive and inescapable of all phenomena: consciousness, our immediate, subjective awareness of the world and of ourselves.”¹³ Koch, in the same text, argues for the position that “consciousness stems from a process that combines attention with short-term memory”,¹⁴ while Krick and Koch maintain that:

The overwhelming question in neurobiology today is the relation between the mind and the brain. Everyone agrees that what we know as mind is closely related to certain aspects of the behaviour of the brain, not the heart, as Aristotle thought. Its most mysterious aspect is consciousness or awareness, which can take many forms from the experience of pain to self-consciousness.¹⁵

¹¹ Germer and Others, *Mindfulness and Psychotherapy*, p. 11.

¹² Antonio R. Damasio, *The Scientific American Book of the Brain* (Connecticut: The Lyons Press, 1999), p. 287.

¹³ Damasio, *The Scientific American Book of the Brain*, p. 298.

¹⁴ Damasio, *The Scientific American Book of the Brain*, p. 303.

¹⁵ Damasio, *The Scientific American Book of the Brain*, p. 321.

Antonio Damasio, the editor of *The Scientific American Book of the Brain*, has also published on this subject under his own name. In this work he extensively analyses the relationship between consciousness and emotion. For this current research, the applications he gives to the practice of consciousness would seem of most relevance. He writes:

The dream of the human condition comes solely from consciousness. Of course, consciousness and its revelations allow us to create a better life for ourselves and others, but the price we pay for that better life is high. It is not just the price of risk and danger and pain. It is the price of *knowing* risk, danger and pain. Worse even: it is the price of knowing what pleasure is and *knowing* when it is missing or unattainable.¹⁶

His conclusion is that “knowing will help being.” This has considerable relevance to the aims of this research in that when pilgrims take on the persona of homeless travellers – in entirely new environments of time and space – their very being is affected through exposure to new knowledge. As Coleman and Elsner point out: “A pilgrimage can be a rite of passage involving transformations of one’s inner state and outer status; it may be a quest for a transcendent goal.”¹⁷ Stewart and Cohen also attempt to shed some light on exactly what consciousness actually is. They write: “Consciousness ... is not just awareness, but a kind of introspective awareness in which the possessor has a definite feeling of individuality. A conscious being has an ‘I’ in its mind, *and it knows that it has.*”¹⁸

The question before this research is the place of thinking, together with all its facets such as awareness, consciousness, interpreting, and judging in the experience of

¹⁶ Damasio, *The Feelings of What Happens: Body, Emotion and the Making of Consciousness*, p. 316.

¹⁷ Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, p. 6.

¹⁸ Ian Stewart and Jack Cowen, *Figment of Reality: The Evolution of the Curious Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 202.

pilgrimage. Is there an orientation of thinking one can adopt for living? Is it enabling or otherwise? Does pilgrimage encourage a particular experience of thinking, and if so what does that mean for spiritual growth? For example, while the particular theories reviewed are predominantly designed around awareness, other theories focus on the brain's capacity to make decisions and judgments. An example of this type of theory development focusing on a range of attributes including the place of judgement in thinking is that of Sigmund Freud. James Strachey suggests that "quite late in his life, indeed, influenced by the ambiguity of the term 'unconscious' and its many conflicting uses, Freud proposed a new structural account of the mind in which the uncoordinated instinctual trends were called the 'id', the organised realistic part the 'ego', and the critical and moralising function the 'super-ego'."¹⁹ For the pilgrims connected with this research, the issue that remains to be investigated is what facets of thinking have dominated their lives previously, and whether, post-*Camino*, there have been different balances of these, which may add value to their lived spirituality.²⁰

In summary, it is true that there are more disagreements than agreements among psychologists with regard to the brain and intellectual functioning. Still, the representative theories outlined above do provide language and conceptual frameworks with which to interpret human experiences on a pilgrim trail. They serve our ability to interpret and reflect on the condition of the human person, change over time, and brain

¹⁹ Albert Dickson, *Sigmund Freud: Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, vol. 1 (Reading: Cox & Wyman Ltd, 1976), p. 21.

²⁰ For insights into current research into brain functioning, particularly that focussed on the neuroplasticity of the brain, its application to changes in brain functioning, and how this is, or can be, achieved, see Norman Doige, *The Brain That Changes Itself* (Melbourne: Scribe Publications, 2007). Appendix 1, "The Culturally Modified Brain", is of particular relevance to this piece of research where it focuses on the relationship between brain and culture. One sentence, in particular, has application for the experiences of pilgrims immersed in a different culture: "we all have what might be called a culturally modified brain, and as cultures evolve, they continually lead to new changes in the brain" (p. 288).

functioning itself in relation to such concepts such as attentiveness, mindfulness, decision-making, malfunctioning, and superior and lower hierarchies. Into this mosaic of theories is to be placed the experience of the twenty-three pilgrims who participated in this research, their own human condition and their own ways of cognitive processing as related to opportunities for spiritual growth. In other words, these twenty-three people made decisions or had them made for them, about what directions their thinking could take while they were on a pilgrimage.

Turning now to the theme of *feeling*, it is to be noted that theories which relate to affect or feelings would seem not to have been as well developed as those on thinking. The notable exception is the *Journal of Rational Emotive and Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (REBT)*. In describing REBT, Bloch²¹ presents a table which outlines the intersection of emotional therapies with other therapies. As such, the aims of these emotion-inclusive therapies are to give relief to the patient from erratic feelings by replacing irrational thinking with rational thinking. The publications of Daniel Goleman shed further light on these issues of affect. Goleman's approach is to apply modern technological advances in studying the brain via such applications as RMI's. In the introduction to his text he writes:

Sociobiologists point to the pre-eminence of heart over head at (such) crucial moments when they conjecture about why evolution has given emotion such a central role in the human psyche. Our emotions, they say, guide us in facing predicaments and tasks too important to leave to intellect alone – danger, painful loss, persisting toward a goal despite frustrations, bonding with a mate, building a family. Each emotion offers a distinctive readiness to act; each points us in a direction that has worked well to handle the recurring challenges of human life.²²

²¹ Sidney Bloch, *An Introduction to the Psychotherapies*, Fourth ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 171.

²² Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than I.Q.*, Paperback ed. (London: Bloomsbury, 1996), p. 4.

Goleman calls on the contemporary research undertaken on brain structures by neurological scientists to support his thesis. In “Appendix C: the neural circuitry of fear”, he reports that:

In a real sense we have two minds, one that thinks and one that feels. These two fundamentally different ways of knowing interact to construct our mental life. One, the rational mind, is the mode of comprehension of which we are typically conscious: more prominent in awareness, thoughtful, able to ponder and reflect. But alongside that there is another system of knowing: impulsive and powerful, if sometimes illogical – the emotional mind.²³

Precisely in relation to the *Camino*, Tony Kevin provides a lyrical account of the effect of the pilgrimage on his state of feeling:

I believe that God spoke a healing word to me in Spain. God restored my hope in possibilities for the fullness of life. I don't yet know if the pilgrimage will make me a better person. It has already made me a happier, more relaxed person. I appreciate more intensely the blessings of every extra day spent with my family, the rich joys of ordinary family life and domesticity, of every precious day in which my young children grow up in my care. I am happier in my society, despite my keen knowledge of its present serious problems.²⁴

It would appear, then, that feelings come into prominence alongside thinking.

With the advances in medical technology, it could be expected that this exploration and theory development will progress even further. Already, however, the participants themselves had their own personal theories on the meaning of “affect” and the best way to describe and interpret it in the language of spirituality. Given the particularly concrete experience of the *Camino* presumed in this project, it is appropriate that the participants' personal experience and reflection be respected as contributing to more theoretical kinds of analysis.

²³ Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, p. 8.

²⁴ Kevin, *Walking the Camino*, p. 295.

And so to the third aspect of pilgrim experience, namely *walking*. The physical element of walking on a pilgrim trail places the body in sharp focus. Its capacity and its contribution to the success or otherwise of the pilgrimage make it an object of particular interest. In relation to the *Camino* itself, there is abundant literature on physical issues. It moves from such mundane information (e.g., what equipment to take) to what can be learnt from bodily experience during the pilgrimage. A notable example of the experiences and effects of a pilgrimage on the body is provided by Joyce Rupp. The physical capacity of the author became a central issue in her pilgrimage to the extent that Rupp made the walking aspect of it the title of her book. Rupp describes how she settled on the actual title. She had written to an old friend who had walked the *Camino* before her, seeking advice about the walk. In response, she received a very short note from him:

He then went on to describe how he met an old man in one of the refugios during the second week. This old man looked at his blistered feet and advised: ‘Drink more water and walk in a relaxed manner’ ... When he slowed down and drank more water his blisters left and, at the same time, his peace of mind and heart returned.²⁵

Rupp also interprets her own reactions to her body as an indicator of her

“embeddedness”²⁶ in her own culture:

We soon discovered that the rushing and pushing caused us to lose our enjoyment of the walk itself. We left home in order to experience the freedom of *getting away from it all* but we simply took the tensions with us in new forms. The *place* of our stress changed but we had not changed. We continued to strain and groan under the desires and expectations of achievement and accomplishment – goals which our culture thrives on and implants in us almost from birth.²⁷

²⁵ Rupp, *Walk in a Relaxed Manner*, p. 54.

²⁶ See below the discussion by Robert Kegan on “embeddedness”.

²⁷ Rupp, *Walk in a Relaxed Manner*, p. 56.

Rupp's concluding reflection has significant affinities with the material presented in the previous chapter from the *Catechism*.²⁸

I thought I knew how much my body's condition affected my mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being but I had to relearn that important truth on the *Camino*. I became even more convinced that my body and spirit are friends, not enemies. Each influences the other to be alive and alert. How I feel physically affects how I am on other levels of my being. My *self* is a whole *self*, not a *self* with many individual compartments that exist separately. I now know if I am to have peace and well-being, I cannot ignore either body or spirit on my life's journey.²⁹

On the physical aspects of pilgrimage, Robinson writes:

There is almost an expectation that a pilgrimage needs to contain a challenging physical ingredient in order for it to be a pilgrimage at all. It is as if the physicality of the experience is part of the defining experience of pilgrimage. Without the hardship, a journey, even if undertaken for spiritual motives, comes much closer to a holiday or outing. So, in a strange way, the pilgrim rejoices in the dangers, difficulties and hardships. The toil of the journey enables the pilgrim to identify with the sufferings of Christ.³⁰

Like Rupp, Robinson's considerations also touch on the unity between body and soul. He chooses words such as "spiritual" and "physical" when describing this interrelatedness: "There seems to be a strange relationship between the spiritual and the physical. To challenge the physical dimension by denying the usual tendency to indulge the needs or desires of the body, can allow the spiritual space to grow."³¹ Robinson had earlier drawn attention to the fact that, as the culture of the trail emerged with the large numbers of pilgrims that followed it – said to be up to a million every year between the ninth and the eleventh centuries – suffering was in fact the impetus for pilgrimage. It was an essential dimension of the way to forgiveness of sins in *Santiago de Compostela* and the receiving of plenary indulgences: "Pilgrims travel in search of forgiveness of sins

²⁸ See in the literature review under Church pastoral guidelines quotations from the *Catechism* on the relationship between body and soul, and the human person's progress through and beyond life on earth.

²⁹ Rupp, *Walk in a Relaxed Manner*, p. 95.

³⁰ Robinson, *Sacred Places, Pilgrim Paths*, p. 84.

³¹ Robinson, *Sacred Places, Pilgrim Paths*, p. 84.

committed and so search for cleansing. A few travel as a form of punishment inflicting hardship on themselves as they go. Others journey in the hope of physical and inner spiritual healing. But above all, pilgrims travel in search of God and so hope to find themselves.”³²

Finally, Palmer clearly brings out the links between his walking experience and thinking and feeling:

Walking is a fascinating exercise. Attend carefully and walking tells us our mood or our attitude of mind and heart. It can point to our peace or our discomfort, it can reflect our purpose, boredom, hesitancy, uncertainty, the action of walking can inspire us, or can turn us inward in reflection or outward to others. It can be a time for acute observation, listening to people or attentiveness to the heart.³³

Indeed, the interrelatedness of thinking, feeling, and walking is at least implied in all these accounts. The PDM Taskforce of the Alliance of Psychoanalytic Organisations adds a further dimension to this when it recognises quite clearly that all three activities need to be attended to in the diagnosis and treatment of mental illness. Part of the brief of the PDM Taskforce was to develop a taxonomy of classifications based on psychodynamic theory. The approach is explained in the following terms:

1. Our taxonomy is geared toward the one central purpose of individualised case formulation, and treatment planning for psychoanalytic (psychodynamic) therapy and other therapies that address the full range and depth of human cognitive, emotional and behavioural functioning.³⁴
2. A developmental framework for depth psychology explores the formation of our most distinctly human capacities, such as relating, feeling, and reflecting.³⁵
3. It is clear that efforts over the last 50 years to develop a purely descriptive nosology of mental illness have encountered increasing difficulty that has necessitated several unsuccessful revisions with yet another revision currently in

³² Robinson, *Sacred Places, Pilgrim Paths*, p. 11.

³³ Palmer, "Dancing with Shadows", p. 9.

³⁴ PDM Taskforce, *Psychodynamic Diagnostic Manual* (Silver Springs, MD: Alliance of Psychoanalytic Organisations, 2006), p. 14.

³⁵ *Psychodynamic Diagnostic Manual*, p. 472.

progress. Lurking behind this descriptive effort are three conceptual frameworks of reference: cognitive behavioural, biological, and psychodynamic ... There is a need for a comprehensive conceptual frame of reference. The psychodynamic frame of reference is offered as the only approach capable of the comprehensiveness needed to incorporate the cognitive-behavioural and biological frames of reference.³⁶

The PDM Taskforce's aim was to undertake a comprehensive scoping of the elements contributing to mental health and mental illness. The authors developed a taxonomy framework as their way of proceeding. Although the current *Camino* research project is not the place to consider mental health diagnoses and effects through pilgrimage, some parallels can still be drawn. The PDM Task Force's text places the ingredients for mental health clearly in the domain of how individuals manage their intellectual, emotional, and behavioural functioning. Pilgrimage experience includes these three dimensions of functioning, even though in this respect the goal is intended not as promoting mental health, but as deepening the pilgrims' spirituality.

In summary, this review of thinking, feeling and walking in the context of what it means to be human may well provide language and contextual meaning for presenting the experience of pilgrims. As stated above, the final decision on how these aspects of the human person should be codified as a pilgrimage experience rested particularly on the reflections of the twenty-three Australian pilgrim participants in this research project.

2. *Oneing* with the kaleidoscope of creation

The natural environment in which the pilgrims placed themselves would seem to be self-explanatory – aspects such as time, space, landscape, and the whole world of God's creation. Nonetheless, many of aspects have drawn the attention of commentators

³⁶ *Psychodynamic Diagnostic Manual*, p. 505.

during and after their experience of pilgrimage. Palmer observed while on his pilgrimage that: "To live in the present is to live a life informed at every point by an awareness of the One who is always present to all people at all time."³⁷ Mary Wilkie, an Australian, is one of those rare pilgrims who, at 59 years of age, walked unaided an amazing distance of some 1800 kilometres from the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris to the Cathedral of Santiago. At one point on her pilgrimage she wrote in her diary: "I was on the road a little after nine and had a good walk through alpine country, which offered some very long views backed by distant mountains. It was like walking on top of the world."³⁸ In the epilogue to her work, she speaks of a new sense of time and distance: "To see distance in terms of a day's walk makes the world larger."³⁹ Theresa Burkhardt-Felder, an Australian now living in Switzerland with her husband, where they have created a private museum for Australian Aboriginal art, walked the *Camino* from St Jean-Pied-de-Port to Santiago de Compostela in 1999, some 850 kilometres. She introduces her book as follows:

For people like my husband and me, middle-aged and comfortably ensconced in our private and professional lives, this pilgrimage was a challenging undertaking. We allowed ourselves two months in order to absorb, without haste, the enchantment of the journey. Spiritual rejuvenation arose almost imperceptibly as we progressed.⁴⁰

While pilgrims place themselves in a position where they are also continually close to the natural environment, at the same time, they are constantly engaged in open conversation with others on the way. This element of intercultural experience is treated here for several reasons. Kindred wayfarers and local communities form a sizable

³⁷ Palmer, "Dancing with Shadows", p. 6.

³⁸ Mary Wilkie, *Walking to Santiago: Diary of a Pilgrimage* (Armidale: Cranleigh House, University of New England, 2001), p. 142.

³⁹ Wilkie, *Walking to Santiago*, p. 246.

⁴⁰ Theresa Burkhardt-Felder, *Pray for Me in Santiago: Walking the Ancient Pilgrim Road to Santiago De Compostela* (Fremantle: Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 2005), p. 13.

interactive part of pilgrimage. The question of how the pilgrim is equipped to deal with this aspect of the journey takes on considerable importance. There are two aspects in particular: the dynamic of the human person in inter-relationships; and secondly, the interpretation by the pilgrim of the interaction, including interpretation in spiritual terms.

Goleman's most recent text gives some indication of where research is heading. He writes: "In this book I aim to lift the curtain on an emerging science, one that almost daily reveals startling new insights into our interpersonal world. The most fundamental revelation of this new discipline: we are wired to connect ... even our most routine encounters act as regulators in the brain, priming our emotions, some desirable, others not."⁴¹ In the Appendix, Goleman provides a short explanation of the work of the neuroscientists in the field dealing with the workings of the brain itself. He considers, for example, whether there exist discrete, interconnected and/or complex areas, and whether there are different areas of circuitry in such areas as the prefrontal cortex, the parietal areas, and the neuron system. He gives examples of how these various areas operate in interpersonal situations: "Other mirror neurons involved in movement activate when we simply observe someone else's action – including the intricate dance of gestures and body shifts that are part of any conversation. Cells in the right parietal operculum that encode kinaesthetic and sensory feedback go to work as we orchestrate our movements in response to our conversational partner." He refers to the priming of circuitry by mirror neurons "when it comes to reading and responding to the emotional messages in another's tone of voice", or the cerebellum "keeping our attention well targeted so that we can monitor the other person, picking up even subtle cues of fleeting facial

⁴¹ Daniel Goleman, *Social Intelligence: The New Science of Human Relationships* (London: Hutchinson, 2006), p. 4.

expressions.”⁴²

In interpreting what this could mean in a human person’s life, Goleman considers:

The fact that we can trigger *any* emotion at all in someone else – or they in us – testifies to the powerful mechanism by which one person’s feelings spread to another ... such a contagion can occur with many people at one time, as visibly as when an audience mists up at a tragic movie scene, or as subtly as the tone of a meeting turning a bit testy.⁴³

In his reflective final chapter, “What Really Matters”, the author prefaces his remarks with the evidence of research around the world which has indicated that “nourishing relationships are the single most universally agreed-upon feature of a good life ... all people everywhere deem warm connections with others to be the core feature of optimal human existence.”⁴⁴ He concludes:

We need not accept the divisions that hatred breeds, but rather extend our empathy to understand one another despite our differences, and to bridge those divides. The social brain’s wiring connects us all at our common core.⁴⁵

In summary, the question emerges: how, along with the way knowing and feeling are understood, does the understanding of interpersonal and intercultural experience illuminate the pilgrim experience? How were the attitudes and experiences of the twenty-three Australian Catholic pilgrim participants clarified and illuminated in their relationships with others on the *Camino*. Goleman’s reflections would seem to have significant application to the experience of pilgrimage where much intercultural dialogue can happen. This is more the case if, in his view, we are searching in the first place, not so much for personal well-being, but for the attainment of connectedness with our common core.

⁴² Goleman, *Social Intelligence*, pp. 124-125.

⁴³ Goleman, *Social Intelligence*, p. 16.

⁴⁴ Goleman, *Social Intelligence*, p. 312.

⁴⁵ Goleman, *Social Intelligence*, p. 319.

3. Steps on the Journey

Background literature for this topic has already been partially covered in Chapter 1 in the section on “The *Camino*: history and the Australian connection.” It was pointed out that the *Camino* is a sacred way replete with iconography, sacred objects, sacred symbols, and sacred ceremonies.

a. The hallowed traditions of the *Camino*

The concept of the pilgrim as participating in the journey of humanity over time is referred to by Aviva as “palimpsest”.⁴⁶ This is a constant theme in literature on the *Camino*. Wilkie, for example, expresses her sense of connectedness with the past as follows: “When now I read of anyone doing the pilgrimage in the Middle Ages I can identify with their experience. This has also given me a reference point in that period, an era which I have begun to read about since my return.”⁴⁷ Nootboom marvels at these ancient achievements: “Yet, the pilgrims of old, trekking from hospice to hospice, separated by an eternity from the security of their homes and having another thousand kilometres to go, were undaunted.”⁴⁸

Nootboom makes telling reference to these hallowed traditions in his reflection on the slow movement of pilgrims through the centuries and their taking time to mark the trail with memorable constructions: “Memories in language and stone still exist; like a chain set with gems, the churches, inns and place names commemorate a pious zeal that is unimaginable today, a piety that drove Christians to that distant corner of windswept Galicia for hundreds of years.” Drawing a parallel between the journey to *Santiago de*

⁴⁶ For Aviva’s use of “palimpsest” see *Following the Milky Way*, p. 25.

⁴⁷ Wilkie, *Walking to Santiago*, p. 246.

⁴⁸ Nootboom, *Roads to Santiago*, p. 324.

Compostela and the pilgrimage to Mecca, Nootboom concludes with a wry observation: “but they now travel in ships, planes and coaches. For them, too, the longer they live the less time they have.”⁴⁹

b. Iconography and symbolism: the Apostle James

The importance of both iconography and symbolism in a pilgrim trail cannot be over-stated. Iconography is intrinsically built into a pilgrim way. One example of the importance of iconography is that of shrines. For instance, The Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People published a major text on shrines under the title *The Shrine: Memory, Presence and Prophecy of the Living God*. On the connection between pilgrimage and sacred remembrances, the Council writes: “One can find the entire history of the pilgrim church reflected in countless shrines.”⁵⁰

Melczer’s rich reflection on *The Iconography of St James* deserves special comment. His work describes the apostle’s relationships with the pilgrims and the *Camino* and highlights the pilgrims and the local people as holy persons. The author’s interpretation of the iconography of James has much in common with the concept of prefiguration that was discussed above in the context of Church pastoral guidelines. In regard to the iconography of James, Melczer writes: “It shows St James as a pilgrim on his way to or from Santiago.” He proposes that, normally, “within the pyramidal structure of Christian hierarchical organisation ... the Lord is followed and imitated by the apostles; the apostles are followed and imitated each by his own disciples; each saint is

⁴⁹ Nootboom, *Roads to Santiago*, p. 50.

⁵⁰ Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, *The Shrine: Memory, Presence and Prophecy of the Living God* (Vatican: Holy See, 1999), p. 1.

followed by a throng of his or her own devotees, and so on.”⁵¹ He then goes on to ask, Why would Santiago himself be described, as a pilgrim? The only plausible answer seems to rest on the notion of the saint’s spiritual self-effacing identification with his devotees, as pilgrims make their way to his tomb. Melczer goes further than observing that Santiago takes his persona from his devotees. He also points towards the iconography of the pilgrim Christ on the *Camino*. In particular, he draws attention to the fact that:

[On] one of the most sublime reliefs of the entire repertory of Romanesque art in *Santo Domingo de Silos*, Christ himself is represented as a pilgrim to Santiago. That Christ is not merely a wayfarer, hence entitled to a staff and a pouch, but a pilgrim to Santiago, unmistakably determined by a scallop shell on his *escalera*. The theological anomaly concerning St James and his devotees has come now full circle. It is Christ himself who turns into a pilgrim of Santiago.⁵²

For Melczer, the pilgrims come to imagine James as they walk and so realise and embody for others the clearly manifest persona of Santiago. More deeply, the pilgrim comes to understand the experience of the trail as a prefigurement of the pilgrim Christ – and this resonates with the experience of those making the pilgrimage to *Santiago de Compostela*.⁵³ In this connection, Palmer enumerates the scriptural passages in which the pilgrim Christ appears:

The Gospels give some insights into how Jesus walked. He was wearied with his journey [John 4:6]. He was resolute in his footsteps [Luke 9:51]. He was observant of the circumstances of others [Luke 7.12] ... Sometimes he walked alone [Mark 1:35: 6:45] at other times he looked for company [Mark 2:1]. Sometimes Jesus walked ahead of his disciples, as though he was pre-occupied [Mark 10:32] at other times they walked as a group [Mark 10:46]. On some occasions there was a destination in view [Mark 11: 12-15] on other occasions he was just walking around the place [Mark 11:27]. Jesus talked to Peter about how as a young man he could choose where to walk, but as an older man he would be taken where he did not want to go [John 21:18]. Sometimes Jesus appears to have

⁵¹ Melczer, *The Pilgrim's Guide*, p. 66.

⁵² Melczer, *The Pilgrim's Guide*, p. 68.

⁵³ Melczer, *The Pilgrim's Guide*, pp. 64-68.

walked purposefully [Luke 4:13] at other times he seems to have walked with such a sense of presence that people could not touch him [Luke 4:30].

Palmer's reflection on the pilgrim Christ then turns specifically to walking and the feet:

Jesus showed his love by washing their feet. Feet change through walking. They become cut and bruised; they develop blisters, swellings, or calluses; we get strained ankles and ligaments; they become twisted or flattened; sometimes toes become dislocated or tendons torn. The feet that Jesus washed were those of his disciples. They had been injured because they had walked with him. As Jesus washed their feet he would have noticed that.⁵⁴

The experience of the Australian Catholic pilgrims of being treated as holy persons while on the *Camino*, especially by the local people, is of particular interest to this research project. This reverence shown by the locals is so obvious that one would think it would have at least some impact on the pilgrims. This characteristic of the *Camino* will be explored as part of the analysis of their reflections.

c. Iconography: an excursus on St Mary MacKillop

Sacred imagery and iconography have particular importance in the Australian context, given the growing momentum towards pilgrimage to St Mary MacKillop's shrine. Since Mary's beatification and now leading up to and after her canonisation, iconography of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop has grown immeasurably. A short visit to her shrine in North Sydney will reveal the growing literature and memorabilia on offer to pilgrims. The number of people involved in various ways, through their pilgrimage to various sacred places forming the cluster of Mary MacKillop icons around Australia, is difficult to measure. The Sisters of St Joseph certainly collect data on this, but so far it has not been released to the public. Certainly, the website of the Sisters of St Joseph attests to this growing phenomenon: "The eighth of August is a very special day and

⁵⁴ Palmer, "Dancing with Shadows", p. 9.

thousands of pilgrims visit Mary MacKillop Place. Masses are celebrated throughout the day in various locations, and there is a range of happenings.” The website, www.sosj.org.au, continues to provide information as well on various pilgrimages to different parts of Australia throughout the year.

Since St Mary of the Cross MacKillop holds a special iconic place amongst Australians, the shrine and the development of her iconography over time are points of interest in the experience of pilgrimage within an Australian context. For example, Sheila McCreanor has attempted “to define, trace and explain the new cultural representation of the Mary MacKillop of the Print Media (MMPM) from 1909 until 2000.”⁵⁵ According to McCreanor, by 2000 there had developed two quite distinct iconic artefacts for Mary: the first in the hagiographic style of traditional saints promoted by the Church, and the other in a more culturally uniquely Australian style, represented by the secular press. In regard to the former, the author presents her case under the heading of “sacred control” and points to the emphasis given to Mary’s feast day, sacred images, shrines, pilgrimages, relics and sacred objects, and the search for the second miracle. McCreanor refers to this orientation as the Mary MacKillop of History, and ruminates:

Keeping in mind the term of “sacred canopy” which Berger used for religion, the first part of this chapter has examined various newspaper articles under the heading of ‘Sacred Control.’ The Catholic Church as a whole, and various sections within it such as the Sisters of St Joseph, individual dioceses or parishes, seek to provide legitimation and meaning in a distinctly ‘sacred’ mode.⁵⁶

On the other hand, McCreanor presents a different case in relation to the secular press of a female icon in some sense linked to the definition of the Australian culture. In this regard McCreanor emphasises such characteristics in Mary as the model of

⁵⁵ Sheila McCreanor, *Sainthood in Australia: Mary Mackillop and the Print Media* (North Sydney: Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart, 2001), p. 3.

⁵⁶ McCreanor, *Sainthood in Australia*, p. 236.

goodness,⁵⁷ a feminist⁵⁸ and a challenger to institutions such as Church and State.⁵⁹

McCreanor's text implies something important for this current research project, namely, the underdevelopment of iconography in Australia compared to Europe and, significantly, in comparison with the *Camino*. The current project is focused on a group of Australians who, as pilgrims, have immersed themselves in the sacred places and sacred images of the *Camino* – and precisely as Australians. They have been conditioned by the fewness of icons in the Australian churches in which they worship. Their experience is affected by their situation, for Australia is a country in which religious shrines and sacred places are virtually non-existent. But, now, in the course of their experience of the *Camino*, they have been exposed to a profuse and different iconography – compared to anything in their previous experience. It happens, then, that Mary MacKillop's iconic role as Australia's first Saint, gives rise to many questions. How do the Australian Church and culture respond to iconography generally? How do Australians wish to further this iconographic opportunity through Mary and with what orientation? How is this presented within the Australian culture? Pilgrim reactions by the cohort of interviewees to the iconography of the *Camino* may provide some helpful insights.

The importance of iconography and, particularly, of the *Camino*, was no better evidenced than by Pope Benedict XVI through the vestments he chose for his inaugural Papal Mass. Of the vestments worn by Pope Benedict XVI and the coat of arms he chose for his Papacy, Monsignor Lanza di Montezemolo writes:

The scallop shell has been used for centuries to distinguish pilgrims. Benedict XVI wanted to keep this symbolism alive, treading the footsteps of John Paul II, a great pilgrim to every corner of the world. The design of large shells that

⁵⁷ McCreanor, *Sainthood in Australia*, p. 218

⁵⁸ McCreanor, *Sainthood in Australia*, p. 220.

⁵⁹ McCreanor, *Sainthood in Australia*, p. 231.

decorated the chasuble he wore at the solemn liturgy for the beginning of his Pontificate, Sunday, 24 April, 2005 was most evident.⁶⁰

Such an understanding of iconography presumes that it is always uplifting. But such is not the case as other aspects of the iconography of a pilgrim trail come into view as sources of tension. There is what we might term a “shadow side” – in the pilgrims themselves, in the life of the Church to which they belong, and in the ambiguities of the history of the country itself. This aspect can now be examined.

d. Shadows

Dancing with our Shadows is the title given by Palmer to an unpublished text. What prompted him to use this title was his awareness of the unfinished business in his life, and his interior struggles while on pilgrimage. He writes: “It has been said that a tourist passes through places, but places – or people – pass through a pilgrim. Being a pilgrim is a profound experience. It is the gift of the discipline of pilgrimage to attend to these shadows, to discover repressed areas of vulnerability or weakness and to dance with them.”⁶¹ The word “shadows” may, however, hold a much wider meaning in its application to the *Camino*. Firstly, the image of St James as a Moor-slayer, *Matamoros*, requires some explanation. One should not diminish the importance or the controversy that this image of St James brings to international relations for Spain, and indeed, for Europe. Anecdotal information gathered during one of this researcher’s journeys to the Sacred City of *Santiago de Compostela* suggested that the Cathedral with its statue was a likely terrorist target following the World Trade Tower bombings in New York in 2001. Melczer, in his commentary, refers to the need of Spanish Christians to have a hero, a

⁶⁰ Monsignor Lanza di Montezemolo, *Coat of Arms of Benedict 16th*. (Vatican: Holy See, 2007).

⁶¹ Palmer, "Dancing with Shadows", p. 17.

saviour, against the marauding Moors. As Christians formed an iconography of St James as pilgrim, so too, they needed to form James as their hero saint. For Melczer, St James as Moor-slayer “plays upon the notion of the active, engaged military leadership provided by St James to the exiguous, hard-pressed Christian forces pushed back into the recesses of the northernmost tier of the peninsula.”⁶²

In the Australian context, the solitary hero on the Australian War Memorial’s boulevard, Anzac Parade, in Canberra, is that of Ataturk. Standing as it does closest to the War Memorial, this shrine represents a hero of war in much the same way as the iconography of St James fulfilled that need. The difference is that the heroism of Ataturk crossed cultures. He is a hero to both the Turkish and Australian people now. One suspects that St James as Moor-slayer is a long way from fulfilling that role between Christians and Muslims in Spain, or in Europe more generally. For the Muslims, the shadow still hangs over St James and the Christian people, in much the same way that Palmer’s shadow side continued to constitute an itinerary for him. The impact of this shadowy divide between Christian and Moor present on the *Camino* appears to have been of only passing interest to the Australian pilgrims who participated in this research project, and the paradoxical nature of this iconography was miniscule compared to the portrayal of St James as the pilgrim. It needs to be asked, however, whether the phenomenon portrayed in St James the Moor-slayer does not have a greater applicability than was explicitly reported. For iconography portraying St James as Moor-slayer may resonate with the *personal* shadow side met by pilgrims as they struggled with their own performance and with thoughts that could turn dark with brooding. Palmer’s chapter on this particular paradox is titled, “Fighting with a dog”. As he says: “I have written about

⁶² Melczer, *The Pilgrim's Guide*, p. 65.

the high points on the *Camino*, but there was a downside. Loneliness would return on many occasions. It was an intense loneliness, an isolation, a sense of being cut off, separated by an immense distance from family and loved ones.”⁶³

In a further chapter titled “Dancing with our Shadows”, Palmer draws the two images of broad intercultural and specific intra-personal tensions into a single paradox when he writes:

The shadow is that part of our personality which doesn’t fit in with how we view ourselves and how we want others to see us. We want to be funny not grieving, respected for our wisdom rather than a learner, clever not childish, strong rather than frail, a success instead of feeling we’ve let ourselves down. And yet that shadow is an integral and to-be-valued part of who we are. Like our lives, the *Camino* is riddled with paradox. Santiago is the benevolent pilgrim, the wise and respected father of all pilgrims. He is also depicted as the Moor-slayer, riding a mighty horse leading conquering Christians into battle.⁶⁴

Martin Robinson refers to this personal shadow when he draws attention not only to the hard road for the body, but also to the hard road of the soul: “The dark side of our being can be met and dealt with as part of the process of pilgrimage.”⁶⁵ A recent publication of the Australian Theological Forum on *Religion & Violence* adds a larger dimension. Of particular interest is the article by James Haire, who writes, “Against the situation in which we find ourselves – in which we find incredible violence in our communities, but also the resilience of the human spirit – we need to find an intercultural approach in Christian theology towards *building communities of peace in the midst of violence*.”⁶⁶

⁶³ Palmer, "Dancing with Shadows", p. 12.

⁶⁴ Palmer, “Dancing with Shadows”, p. 16.

⁶⁵ Robinson, *Sacred Places, Pilgrim Paths*, p. 127.

⁶⁶ James Haire, "Building Communities of Peace in the Midst of Violence: An Intercultural Approach in Christian Theology," *Interface: A Forum for Theology in the World* 10 (2007): p. 18.

Finally, several short contributions by Coleman and Elsner, writing on the tensions experienced by pilgrims, further contextualise the range of disjunctions that persist. For example, they refer to anthropologists who argue “that the Virgin of Guadalupe can be seen not merely as a pilgrim shrine but also as a unifying symbol for the whole of Mexico” – an interpretation not dissimilar to the rallying cry of the Christian Spaniards with the role of St James the Moor-slayer. Other anthropologists “have gone on to note that they (pilgrimages) can be used to legitimise unequal power relations in society.” Furthermore, Coleman and Elsner draw attention to Eade and Sallnow’s analysis that “the power struggles of society are evident at pilgrimage sites.” Finally, Coleman and Elsner suggest pilgrim “sites cannot be regarded as separate from their socio-economic surroundings”, and that “many pilgrimages not only involve situations of conflict and division, but also are liable to be controlled by powers more temporal than spiritual.”⁶⁷ This researcher had first-hand experience of many of these points of disjunction on an extended pilgrimage to the Holy Land at Easter 2007, an unusual year in that the Passover in the Jewish calendar fell at the same time as Easter. I also availed myself of the opportunity of twice entering Palestine, once through the barbed wire, and then through the dividing wall. The shadows hanging over these countries can only be described as raw and painful.

In summary, pilgrimage can have the effect of placing the participants in highly controversial historical and contemporary contexts, in clashes of identities between state and church, and in complex situations of intercultural exchange across national and international lines as well as across religious lines. No doubt, this suggested a wide range of learning experiences for the pilgrims, in a wide variety of contexts – individual, social,

⁶⁷ Coleman and Elsner, *Pilgrimage*, p. 202.

cultural, historical and religious. Here opens a pastoral opportunity to promote a deeper spiritual development than having a nice time on a benign pilgrim trail. Perhaps, with prior preparation, the pilgrim may find the iconography of St James the Moor-slayer more telling than being just a matter of passing interest.

e. Salvific suffering

In light of the reflection on “shadows”, the discussion of salvific suffering takes on considerable significance. The reflections of the Australian Catholic pilgrims presented in later chapters will reveal that all of the pilgrims reported deriving considerable benefits from undertaking the *Camino*. For these pilgrims the “success” of the pilgrimage was born from a deep and progressing experience of living and acting in hope. Most elementally, they hoped to complete the journey to *Santiago de Compostela* despite the hardships besetting them on the way. In this mood of hope they felt included in the long lineage of pilgrims who had walked this trail before them, namely, knowing the long, hard road they travelled, and sharing their deepest spiritual longings and expectations. In his chapter on “Footsore on the Way”, Palmer describes the discomforts experienced on the *Camino*. He writes: “It was not only feet that suffered. There was the crippling cramp in the calf muscles, the pain and numbness in the thighs, the ache in the lower back, the nauseating pain in the shoulders made uncomfortable by a heavy pack.”⁶⁸ And then further on, he makes meaning of this for himself when, in Christian terms, he writes:

Jesus says, “You are different. You are special. I honour you because I asked you to follow me and you have walked with me. I honour you because I asked you to

⁶⁸ Palmer, “Dancing with Shadows”, p. 8.

follow me and you have walked a different way and you have suffered on your journey. Now let me wash your damaged feet.”⁶⁹

As Robinson also points out in his chapter, “A Hard Road”,⁷⁰ that the journey is potentially fraught with difficulties and dangers, Melczer, in his turn, refers to Arnould du Mont, a monk of the twelfth century, who expressly stated that “he went to Santiago in order to obtain the remission of his sins as well as to see the site venerated by everybody.”⁷¹ In a more general sense, Melczer points to “those who made the pilgrimage to ask forgiveness in a vague sense only, for a generically perceived dissolute existence of which one usually became aware on the downhill side of life; and there were, of course, those who made the pilgrimage as a personal penance for a very particular sin committed, buried in the depths of one’s conscience.”⁷² By acknowledging moral failure and confessing readiness to seek forgiveness and reconciliation, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is prefigured. The voluntary suffering and hardship experienced by the pilgrims on the *Camino* are a movement towards and a prefigurement of sacramental reconciliation. The actual experience of the sacrament – especially at the Cathedral of *Santiago de Compostela* – can place the value of the hardship experienced, potentially at least, into a more sacred space.⁷³

69 Palmer, “Dancing with Shadows”, p. 11.

70 Robinson, *Sacred Places, Pilgrim Paths*, pp. 84-100.

71 Melczer, *The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago*, p. 39.

72 Melczer, *The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago*, p. 41.

73 A note can be made of what appear to be some synergies in the underlying principles and accountabilities of salvific suffering and those in the secular environment under the name of restorative justice. This research project was not in any position to investigate this connection further, but it is placed here as a note for further consideration. In 2008 Australia as a nation went through a discourse on the itinerary of saying sorry to the Aboriginal people. Many of the elements, particularly those of communal guilt and reparation, which fall under the ambit of restorative justice and salvific suffering, were acted out by the nation during that exercise. For an introduction to restorative justice principles and practices see Eugene McLaughlin and others, *Restorative Justice: Critical Issues* (London: Sage Publications, 2004), Katherine van Wormer, *Counselling Female Offenders and Victims: A Strengths-Restorative Approach* (New York: Springer Publishing Co., 2001).

4. The call, the journey

According to Robinson: “Many set off on pilgrimage with little concept of what the interior journey might mean and meet themselves *en route* in surprising and sometimes disturbing ways.”⁷⁴ What prompts a person to go on pilgrimage would seem to be complex. Robinson asks: “What is it that attracts large numbers to engage in an activity that has no obvious immediate purpose? The particular stimulus for any one pilgrimage may vary greatly from one individual to another.”⁷⁵ The Cathedral of *Santiago de Compostela* certainly asks each pilgrim what was the intention behind their walking prior to presenting them with the “Compostela”.⁷⁶ It is expected that the pilgrim walk at least 100 kilometres. One pilgrimage writer, Tony Kevin, explains his motivation as:

I knew I was looking for something in Spain that I had been unable to find at home: some answers to the complexities of life, a circuit-breaker from the growing stress and pain of living in what seemed to be becoming a more selfish and joyless society. I really did not know what Spain would show me. I feared I might not be up to handling it. Most of all, I feared I might not be able to see the point of it.⁷⁷

At the other end of the pilgrimage, Wilkie, another pilgrim author, was uncertain as to whether she had “grown spiritually or gained any wisdom from the pilgrimage”, although she did state:

The level of conscious faith I have lived with for most of my life had faded somewhat before I undertook the pilgrimage and it did not return on that journey. I remain on the faith path that is called Catholicism and only recently have begun to re-experience a livelier sense of belief in God.

⁷⁴ Robinson, *Sacred Places, Pilgrim Paths*, p. 127.

⁷⁵ Robinson, *Sacred Places, Pilgrim Paths*, p. 1.

⁷⁶ Name given to the certificate presented to the pilgrim at the *Catedral de Santiago de Compostela* as recognition of successful completion of the requirements of the *Camino*.

⁷⁷ Kevin, *Walking the Camino*, p. 164.

She offered an insight into her pilgrimage which is representative of many of the responses of this project:

I have no profound revelations to hand on. Some things I knew before I now hold with greater certainty. They are not new truths but ones many people find out and constantly rediscover for themselves. We need little to live on the earth; we can travel light. If you see with the eyes of faith you will live in a world where everything conspires for good, where little miracles happen daily – where all is indeed, well. This is not a world devoid of pain and sorrow, malice and evil, but a world through which the pilgrim passes protected to the end.⁷⁸

Slavin, too, has reflected on his experiences of *Journeys with the Sacred*. An Australian researcher, as we have seen above, he has applied Turner's notions of *communitas*, and liminal identities and liminoid social spaces, to the personal journeys of contemporary pilgrims travelling to *Santiago de Compostela*. His central question was: "How pilgrims construct, experience and understand the sacred and the social on the pilgrimage. This raised discussions of life transitions, universal meaning and inter-subjectivity."⁷⁹ He concludes,

The pilgrim is both a stranger and homecomer ... S/he seeks social distance to facilitate a search for authentic being in order to further personal development. Consequently, a general search for spiritual meaning occurs which leads pilgrims to question the validity and efficacy of many aspects of assumed social knowledge and the way that had been deployed in their lives previously.⁸⁰

His final reflection offered a highly positive and personal evaluation of the *Camino* experience:

The *Camino* is a prodigious event for all those who become fully involved in it. The experience profoundly affects people in ways which offer them strength and a sense of connection to the world. This cuts across many tendencies in our cultures which seem to increasingly work the other way. The journey offers people the possibility of knowing the sacred and experiencing it in ways which they may

⁷⁸ Wilkie, *Walking to Santiago*, pp. 247-248.

⁷⁹ Slavin, *Journeys with the Sacred*, p. iii.

⁸⁰ Slavin, *Journeys with the Sacred*, p. iii

have never imagined before. These lofty dimensions often appear in forms as humble as sunlight on stone: that is the real revelation.⁸¹

Palmer, in his chapter on “Arriving in Santiago”, also discusses the dynamics of arriving and leaving. He draws attention to the solemnity of the acceptance of beginning and eventually of ending, of farewell. Palmer’s insight reflects that of the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People’s *Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee*: “The way is a symbol of existence which is expressed in a wide range of actions like leaving and coming back, entrance and exit, descent and ascent, walking and resting” (1). Palmer writes,

This was the moment I had been anticipating and yet dreading: the end of the journey. Two days earlier I had left the marked pathway, and made excursions through tiny medieval Galician villages, later realising that I was trying to put off the end.⁸²

Theresa Burkhardt-Felder concludes her testimonial with these words:

We do not wish to leave this special place without acknowledging the help of our guardian angels who ensured such a smooth journey. We hear them whisper back: “When you are on the right journey, life is easy!”⁸³

Even if Bishop Geoffrey Robinson’s pilgrimage to “sacred places” did not include a visit to *Santiago de Compostela*, his reflections are illuminating:

Before I left Australia to begin my travels, I packed what I needed into one suitcase and left everything else I possessed at home. When I left Jerusalem to go to the Sinai, I left this suitcase behind and took with me only what I could hold in one haversack to carry on my back. When we left our overnight camp to ascend Mt Moses in the Sinai, I left most of the contents of this in the jeep and took on my back only the essentials of water and a few dried figs.

I believe it is the same in the spiritual life. To find God I have to leave behind a lot of baggage and climb a mountain. It is only when I have reduced my spiritual life to its few basic essentials that I may begin to come near God. If I don’t do

⁸¹ Slavin, *Journeys with the Sacred*, p. 377.

⁸² Palmer, "Dancing with Shadows", p. 6.

⁸³ Burkhardt-Felder, *Pray for me in Santiago*, p. 295.

this, I will inevitably load many of my own longings and distortions onto God and end up with a God of my own creating.⁸⁴

In summary, we have presented here some of the motivations people have for choosing to go on pilgrimage and what occurs on returning. Further, there exists a volume of anecdotal evidence as more and more Australians avail themselves of pilgrimage. For example, while material was being collected for this project, there was any number of other pilgrims beyond our selected group who wished to tell their stories on what made them decide to undertake the pilgrimage, and how they felt on completing it. This study, however, directly explores the motivations, experiences and transformations of the twenty-three Australian Catholic pilgrim participants whose reflections are analysed in the chapters to come.

5. Culture

Our previous treatment of the Church pastoral guidelines and other writings suggested the immense effect of culture on life in general and in particular in the conduct of tourism and pilgrimage. The cultural effect can be examined for our purposes under the headings of:

- a. Tourism and movement by Australians
- b. Australian Culture
- c. Australian Catholic Culture

In exploring the influence of culture on the twenty-three pilgrim participants, one can make mention of the Australian behavioural theorist Michael White⁸⁵ and his notion of the culture's ability to mould life. White goes so far as to nominate culture as a

⁸⁴ Geoffrey Robinson, *Travels in Sacred Places* (Melbourne: Harper Collins, 1997), p. 16.

⁸⁵ The theories of White, *Re-Authoring Lives*, and Kegan, *The Evolving Self*, are treated in detail in "Three theories on how people change", pp. 130-141.

dominant paradigm in the experiential life of all humans, and he is not alone in that emphasis. Robert Kegan, too, acknowledges the central part that the dominant cultural discourse plays in constructing the lives of human persons. Further, both White and Kegan consider that the dominant cultural discourse is constitutive of individual identity as the person internalises what is so communicated. Even if this cultural consciousness is not entirely at ease with itself, those who share it are still likely to express views such as, “this is how we are as Australians”. Our limited aim here is to register some aspects of Australian culture and to identify the extent to which the twenty-three Australian pilgrims on *Camino* were affected and influenced by such cultural determinants.

a. Tourism and movement by Australians

Amongst Australians the growing phenomenon of travel, both within and outside, is an obvious fact. David Dale records that Australians made 3.5 million overseas trips in 2006, “mainly to New Zealand, Britain, the United States, Indonesia, and Fiji.”⁸⁶ Further, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has released reports on movement trends. The ABS defines short-term travel as a period of less than twelve months, and has presented these yearly trend statistics by Australians from 1983 to 2003. Apart from some plateauing in travel as a result of the terrorist bombings of September 11 in 2001 and Bali in 2002, the trend of Australians travelling overseas continues to increase significantly. The ABS interprets the data as follows: “Australians are enthusiastic travellers. Australian short-term departures overseas have nearly tripled over the past 20 years; there were 1.3 million departures in 1983, compared with 3.4 million in 2003.” Australia’s

⁸⁶ David Dale, *Who We Are: A Miscellany of the New Australia* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2006), p. 5.

domestic travel statistics exhibit similar trends. In 1997 there were 28 million domestic passenger departures in Australia, rising to 43.7 million in 2006.⁸⁷

Of particular interest for this project is the work of Professor Ralf Buckley. His research examines travel by Australians to World Heritage Areas. These include such destinations as Fraser Island in Queensland, Kakadu National Park and Uluru in the Northern Territory. For Fraser Island some 147,000 Australians visited the island in 1986, and by 2000, there were 224,000 visitors. For Kakadu it was 54,000 in 1982, and 100,000 by 2000. Finally, for Uluru, in 1987, there were 144,000 visitors, rising to 324,000 in 2000.⁸⁸ This movement through travel is an ever-increasing experience for a large percentage of the Australian population, and their iconic destinations seem to be places of natural beauty such as Uluru. Yet, in addition there is the growing interest in such “pilgrimage” opportunities as walking the Kokoda Trail and in attending an Anzac service at Lone Pine in Turkey. These sites focus more on heroic feats, rather than any religious orientation – the one particular exception in recent times is St Mary MacKillop’s Memorial Chapel at North Sydney and the site of her first school in Penola.

In noting this widespread mobility, it is worth recalling the interpretations in some of the pastoral documents treated in the previous chapter. The Catholic Church includes in pilgrimage all those who undertake those journeys outlined above and undertaken by Australians, no matter who they may be and what their motivations were. In the light of the Catholic Church’s understanding, the development of appropriate responses takes on a truly universalised itinerary for movement in all its forms and for the experience of intercultural dialogue that such a popular Australian practice brings with it.

⁸⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Australian Social Trends* (Australian Government, 2004).

⁸⁸ Ralf Buckley, *World Heritage Icon Value: Contribution of World Heritage Branding to Nature Tourism* (Canberra: Australian Heritage Commission, 2002), p. 6.

b. Australian culture

In leading in to this discussion it needs to be noted that the twenty-three participants in this *Camino* pilgrimage research project were all Australian and that their Australian culture and their status as Australian citizens form an integral part of the research.

Various measures can be used for determining the characteristics of the Australian culture. For example, a simple measure could be the recipients of the iconic award of Australian of the Year. One should expect such a winner would embody those values which Australians cherish. Fifty monuments in the National Capital are inscribed with the names of those whom the government of the day considered best exemplified these important elements of Australia's culture. Of the fifty names, 78% are men and 24% are sports people. Indigenous Australians have been recognised 12% of the time, compared to 88% for non-Aborigines, and 4% are senior churchmen. On these measures, the characteristics most likely to be acknowledged as representing the Australian culture at its highest level of attainment, and being recognised through this most prestigious of awards, are non-Aboriginality, maleness, and excellence in sport.

On a more measured initiative, the history of the development of the "Australian Citizenship Test" gives some idea of the issues involved in the identification of the specific elements of a culture. On a subject involving a much wider percentage of current and future Australian citizens, Australia was involved in a wide-ranging debate through 2006 concerning the requirements that entrants needed to meet in order to qualify for citizenship as Australians. As a way of progressing the debate, Andrew Robb, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, on

behalf of the Australian Government produced a “discussion paper to seek the Australian community’s views on the merits of introducing a formal citizenship test, including seeking a commitment to Australian values.”⁸⁹ The document referred on a number of occasions to whether some commitment to Australian values should be included in the assessment of the applicant for citizenship. The document, however, remained silent on what “Australian values” are.

Eventually, the Australian citizenship test was brought into operation from 1 October 2007. The Government’s advice on the values which are considered important in modern Australia include “respect for the equal worth, dignity and freedom of the individual; freedom of speech, freedom of religion and secular government; freedom of association; support for parliamentary democracy and the rule of law; equity under the law; equality of men and women; equality of opportunity; peacefulness; and tolerance, mutual respect and compassion for those in need.”⁹⁰

On 29 January of that year, the Minister for the incoming Labor Government, Senator Chris Evans, released the first report on the performance of the Australian Citizenship Test over its first three months of operation. In the Minister’s press release on the report it indicated that 9043 people had sat the test and that “93 per cent of people who sat for the test passed on their first or subsequent attempt.” The Minister also indicated he would commission a review in April, following six months of its operation, and that while feedback generally was positive, a range of concerns had been raised. While Governments over time have regarded culture as a dominant factor in the lives of Australian citizens, they continue to struggle with what the specific ingredients of

⁸⁹ Andrew Robb, *Australian Citizenship: Much More Than a Ceremony* (Canberra: Dept. Immigration and Citizenship, Australian Government, 2006), p. 1.

⁹⁰ Senator Chris Evans, *Citizenship Results Published* (Dept. of Immigration and Citizenship, 2008), p. 1.

Australian culture are. Evans noted that “more work needs to be done to make sure the right questions are asked and there are no unintended barriers for people who wish to become Australian citizens. Australia has been enriched by the diverse cultures and traditions of people who have come here from more than 200 countries. The common bond that unites us all is citizenship.”⁹¹

A further attempt to identify cultural values was pursued through the previous Australian Government, in its promotion of “Harmony Day”. In 1999, the Government launched an initiative designed to promote harmony in Australia. The logo is “living in harmony” and the date of 21 February has been designated Harmony Day. In the associated promotional material, a set of Australia’s values known as the “Harmony Day Values” are promoted. They are: commitment, goodwill, understanding, diversity, community, and harmony.⁹² A further attempt to collect data on this subject was research commissioned by the Australian Government. In 2002, the Government sought information into the settlement experiences of new migrants. Some 200 migrants who had been in the country around six months were interviewed. Amongst other data collected were the likes and dislikes expressed by the migrants about Australia. In percentage terms their likes included our country’s environment (36%), friendly people (36%), lifestyle (36%), political freedom/no war (20%), cost of living (20%). What migrants disliked about Australia were climate (10%), services and facilities (13%), employment difficulties (10%), crime and lack of discipline (9%), and the economy and high costs (8%). The overall finding reported by the researchers was “the high level of

⁹¹ Senator Chris Evans, *Citizenship Results Published*, p. 2.

⁹² Department of Immigration and Citizenship, *Living in Harmony: Harmony Day Values* (AGPS, 2006, accessed 1 Nov 2006); available from www.harmony.gov.au.

satisfaction that migrants express about their life in Australia. Very few report being dissatisfied.”⁹³

Apart from Government publications and initiatives, Australian commentators have also published a wealth of analyses. Clive Hamilton of The Australia Institute has been an important contributor to the values debate. He argues that a dominant value in Australia is the pursuit of materialism: “Australians have been on a decade-long consumption binge fuelled by the extraordinary growth in consumer credit and home loans.”⁹⁴ He further defines his proposition by singling out two particular characteristics:

The primary target of excessive consumption spending in Australia is undoubtedly the home. Houses are bigger than ever, with more space and appliances. Australians want to live in homes with more space than the residents can actually use ... The expansion in the size of houses has been occurring at a time when the average number of people in each household is shrinking.⁹⁵

Hamilton’s second proposition is the commitment of Australians to overwork to meet the costs of over-consumption:

Many Australians still see themselves as living in the land of the long weekend. But for most Australians workers having a “sickie”, knocking off for smoko and taking long lunches are things of the past. During the last twenty years there has been a gradual but relentless increase in working time in most organisations – so much so that Australians now work the longest hours in the developed world.⁹⁶

Hamilton’s book poses one simple question: “If the economy has been doing so well, why are we not becoming happier?”⁹⁷ He takes this discussion further with his insights into downshifters, a term he uses for those who opt to take time out from the dominant way Australians live their lives:

⁹³ Sue Richardson and others, *The Settlement Experiences of New Migrants* (Australian Government, 2007), pp. 5-9.

⁹⁴ Clive Hamilton, *Affluenza: When Too Much Is Never Enough* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2005), p. 19.

⁹⁵ Hamilton, *Affluenza*, p. 20.

⁹⁶ Hamilton, *Affluenza*, p. 86.

⁹⁷ Hamilton, *Affluenza*, p. vii.

They [downshiffters] are motivated by the desire for more balance in their lives, more personal fulfilment and more time with their families. Some qualify as ‘real estate refugees’ driven out of the cities by rising house prices and the pressure to work longer and harder to repay onerous mortgages. Many do not even move house; they just change the way they live their lives.⁹⁸

In 2006, Hamilton and Rush surveyed 1000 Australians, utilising stratified random sampling methods to ensure a representative cohort. In their introduction titled, “The Attitude of Australians to Happiness and Social Well-being”, they state: “Australians themselves see their society with 83 per cent agreeing that Australian society today is too materialistic, with too much emphasis on money and not enough on the things that really matter.” Despite this, their perceptions on their own happiness summarised as follows:

Despite the variety of possible responses, almost 60 percent of respondents nominated their relationship with their family, including their partner or spouse, as the most important factor contributing to their happiness and well-being. Health is the next most important, with 18 per cent overall citing it as most important, followed by community and friends (8 per cent) and religious/spiritual life (5 per cent). Only 4 per cent consider their money and financial situation to be the most important factor in their happiness.⁹⁹

Hamilton and Rush report that there are significant differences between men and women on the importance of particular factors contributing to happiness, with women significantly stronger on family relationships and men on community and friends. Of particular interest are the differences by household income, where people from “low-income households are no more likely than middle and high-income households to nominate money as most important to their happiness. However, they are more likely to identify religious/spiritual life as the most important thing (8 per cent) than those with middle or high household income (4 and 2 per cent respectively).”

⁹⁸ Hamilton, *Affluenza*, p. 153.

⁹⁹ Clive Hamilton and Emma Rush, “The Attitudes of Australians to Happiness and Social Well-Being,” in *Webpaper September 2006* (Australia Institute: www.tai.org.au, 2006), pp. 2-7.

Two other researchers from The Australia Institute, Pocock and Clark, undertook two studies on the values of young people and how they relate to their own futures and the decisions their parents have made about their own lives. Their study entitled “Young Australians’ views on parental work, time, guilt and their own consumption”, confirmed that parents continue to commit themselves incrementally to time at work, with resultant “increasing commodification of care, including through guilt-induced consumption.”

Pocock and Clark conclude:

From the perspective of children, a mismatch between parental references and workplace reality is associated with negative spill over from work into home with adverse consequences for young people who are acute observers of the effects of parental work on the family. New levels of commodified consumption can mitigate only some aspects of this experience and, in many cases, merely serve to stimulate new levels of working and spending with little real relief for any members of the household.¹⁰⁰

Don Aitkin’s research on his fifth year school class of 1953 has specific interest for this research because of the methodology’s similarity with this study. He reports on his findings following structured interviewing of 36 of the cohort of 44 who made up this class. The interviews were conducted throughout 2003. He notes that in 1950 Australia had a population of eight million and that “Government controls of all kinds regulated finance, employment, hours of work, wages, what could be read in books and magazines or seen in cinemas.” Australia was one of the richest countries in terms of GDP. He goes on to say, “From both sides of politics, and in the country as a whole, the perception of Australia was of a country whose basic structure was pretty right and not surpassed elsewhere.” The meaning of “White Australia” was coming under challenge, and the plight of Aborigines was less than commonly talked about. He continues: “And of course

¹⁰⁰ Barbara Pocock and Jane Clark, *Can't Buy Me Love: Young Australians' Views on Parental Work, Time, Guilt and Their Own Consumption*, Discussion Paper, vol. 61 (Canberra: The Australia Institute, 2004), p. 70.

there were drinking and sport ... Australians knew that if they were good at anything, it was sport.” As for his own town of Armidale, he observes, “The Catholic/Protestant divide was a clear one [in Armidale], no doubt because of its Episcopal status for both Catholics and Anglicans. A comprehensive network of Catholic Schools, a tennis club and social clubs catered for members of that faith at every age and for every purpose. It was well known that work for tradesmen was allocated according to the tradesman’s denomination.”¹⁰¹ In introducing the changes that have occurred in the last fifty or more years, Aitkin remarks: “We need first to consider what happened to society as a whole, because what happens to the society represents the backdrop against which we live our own individual lives. Human societies change slowly in their values and practices, because we human beings are creatures of habit who like to hold on to our ways of doing things.”¹⁰² Aitkin’s cohort argue that the “engines of change” in the intervening years have been education, wealth and immigration, and also that “the second half of the twentieth century was the end of security and tenure” in work. On social change, Aitkin refers to attitudes to love, sex and the role of women, the weakening of the churches, improved health facilities and the postponement of death. He also notes the rise of individualism – explained as from “we” to “me” – our quest for status among other nations, the loss of trust and compassion as social values.¹⁰³

Despite the lack of unanimity on what constitutes Australian identity, this brief reflection on Australian culture touches on some of the significant traditions, experiences and values that the twenty-three Australian pilgrims would have brought with them to the

¹⁰¹ Don Aitkin, *What Was It All For? The Reshaping of Australia* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2005), pp. 11-20.

¹⁰² Aitkin, “*What Was It All For?*” p. 36.

¹⁰³ See Ch 7, “From We to Me”, for a detailed description of the range of changes Aitkin regards as having occurred in the latter half of the twentieth century.

Camino. The pilgrims' Australian culture and their status as Australian citizens are important considerations in this research in that these affected the quality of their participation and their reactions to what they encountered in another country and in another culture.

c. Australian Catholic Culture

The twenty-three pilgrims were all Australian Catholics, and what they had in common in terms of Australian Catholic culture is the subject of the following section. In introducing his profile of the Catholic Church in Australia, Robert Dixon acknowledges that "much of the information ... has been gleaned from reports prepared by diocesan and national church agencies, religious orders and other Catholic organisations." From this research Dixon concluded that

Catholic teaching is profoundly hopeful ... a fundamental element ... is the recognition of God as creator ... involved in the world. Catholics reject the view that religion is only to do with a spiritual realm quite separate from the physical world ... this holistic view of human life is one reason why the Church believes it has the right to contribute to debate about issues in Australian life.¹⁰⁴

Dixon points to the influx of non-English speaking Catholic migrants for an increase in diversity in Catholic practice. The changes of Vatican II appear as the most divisive topic amongst Australian Catholics, specifically in attitudes to church authority, the role of women in the Church, and the status of the third rite of Reconciliation. Dixon notes that the Catholic population grew by 4.2% between 1996 and 2001 to a total of 26.6% of the population. Mass attendance over the same period went from close to 18% to 15.3%, with wide variations in age cohorts, e.g., 35% of Catholics seventy and over attended compared to 6-7% of those in their twenties.

¹⁰⁴ Dixon, *Catholic Community in Australia*, p. 13.

The 1996 Catholic Church Life Survey (CCLS), the Australian Community Survey (ACS) and the National Church Life Survey (NCLS96) formed the basis for “Build My Church: trends and possibilities for Australian Churches”, a document presenting extensive data on Australians’ beliefs. Kaldor *et al.* report that the CCLS alone attracted 100,000 attendees’ responses from 281 parishes. Their primary finding, quoted from the 1996 Census, was that seven out of ten Australians identify with a Christian Church. They also quoted from the Australian Community Survey (ACS), carried out jointly by NCLS Research and Edith Cowan University in 1997-8. “The ACS asked respondents how important spiritual life was to them. Two-thirds of Australians see it as important, while the other third place little or no importance”. Kaldor and associates report that while 74 % of Australians believe in God, 35 % believe in a personal God and 39% in some form of life-force. Australian confidence in churches was reported at 39%, which was below that for education systems at 51%, 56% for health systems, and 69% for police. The top three factors militating against church attendance, according to data emanating from the 1996 ACS, were as follows: 42% found church services boring; 35% found the beliefs of the church unacceptable, and 35% had reservations about the church’s moral values. The category “bad experiences of church people” was placed ninth at 16%, and a degree of discomfort with church people was measured at 14%.¹⁰⁵ The survey also reported on levels of participation in liturgical life. It concluded: “In a typical week, about 1.8 million people or 10% of the population attend a Catholic, Anglican or Protestant church in Australia. 50% of the attendees were Catholic which made them by far the largest practising denomination. With regard to those people who

¹⁰⁵ Peter Kaldor and others, *Build My Church: Trends and Possibilities for Australian Churches*, National Church Life Survey Research (Sydney: OpenBook Publishers, 1999), p. 49.

identified themselves as Catholic and attended a Eucharistic Liturgy weekly, the participation rate was in the order of 18%. Interestingly, the highest participation rate was registered among the Pentecostals at nearly 100% on the same indicators. They were also attracting new attendees who identified with them. Under the heading of “who is switching”, the Report made the point that around 7% of attenders, including Catholics, in an average week have switched from other denominations in the last five years. Apart from moving to another area, the three highest reasons for leaving congregations were expressed, in approximately equal proportions, as “my needs changed”, “a more engaging style of worship”, and “I no longer felt I belonged”.¹⁰⁶

This body of data would suggest that Australian Catholics embarking on pilgrimage will express quite distinctively personal views on such subjects as the spiritual life and their membership in the Church. It could be expected that they would be less likely to be engaged in formal church liturgies and feel free of hierarchical Catholic Church requirements. Similarly, we might anticipate that they would exhibit a diversity of tastes and reactions in regard to routine liturgical practices. Nonetheless, the data referred to above suggest that, despite their sense of independence regarding church authority, they continued to have a strong attachment to the Eucharist, although a significant decline in Mass attendance has occurred.

In this respect there is a positive aspect for this research in that the above-mentioned independence discernible in Australian Catholic culture affects also the reactions of the Australian pilgrims and the way they report on their experiences. The methodology of this research project has placed considerable weight on collecting robust data from these Australians’ reactions and commitment to the realities of pilgrimage.

¹⁰⁶ Kaldor, *Build My Church*, pp. 14-16.

6. Three theories on how people change

The first task for this research project is to develop a language and interpretative framework in order to further our understanding of how Australian Catholic pilgrims envisaged the challenge before them on their *Camino* journey, and to refine the capacity to appreciate their responses to what they experienced. Secondly, the project attempts to identify the process of change and to give an account of what it entails for those concerned. In regard to the process of change, three eminent theorists, namely Michael White, James Fowler, and Robert Kegan, are a valuable reference when it comes to conceptualising the meaning of a journey and the role of context in understanding change. White deals mainly with theories and techniques related to a person's journey and the significance of various interactions with the environment in the course of life. In *Re-Authoring Lives*, White offers this condensed programmatic statement:

This is to propose that human beings are interpreting beings – that we are active in the interpretation of our experiences as we live our lives. It's to propose that it is not possible for us to interpret our experience without the access to some frame of intelligibility, one that provides a context for our experience, one that makes the attribution of meaning possible. It is to propose that the meanings derived in this process of interpretation are not neutral in their effects on our lives, but have real effects on what we do, on the steps we take in life.¹⁰⁷

An important perspective on White's narrative approach is the value-laden context in which the person is situated. Values are internalised and form a set of moral beliefs forming the identity of the persons concerned, directing their way forward and framing a narrative structure of personal development. In collaboration with Epston, White writes, "Persons give meaning to their lives and relationships by storying their

¹⁰⁷ Michael White, *Re-Authoring Lives: Interviews & Essays* (Adelaide: Dulwich Centre Publications, 1995), p. 13.

experience; and, in interacting with others in the performance of these stories, they are active in the shaping of their lives and relationships.”¹⁰⁸ These authors draw attention to the possibility of personal discrepancy when the dominant values promoted by society conflict with the scale of values adopted by any given individual. They explain:

Persons experience problems, for which they frequently seek therapy, when the narratives in which they are “storying” their experience, and/or in which they are having their experience “storied” by others, do not sufficiently represent their lived experience, and that in these circumstances, there will be significant aspects of their lived experience that contradict the dominant narratives.¹⁰⁹

An Australian instance of people “having their experience ‘storied’ by others” would be when women were not given the right to vote at the time of Federation. The dominant values of the society at that time did not allow for the expression of the values and lived experience of the women of the country. The question of self-perception when one’s identity is being defined by dominant others has application to this project as it examines the sense of identity and commitment of the Australian Catholic pilgrims on the *Camino* – especially when the dominant “storying” environment has been removed during the course of pilgrimage. It is possible that the environment of pilgrimage will have the effect of freeing the pilgrims concerned by situating them in an entirely new environment. Measuring the extent and character of this possible change remains a central concern for this project. One possibility is that some are so enclosed in a particular sense of identity that they remain largely unaffected by the narrative structuring the larger social environment. At such times, how is the social construction of their “preferred realities”¹¹⁰ – which, in fact, have been narratively constructed by others –

¹⁰⁸ White and Epston, *Literate Means to Therapeutic Ends*, p. 21.

¹⁰⁹ White and Epston, *Literate Means to Therapeutic Ends*, p. 24.

¹¹⁰ For an extensive treatment of the theory of preferred realities see: Jill Freedman and Gene Combs, *Narrative Therapy: The Social Construction of Preferred Realities* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co.,

experienced, especially when their lived experience continues to be shaped and directed in that particular environment? What has to occur, then, in people's lives if they are to become aware of the social construction of so much of what they take for granted, and so appropriate more critically and consciously their lives and their freedom to direct their lives? No doubt, for some a step along the way of liberation and self-determination would be to make a retreat, do a renewal course, perhaps receive counselling, or make serious life-changes in terms of employment, health care and even lifestyle. For others, it will be the time to go on pilgrimage.

Freedman and Combs understand this freeing process of change and self-determination by noting the importance of "rites-of-passage". They write:

Anthropologists have examined how rites of passage help people in different cultures negotiate developmental transitions (Roberts, 1988) ... The rites-of-passage analogy has been used to conceptualise change within the context of the narrative approach developed by Michael White and David Epston (Adams-Westcott & Isenbart, 1990; Epston & White, 1990; White, 1986; White & Epston, 1990). This approach assumes experience contradicts the dominant story about themselves and their relationships. Symptoms and crises are considered evidence of progress and indicate that the person has already begun separating from a story that is no longer viable. The separation process is facilitated by externalising conversations (Epston, 1993; White & Epston, 1990).¹¹¹

With such a basis, it can be asked how a "rite-of-passage" analogy can be applied to the interior realm of self-understanding in the context of personal development and spirituality. White argues that the appropriate rite-of-passage is linked to techniques of externalisation. He writes:

"Externalising" is an approach to therapy that encourages persons to objectify, and at times to personify, the problems that they experience as oppressive. In this process, the problem becomes a separate entity and thus external to the person who was, or the relationship that was, ascribed the problem. These problems that

1996). See also Ruthellen Josselson and Amia Lieblich, *The Narrative Study of Lives* (London: Sage Publications, 1993).

¹¹¹ Freedman and Combs, pp. 332-333.

are considered to be inherent, and those relatively fixed qualities that are attributed to persons and to relationships, are rendered less fixed and less restricting.¹¹²

In the process of objectifying and externalising the problem, the person is enabled to explore herself/himself as a self-aware subject separate from the object of concern. When the contours of the problem are objectified, it can be examined, faced, and set in a larger context, and re-examined from a healthy psychological distance. Above all, the problematic issue is not so embedded in personal awareness that the subject concerned sees him/herself only in terms of an oppressive or frustrating reality.

While the metaphor of narrative and its associated techniques and applications as treated by White and Epston¹¹³ are comparatively new in the therapeutic context, this is not the case in long-established areas of research into faith development. As early as 1983, stages in faith development were being proposed. This area of research was particularly associated with the name of James W. Fowler. He formulated a seven-stage constructivist theory of faith development¹¹⁴ around two key ideas: “First there is the idea of a process or *journey* from a starting point (birth, origin) to a termination point (death, conclusion) ... second, there is the idea of *seasons*: a series of periods or stages within the life cycle.”¹¹⁵ For Fowler, “From the dawning of language and storytelling, members of our species have used image, myth, and metaphor to characterise and distinguish different eras of the life cycle and to characterise the strengths, contributions and limits appropriate to each.”¹¹⁶ As well as constructing a developmental model based on the

¹¹² Michael White, *Selected Papers* (Adelaide: Dulwich Centre Publications, 1989), p. 5.

¹¹³ White and Epston, *Literate Means to Therapeutic Ends*.

¹¹⁴ See Appendix O for Fowler’s seven-stage model of stages of faith development, combined with his model of “recapitulation”.

¹¹⁵ Malcolm Knowles and others, *Faith Development in the Adult Life Cycle*, ed. Kenneth Stokes (New York: W. H. Sadlier, 1983), p. 182.

¹¹⁶ Knowles, *Faith Development*, p. 182.

concepts of “journey” and “seasons, Fowler extends his conceptual paradigm so as to include an analysis of moments of movement from one life cycle season to the next. In this overall scheme of development, he presumes “genetically endowed potentials for operations of knowing and valuing which constitute successive “styles” of meaning-making.”¹¹⁷ He elaborates this idea by arguing “that to speak of a general, human life cycle is to propose that the journey from birth to old age follows an underlying, universal pattern on which there are endless cultural individual patterns.”¹¹⁸ Fowler outlines the benefits of such conceptualising by stating that “they give us a sense of overall direction and meaning, provide names for our experiences, and afford a sense of solidarity with others who have preceded us or who will follow us in the journey.”¹¹⁹

Of particular interest to this research project is what Fowler suggests are the underlying factors which move a person out of one “season” and into the next. This, of course, can be applied to change in the pilgrim resulting from the experience of pilgrimage. As Fowler writes:

In summary, Erikson’s eras and crises provide a helpful guide to what Sheehy calls “predictable crises” of the life cycle. From our standpoint, those crises of trust, autonomy, initiative, and so forth, which are reasonably correlated with maturation and age, represent life challenges with which all persons must deal.¹²⁰

As an example of crisis, reference can be made to the transition of a person moving from stage 3 into stage 4:

For some adults the transition to Stage 4, if it comes at all, occurs in the thirties and forties. It can be precipitated by changes in primary relationships, such as divorce, the death of a parent or parents, or children growing up and leaving home. Or it can result from challenges of moving, changing jobs or the experience

¹¹⁷ Knowles, *Faith Development*, p. 186

¹¹⁸ Knowles, *Faith Development*, p. 182.

¹¹⁹ Knowles, *Faith Development*, p. 183.

¹²⁰ Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, p. 109.

of the breakdown or inadequacy of one's Synthetic-Conventional (Stage 3) faith.¹²¹

Fowler shares with White the part that the person's environment plays as enabler or subjugator as he writes:

We are endowed at birth with nascent capacities for faith. How these capacities are activated and grow depends to a large extent on how we are welcomed into the world and in what kinds of environments we grow. Faith is interactive and social; it requires community, language, ritual and nature.¹²²

In summary, the analyses presented by White and Fowler are notable resources in our task of articulating the spirituality of the pilgrim experience and in developing an accessible language for those participating in it. The manner in which both Fowler and White recognise and affirm the human capacity to experience, change and grow in interaction with various environments suggests any number of applications to the experience and meaning of pilgrimage as a movement of both body and mind in the direction of a desired goal. In this context, to remove oneself from an habitual and even routine environment and to expose oneself to a large range of new experiences and insights, is to create conditions not only for broadening one's experience of the world and humanity, but for deepening and broadening the dimensions of one's personal spiritual development.

The third commentator, Robert Kegan, at practically the same time as James Fowler was promoting his theory, was also building growth models in the field of psycho-education. Two of his texts are relevant to this research. In the first, *The Evolving Self*, Kegan sets the stage for his thesis by outlining the leading idea of his approach:

The subject of this book is the person, where "person" is understood to refer as much to an activity as to a thing – an ever progressive motion engaged in giving itself a new form. This notion of human being has been most powerfully

¹²¹ Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, p. 181.

¹²² Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, p. xiii.

represented by two separate Big Ideas which have been appearing throughout this Prologue. As big ideas should, one or both have had an influence on nearly every aspect of intellectual life in the last hundred years. These are the ideas of constructivism (that persons or systems constitute or construct reality) and developmentalism (that organic systems evolve through eras according to regular principles of stability and change). In somewhat different ways, both ideas exist in recognition that behind the form (or thing) there exists a process which creates it, or which leads to its coming into being.¹²³

Kegan, in his chapter entitled “Evolutionary Truces”, applies the concept of staging to personality development: “the notion of development as a sequence of internalisations, a favourite conception of psychodynamic thinking, is quite consistent with the Piagetian¹²⁴ concept of growth.”¹²⁵ Kegan argues, as well, that these internalisations have latent periods followed by progressions. These latent periods he refers to as “embeddedness”. Kegan’s theoretical construction is developed through his explorations into a six-stage model¹²⁶ of “evolutionary balance and psychological embeddedness”. The stages are described as follows:

1. Incorporative: embedded in reflexes, sensing.
2. Impulsive: embedded in impulse and perception.
3. Imperial: embedded in enduring disposition, needs, interests, wishes.
4. Interpersonal: embedded in mutuality, interpersonal accordance.

¹²³ Kegan, *The Evolving Self*, pp. 8-9.

¹²⁴ Kegan acknowledges in his text the strong influence Piaget’s developmental approach had on his own thinking. Some elements of Piaget’s theory relevant to the work of Kegan can be briefly touched on here. In his work on growth in intelligence of children, Piaget pioneered an evolutionary biologically staged growth model. Piaget wrote: “certain continuity exists, therefore, between intelligence and the purely biological processes of morphogenesis and adaptation to the environment.” He advocated six stages commencing with the use of reflexes, to the sixth stage of abstraction, “invention through deduction or mental combination”. See Jean Piaget, *The Origin of Intelligence in the Child* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1936), p. 13. In a later text, Piaget extends the development of his staged, evolutionary growth theory of intelligence to include the higher order of intellectualisation, namely consciousness. He prefaces this text with the question, “When is a subject fully conscious of the situation? In other words, what constitutes the dawn of consciousness?” See Jean Piaget, *The Grasp of Consciousness* (London: Billings and Sons, 1974), v.

¹²⁵ Kegan, *The Evolving Self*, p. 31.

¹²⁶ See Appendix P for Kegan’s visual display of his model, “a helix of evolutionary truces”.

5. Institutional: embedded in personal autonomy, self-system identity.
6. Inter-individual: embedded in interpenetration of systems.¹²⁷

While the over-arching model construction by Kegan has gained considerable currency in professional circles as has Fowler on faith development, certain elements of Kegan's approach are particularly relevant to this pilgrimage research project. In his understanding of the process of change from one stage to the next, Kegan argues that the starting point is embeddedness. He describes such embeddedness in these terms: "We are seeing a given meaning system, a given moment in the evolution of meaning, the manifestations of a given evolutionary truth which knows the world."¹²⁸ It is important to note here the parallels with Fowler's paradigm. Both Kegan and Fowler formulate progression through stages, with periods of steady state followed by transitions based on life-cycle itineraries. They both agree that the genetic inheritance of the evolving self leads the person to search for new meanings.

All three theorists, White, Fowler, and Kegan, favour developmental constructions based on a "holding pattern". This is followed by the emergence into another level of awareness on the part of the person. The nature of the holding pattern varies with each author. Fowler, for example, refers to "genetically endowed potentials".¹²⁹ White proposes that when persons recognise their individual immersions in contextual realities conditioning their sense of identity, change can occur. The attendant symptoms and crises are interpreted as evidence of progress, and indicate that the person has already begun separating from a story that is no longer viable. White argues further

¹²⁷ Kegan, *The Evolving Self*, p. 120.

¹²⁸ Kegan, *The Evolving Self*, p. 28.

¹²⁹ Knowles, *Faith Development*, p. 186.

that the separation process is facilitated by a process of externalising and objectification.¹³⁰

More specifically, Kegan proposes that within a holding pattern of evolutionary truce, the chords of evolutionary movement still remain. He expresses these tensions as, on the one hand, guarding one's precious sense of differentiation or separateness; and on the other, guarding one's inclusion or connection. He writes:

These two orientations I take to be expressive of what I consider the two greatest yearnings in human experience ... of the multitude of hopes and yearnings we experience, these two seem to subsume the others. One of these might be called the yearning to be included, to be a part of, close to, joined with, to be held, admitted, and accompanied. The other might be called the yearnings to be independent or autonomous, to experience one's distinctiveness, the self-closeness of one's direction, one's individual integrity.¹³¹

In this context, Kegan recognises that “every developmental stage is an evolutionary truce. It sets terms on the fundamental issue as to how differentiated the organism is from its life-surround and how embedded.” He further clarifies what he means by these “truces” by recognising that “our balances are slightly *imbalanced*. In fact, it is because these temporary balances are slightly *imbalanced* that each is temporary; each self is vulnerable to being tipped over.”¹³² Kegan's conceptions of separation and connection, truces, embeddedness and evolutionary change, have an immediate applicability to the task of identifying the character of the changes occurring in the participants in this research project. Their usual environments where they experience “inclusion and connectedness” are far removed from their new environment of “differentiation and separateness” while on pilgrimage.

In Kegan's subsequent text, *In Over Our Heads: The Mental Demands of Modern*

¹³⁰ White, *Selected Papers*, pp. 5-28.

¹³¹ Kegan, *The Evolving Self*, p. 107.

¹³² Kegan, *The Evolving Self*, p. 108.

Life, he moves further in the direction of White and Epston. While Kegan still argues for a psychodynamic-oriented, constructive-developmental model, he now acknowledges that this is managed by dominant discourses prevalent in society. Thus, he adopts a position similar to White's concepts of dominant, unitary discourse pressures, and the struggle for ownership of personal discourses, albeit marginalised, outside of those unitary systems. Society's dominant theories are not necessarily neutral in regard to the personal development. While they can be constitutive in a good sense, they can also be subjugative. On this point, Kegan writes:

Those familiar with the theory will see that I have not shied away from the most familiar challenges to constructive-developmental psychology, but have turned directly towards them. In a day when we are becoming increasingly aware of issues of diversity and the way systems of knowledge are inevitably susceptible to being used as a means to gain advantage or maintain power, it may seem anachronistic to be speaking of 'adults', 'evolution', 'the culture', or 'a theory'. Which adults do I mean? Whose conception of evolution? In what sense do white people and people of colour, gay people and straight people, men and women share a culture? Theory privileges whom and valorises what? Is the theory a Western theory? Isn't it hierarchical? Does it propose a lockstep conception of growth? Does it assume that people are consistent in their use of a single meaning system across all domains and circumstances of experience?¹³³

Kegan and White's theories of privilege and authority raise important issues for our research project. The status of the pilgrim is one of voluntary withdrawal from the life of privilege and authority. The pilgrim imitates the mendicant itinerant. In the case of the *Camino*, the Australian pilgrim usually suffers a further dependency in not knowing the Spanish language. The pilgrim on the *Camino* is a "tramp", as it were, who wanders into a particular *pueblo* (village) as a stranger in a foreign land, hoping to be received by the locals, and hoping specifically for food and shelter. In evangelical terms, the pilgrim

¹³³ Robert Kegan, *In over Our Heads: The Mental Demands of Modern Life* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), p. 8.

is placed among “the least of the brethren”.¹³⁴

The final section of Kegan’s text entitled, “The Natural Emergencies of the Self”, and the final chapter of that section, entitled “Natural Therapy”, brings this entire examination into perspective. He writes:

I have proposed that we are "held" throughout our lives in qualitatively different ways as we evolve. The circumstance of being held, I have suggested, reflects not the vulnerable state of infancy, but the evolutionary state of embeddedness. However much we evolve, we're always still embedded. Development at any period in the life history, involving an emergence from a psychobiological evolutionary state, must also involve an emergence from embeddedness in a particular human context. This is analogous to transcending my culture and creating a distinction between what now appears as the culture’s definition of me and what is "really me".¹³⁵

In conclusion, Kegan adopts a position identical to that of Haberman and Stevenson at the end of their text. They argued that, in the end, the resilience of persons, the real owners of themselves and their stories, is of the greatest importance in the structure and process of their life-course. For his part, Kegan writes:

The “career of the truth” may turn out to include a far greater degree of personal functioning than we might at first imagine, but the fact remains that in a world where people increasingly will put themselves in the hands of “mental health professionals” it is the professionals above all who must understand that much of human personality is none of their business.¹³⁶

This project has incorporated much of the theories of these authors. For instance, echoing Kegan just quoted, it recognizes that human personality and human experience

¹³⁴ In a round-about way, Kegan and Lahey, in their most recent text, explore how the “least of the brethren” may, indeed, be empowered in shaping their environment, in this case the organisational environment. Their thesis is that, while each employee of an organisation will be dealing with her/his own personal “immunity to change”, so will the organisation as a whole. Therefore, rather than being held back in personal growth through weaknesses in the organisational environment, the employees can also exert influence for change in their work place. For the purposes of this current research project, this expansion of Kegan’s model applied to organisational structures invites further investigation of symbiotic growth in the context of pilgrimage, not only for the pilgrims themselves, but for the whole range of elements comprising the phenomenon of the *Camino*. See Robert Kegan and Lisa Lahey, *Immunity to Change: How to Overcome It and Unlock the Potential in Yourself and Your Organisation* (Boston: Harvard Business Press, 2009).

¹³⁵ Kegan, *The Evolving Self*, p. 294.

¹³⁶ Kegan, *The Evolving Self*, p. 296.

are the business of the pilgrims themselves and “it is the professionals above all who must understand that much of human personality is none of their business.” This view of things is respected in the methodological approach adopted, namely, the practice of co-authoring, involving both the researcher and the participants. It is the pilgrims’ story, their experience, and their reflections on what they have gone through which has been the focus of this research project. In the deepest reality of who they are and what they were doing, there is a God-ward, theological and spiritual dimension, compared to which this research project remains quite peripheral.

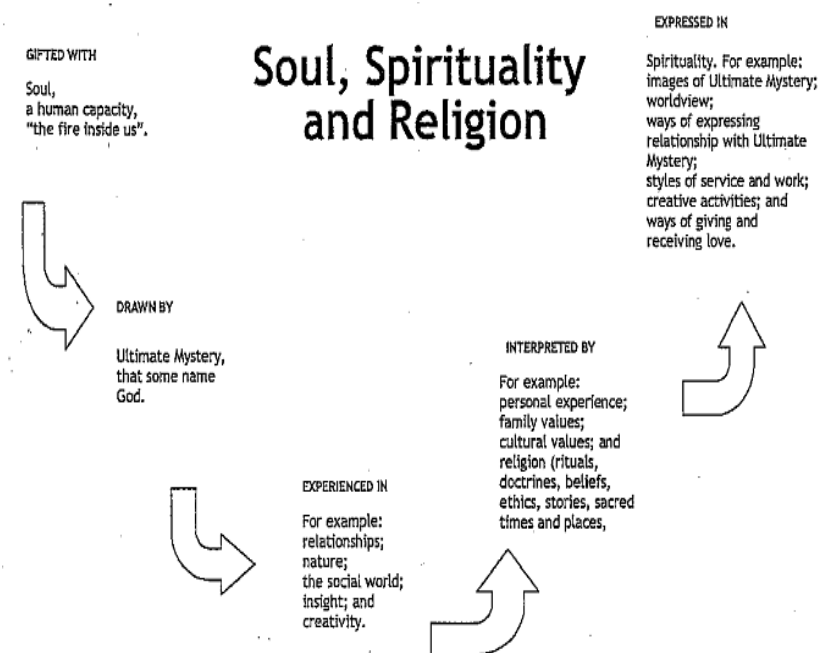
The works of White, Fowler and Kegan are a valuable resource when it comes to exploring and formulating the dynamics of change experienced by the pilgrims both during and after their *Camino* experience. This has led to the development of Framework 3, Stages in lived *oneing*: an holistic, re-generative model, (see p. 209 below) which seeks to formulate the meaning of the experience of the twenty-three Australian *Camino* pilgrims and, in particular, of *the three* in real time and in the dynamics of conversion affecting them.

7. Spirituality

This research project set out to explore the spirituality and its associated developments of the twenty-three pilgrims involved. Already, a review of Church pastoral guidelines revealed a range of interpretations of spirituality, extending from particular instances to a whole way of living. A single, authoritative and universally accepted definition could not be found. The search for consistency of meaning in Australian writers on spirituality produced a similarly wide spread of possibilities. Hide’s presentation of spirituality in terms of *oneing*, deriving as it does from Dame Julian of

Norwich, has already been presented. It was decided to use this unusual term, *oneing*, as the most useful in defining the experiences that were common to the pilgrims.

From another perspective, Sally Liddy and Andrea Dean¹³⁷ conducted focus groups and distributed a questionnaire to teachers in the Catholic School system of the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn, with the purpose of eliciting responses on how the teachers experienced their spirituality. The researchers drew on the definitions of spirituality as found in well-established writers such as Ronald Rolheiser¹³⁸ and Gerald May.¹³⁹ Of special interest for our pilgrimage research is the framework, based on the writings of Rolheiser, for its ability to express the interconnections of soul, spirituality, and religion.



¹³⁷ Sally A Liddy and Andrea Dean, *Staff Spirituality: Exploring Key Values* (Canberra: Catholic Education Office, Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn, 2004), pp. 3-4.

¹³⁸ Ronald Rolheiser, *The Holy Longing: The Search for a Christian Spirituality*. (New York: Doubleday, 1999), p. 208.

¹³⁹ Gerald May, *Contemplative Spiritual Formation: An Introduction* (Bethesda: Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation, 1995), p. 2.

As can be observed, the framework presents a comprehensive model which moves through different dimensions of the spiritual life. Importantly, for the present project, the model also suggests characteristics of a journey in the movement from one dimension to another, culminating in what is referred to as “spirituality”.

For a second writer, David Tacey, spirituality is seen as a dimension of the lives of all people rather than being the pursuit of an elite few. On this point, he writes:

The spiritual life is no longer a specialist concern, confined to the interests of a religious group. No membership is required to relate to spirit. Spirituality is now the concern of everyone, religious or secular, young or old, atheist or believer, educated or otherwise, because we inhabit a different world in which spirit is making new and quite extraordinary demands.

Tacey proposes that this spiritual dimension must be actualised and sustained in the quest for meaning: “Spirituality seeks a sensitive, contemplative, transformative relationship with the sacred, and is able to sustain levels of uncertainty in its quest because respect for mystery is paramount.”¹⁴⁰ Similarly, Christine McColl, in her research into the spiritual searching of contemporary Australians, offers her own definition of the spiritual and spirituality:

I use the word ‘spiritual’ to describe any activity aimed at deepening the individual’s awareness of spirit, soul, self, truth, and reality. ‘God’ is a word that some traditions use for this quality of being, ‘shunyata’ others, the ‘tao’ others again. Whatever the concept, what is being described in all teachings is a level of being, to be found within and without, that is different from the one we experience in our ordinary day to day living, and the mundane consciousness associated with that.¹⁴¹

The scripture scholar, Sandra M. Schneiders, offers a more specific definition when she writes: “I define spirituality as the experience of conscious involvement in the

¹⁴⁰ David Tacey, *The Spiritual Revolution: The Emergence of Contemporary Spirituality*. (Sydney: Harper Collins, 2003), p. 11.

¹⁴¹ Christine McColl, *Living Spirituality: Contemporary Australians Search for the Meaning of Life* (Elwood, Vic.: Greenhouse Publications, 1989), p. 2.

project of life-integration through self-transcendence toward the ultimate value one perceives.”¹⁴²

David Ranson, the final writer to be mentioned in this connection, promotes an understanding of spirituality in relation to the biblical category of “awakening” and in accord with the transcendental imperatives of Bernard Lonergan. Under the title of “What is this thing called spirituality?” he argues that spirituality has become a fashionable word often figuring in the declaration of someone being “spiritual but not religious”. From his distinctive viewpoint, spirituality is not a matter of “talking about such things as piety, ego therapy, or spiritualism”.¹⁴³ Rather, he locates spirituality in accordance with Lonergan’s imperatives of “attending, inquiring, interpreting, acting, loving”. These activities are a sequence leading to an understanding of genuine spirituality. By attending and inquiring, the person enters a “spiritual” sphere, and this is followed by a movement outward into the social “religious” sphere as constituted by interpreting, acting, and loving. He goes on to add a further dimension to his theoretical model. By attending to “awakening” moments which “contain within themselves an invitation”, the spiritual and religious spheres are enriched and focused, as life itself “works to awaken us” in all creation. So understood, spirituality is not so much something that we add to our lives, but, to use David Tacey’s words, “that which gives depth, meaning, and resonance to what we do ordinarily.” For Ranson, to be a spiritual being is to hear one’s life in a new way. He asserts that “context provides the content.” In practice, then, he argues that spirituality is named by “listening deeply to the experience of our context”, and then by identifying “what in the context stirs me into a sense of wakefulness, consciousness and

¹⁴² Sandra M. Schneiders, *Spirituality, Religion, Theology: Mapping the Terrain* (2003, accessed 4 Feb 2005); available from www.ihmsisters.org/spirituality-theological1.html.

¹⁴³ Ranson, *Spirituality and Leadership*, p. 1.

purpose.”¹⁴⁴ Spirituality thus occurs in many ways because of the uniqueness of the “context” in which it is particular to each one. The crux of the matter is that listening constitutes the foundation of spirituality. Ranson points out that, for some, this awakening to the spiritual self may indeed be transformed into God-given and Christian spirituality, depending on the way in which each person interprets these awakening moments in the context of their own life. Moreover, in that final dimension of this spiritual movement, that is, in acting and loving, the full meaning of what is being experienced may indicate the need for religious practices and actions of a liturgical kind.

In the light of Ranson’s approach, a comment can be made with reference to ownership in relation to terms such as spirituality. This research project on Australian Catholic pilgrims on the *Camino* focuses exclusively on participants whose interpretation and subsequent reporting on their spiritual awareness takes place within a Church-related context. As Ranson recognises, interpretations of spiritual awakening can be found outside a Church context, e.g., “the integration of spirituality into mindfulness-oriented psychotherapy”¹⁴⁵ or considering “sexuality and spirituality” through a humanist perspective.¹⁴⁶ The language of spirituality thus goes well beyond a Church definition and traverses many dimensions of personal and communal experience.

To summarise: the authors reviewed here draw attention to the fact that there is no universally agreed understanding of spirituality. Considerable differences in perspective have been noted, including the ways in which the human person participates in the spiritual, e.g., with body, heart, mind; and the association of spirituality with either single

¹⁴⁴ Ranson, *Spirituality and Leadership*, p. 1.

¹⁴⁵ Germer, Siegel, and Fulton, *Mindfulness and Psychotherapy*, p. 23.

¹⁴⁶ Daniel Helminiak, "Sexuality and Spirituality: A Humanist Account," *Pastoral Psychology* 47, no. 2 (1998): pp. 119-126.

experiential moments or with broader life-style orientations. Against the background sketched above, research into the spirituality of our pilgrims has sought to find categories sufficiently comprehensive and flexible to cover the multi-dimensional experience of the *Camino*.

By way of general summary, our presentation so far has been limited to themes and issues related to Framework 1, Pilgrimage through space and time: *Homo Viator*. Both Church pastoral guidelines and psychological and spiritual writings have been important resources. The theme of movement in all its manifestations is in the background. We now turn our attention to the twenty-three particular stories of movement as experienced by the Australian Catholic pilgrims on the *Camino*.

CHAPTER 6
FROM EXPERIENCE TO INTERPRETATION:
TAXONOMY OF PILGRIMAGE

Given the data accessible and the various theoretical frames of reference, this chapter will proceed to construct a taxonomy of pilgrimage. It will be followed by an examination of the pilgrims' responses in accord with the methodology and procedures set out in Chapter 2. An issue throughout this research project has been that of terminological inconsistency when, say, Church pastoral guidelines are compared to the language of other writers. Since the pilgrims themselves had little preparation before they walked the *Camino*, they had no common terminology or framework of interpretation to assist them in objectifying and communicating their experience to others. Even afterwards, during the interviews for this project, the problem continued as the pilgrims struggled to conceptualise their experience and express it in appropriate terms.

This research project on Australian Catholics on the *Camino* is the first large-scale attempt to fill these gaps. In conducting it, the recommendation of Moon, Dillon and Sprenkle was adopted: "the goal of the analysis is not to support a hypothesis but to generate rich description of phenomena and discover theory."¹ We aimed, therefore, to generate information-rich data from the twenty-three participants, to organise this data into meaningful cohesive pieces of information, and to construct these into a preliminary framework.

Miles and Huberman² advise that an appropriate structure and terminology are best presented visually by the use of displays – and we have proceeded accordingly. The

¹ Moon and others, *Family Therapy and Qualitative Research*, pp. 357-373

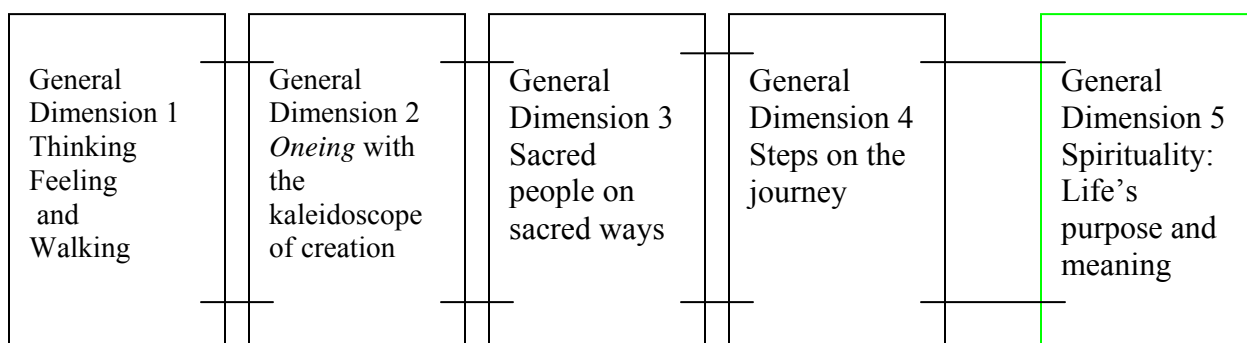
² Miles and Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, p. 11.

taxonomy of pilgrimage developed below derives from a methodology of exploratory design, and is therefore open to further revision and refinement. But in fact this taxonomy has been constructed out of the responses of the pilgrims and to suit their particular needs of interpreting and communicating their overall experience of the *Camino*. Individual contributions can be identified in the text by the numerical descriptors after each synthesising statement.³ The overall framework consists of five higher order General Dimensions consisting of seventeen first-order Specific Themes. The Specific Themes are further specified in terms of directional *orientations*, which are italicised.

The first General Dimension tracks the pilgrims' responses to the three characteristics of the human person outlined above in Framework 1 (dealing with *Homo Viator*). The second General Dimension focuses on the opportunities available to Australian Catholics on the *Camino* and their responses; the third on the sacred within the pilgrims themselves and their environment; and the fourth on aspects of the pilgrimage before and after the event. The fifth, which forms the topic of Chapter 7, explores the psychodynamics of *the three* in real-time.

³ See Appendix Q data matrix: Pilgrim codes, individual pilgrim contributions to the taxonomy, Specific Themes and General Dimensions, and aggregations.

Framework 2: From experience to interpretation: taxonomy of pilgrimage



The complete taxonomy, including all Specific Themes and *orientations*, is given at the end of this Chapter.

General Dimension 1: Thinking, feeling and walking

Church pastoral guidelines dealing with the nature of the human person, body and soul, form the basis of this first General Dimension. Following a pilgrim trail can be a time for attending, thinking, and listening to people, all the while being attuned to the feelings of the heart and to the bodily exercise of walking. The three elements of thinking, feeling and walking are recognised in the Specific Themes, which represent the Australian Catholic pilgrims' awareness of the total engagement of their intellect, emotions and physical selves in the enterprise of the pilgrimage.

a. Thinking while on pilgrimage

“Thinking” has many dimensions, as has already been implied, as it illuminates, objectifies, situates and evaluates the pilgrim experience. A number of responses in this

regard suggest some aspects of mindfulness – i.e., the “mindfulness of breathing and awareness of the small acts of our daily lives and the benefits of mindfulness and concentration to transform and heal difficult psychological states”,⁴ and, in particular, David Ranson’s reflections on “wakefulness”.⁵ Also of particular relevance here, is Robert Kegan’s work on embeddedness.⁶ The Australian Catholic pilgrims on the *Camino* found themselves removed from their embeddedness in Australian society, and were thereby exposed to entirely new experiences. The awakening of these participants to new levels of consciousness could be further interpreted in the light of Kegan’s model of transitional, evolving self-conceptualisations. Four particular *orientations* (highlighted in italics below) are presented under this Specific Theme, viz., *noticing, taking time to be alone to think, seeing opportunities for reflective thinking, and consciously thinking as a pilgrim.*

Noticing was a consistent *orientation* for the pilgrims. New information in many forms was before them all the time, some of which was necessary, e.g., noticing way-marks on the trail. Note the following responses in regard to the beauty of place, season, and persons, within a larger sense of the unexpected happening:

When you go on a pilgrimage you see so many beautiful things, and you ask how could anything be more beautiful, then you notice the people are more beautiful. 3

The beauty of spring awaited us as we descended after some steep climbing between Astorga and Rabanal. 23

There was a sense in which this journey was taking me into unexpected places. 8

⁴ Hanh, *Peace is Every Step*, p. vii.

⁵ Ranson, *Spirituality and Leadership*, p. 1.

⁶ Kegan, *The Evolving Self*, Appendix P, p. 340.

She said she made a point of not attaching herself to pilgrims but when she left I noticed a little tear in her eye. 4

You can see for miles and miles and you really get the sense of being on top of the world. It was very beautiful that day I think and we were able to sit half way up and just look out from this big green meadow as if we were on top of the world. It was very beautiful. 17

I noticed people reacted well to us being Australians. People also noticed us and were interested, for example, the priest in the navy at Neda. I noticed people know little about us. 13

There were moments when the pilgrims wished to awaken what was within them, and enjoyed *taking time to be alone to think*. The following testimonies make this point, and indicating as they do a variety of levels of interiority and conscious recollection:

I always made a point of at least walking for a half hour or so on my own every day, but there was always that security of being able to go and talk to somebody else and get outside yourself. I can really see the benefit of it. 14

Some days I needed to be alone, and even if I'd been walking with people I would allow them to walk on so that I could give time to thought. 7

It was like I was giving permission to be that part of myself, and that was what I wanted to do. To be able to express my faith without being self-conscious about it and I guess I was hoping that going to a Catholic country like Spain would give me the opportunity to do that. 21

It was more a sense of wanting to be quieter than I was in the group I think. We had ample opportunity to do that. We could walk by ourselves and we did. 6

I know I wanted to be alone with myself. I just suppose I went to go away, to be myself, because it has religious significance for me. 6

Then there were other times when the pilgrims allowed themselves to think more deeply on many subjects, most of all on their personal self-understanding. This led to a need in them *to seek opportunities for reflective thinking*. The following responses are a

good indication of developments in this direction, especially in a conscious effort to turn from distractions and concentrate on what really matters:

You certainly have choices of what you want to think about during the day. There were days when I would consciously decide to think about global warming, and I would let my mind range freely through it all. And I did. I thought about it for a very long time without distractions. 19

Walking allowed me to turn off the other distractions. To turn off what at home would be a distracter to my thought process. 1

Part of my searching was to whether there was some vocation I was meant to follow. I have had several false starts in that way. I didn't get an overwhelming answer but I think the answer I got was just keep travelling in your journey for the time being and it will all become clearer later. I've been seeking for a spot and I tried several cities. That didn't work out, and mentally I've thought of a few other things. I'm just not sure if there isn't something I should be doing, but haven't worked it out yet. I haven't found it or whether my destiny is that I have got to be on the move all the time. 21

The first day of walking the road moved people closer together but also created a more reflective state. 8

I became aware of all the wonderful things that can happen to you when you consciously take away all your normal support systems, all the insulations that buffer you from the world and cushion you at home when you deal with the things of life. 9

It depends where you start from, doesn't it. As an adult if you start from spending your life escaping blame then that is where you are heading now. So it has to start; where do we start from? This is what I am thinking of. 11

The experience of doing the pilgrimage I think cuts away at anything except what you find important. It is obvious that possessions don't matter one iota. It showed me that physical activity, good sleep, food, being free in your mind, that the people you care about are safe and you have time to reflect on what's important in life. I guess they are some of the key things I noticed. 10

I try to own who I am. At times I respond to others. I think I am less influenced by others as I get older and more confident about what I think is important in life. 17

Fourthly, there was an increasing awareness of *consciously thinking as a pilgrim*. Our pilgrims were conscious of orienting their thinking differently compared to what had been routine at home. It was as if a new way of thinking presented itself. Stewart and Cohen speak of “not just awareness, but a kind of introspective awareness in which the possessor has a definite feeling of individuality.”⁷ The following responses can be read as examples of this “introspective awareness”. They suggest in different ways a more intense sense of self, and the reality of that self as involved in a journey:

I actually tried to get my mind around the fact that this was going to be a pilgrimage for several months before I left Australia. That involved physical preparation for what I knew would be an arduous journey, on my feet in particular, but also mental preparation. I tried to get my head into the way of thinking that this was going to be a very important spiritual time, an event in my life. 19

There was a sense in which this journey was taking me into unexpected places. 8

When you place yourself for six days on your own, I think you confront yourself then and you have all these challenges as well. Then you shed all the masks that you have. 15

I became quickly aware of two things: that I was carrying too much baggage with me and that others were able to encounter me as a pilgrim through the shell I wore. The baggage became a metaphor for the extras that I sought to add on to my life to establish meaning for myself. They were stripped away over the journey. 8

The elements of the journey which were important to me were, firstly, a consciousness that one was making a pilgrimage. I didn't pretend that I was on a bush walk or that I was on a tourist trip through Spain. 19

From this collection of responses at least, specific characteristics of the experiences of these Australian Catholic pilgrims began to emerge. In their journeying, they constantly experienced moments of heightened awareness and quiet solitude,

⁷ Stewart and Cohen, *Figment of Reality*, p. 202.

sometimes prompting reflection on old subjects in a new environment. It is hard to detect any censoriousness in their responses. In this context, Ranson's reflections on wakefulness⁸ resonate most readily with the experiences of thinking here reported by these Australian Catholic pilgrims. The responses also indicated a level of acceptance rather than judgment in accord with the "mindfulness" described by Thich Nhat Hanh.⁹

b. Feeling while on pilgrimage

A number of the pilgrims reflected on the path of their emotions during their pilgrim walk, and the recognition of human passion and affect in relation to a deeper understanding.¹⁰ Here the aim was to find ways of expressing the intentionality or orientation of the feelings being experienced by the pilgrims. In this communication, we stayed with common generic word, "feeling", and yet recognised a way of refining the language of feeling by attending to three *orientations* suggested in the pilgrims' reports: *ponderings, movements of the heart, and shadows*.

The term *ponderings* is paradigmatically biblical as instanced in Luke's description of Mary who "treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart" (2:19). This pondering took a variety forms – a new feeling for the presence of God, the wonder of solidarity in a vast history and a sense of connectedness with others, being in communion with one's fellows at the deepest level of faith, and yet within all this, the appreciation of solitude as a value in itself:

I have always thought God is with us all the time. My God has always been incarnational. But occasionally in some places you say this is a sacred place. Why

⁸ Ranson, *Spirituality and Leadership*, p. 2.

⁹ Thich Nhat Hanh, *Peace in Every Step*, p. vii.

¹⁰ Cf. Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, pp. 317-318.

did it take me walking on the other side of the world to reinforce God is with us in our time and place no matter wherever that is? 10

In many ways there weren't many emotional high points but there was a consistency of being on the journey, literally to Santiago but also being on my own life's journey which has changed so much over the last 15 years; and doing the pilgrimage with others who were walking also in this place that has so much for me in religious history, cultural history, national history and so on. That was wonderful. 6

I found some of the walking by myself very good. I did feel different from how I feel here. It gave me more time to think about who I am in the world, my relationships with family and stuff. I had a greater sense of self-worth. I remember I rang my relative, a young person one day with my mobile. There was no one else around. I was walking through a forest and I came out into a field after a shower of rain and it was still misty. I thought I must ring my nephew for his birthday. I rang the family and I had a great sense of connection with him and my relatives which doesn't happen very much. I had a great sense of being important in their lives even though I always thought I was a bit extraneous to their lives. Little but important things like that happened to me. 21

I feel lucky to be able to spend time with my pilgrim companions and to get to understand the depth of their religion. 17

I didn't mind being alone because I felt and wanted to be with God. Before I left, the Priest who blessed me said this would be an opportunity to open my heart up to God free of most distractions you encounter in everyday life. You can just talk to God and be alone with God. It is a wonderful opportunity. I didn't fear the solitude. I welcomed it. 19

I walked alone from Leon to Santiago. I found benefits of being on my own. I spent the first part of my pilgrimage finding solitude something special for my journey. 18

Others experienced what might be called *movements of the heart* in the symbolic sense of the word, thereby indicating the deep interior movement of the conscious self toward what is truly good (cf. *Catechism*: "Affections have their source in this first movement of the human heart toward the good" (1766)). Tears of joy and anticipation, the impact of beauty, the sheer wonder of the experience, all come together in the following expressions:

I wept at Monte de Gozo (a mountain on the outskirts of Santiago famous to pilgrims of all generations for their first look at the Holy City). I felt that this expression of emotion was appropriate and expressive for me particularly when I saw the old city I was about to enter into. 18

It was the beauty of it. It was looking at the people. It was watching other people pray. 3

The *Camino* was the most marvellous experience really. To go, to take my time, walking through the countryside, the knowledge that so many thousands of people have done it before and they have been doing it for centuries. And there is just a really special experience in so many ways. It was just a beautiful experience. 9

Doing that with others who were also walking also in this place that has so much for me primarily religious history, cultural history, national history and so on. That was wonderful. 6

I had tears streaming down my face at the Hill of Joy when I became aware of how unwell my companion was, and that he was unable to carry his load. Yet through the emotions of that time he was able to continue. You could see he was going through such a time and yet he was generous. He is a generous man. 2

There were also the experiences of *shadows*,¹¹ as expressed in the following statements of disruption, regret, isolation, and need:

I was there for a nice experience but I wasn't expecting someone like that. He made you come out of yourself whether you wanted to or not. I find people with an illness very difficult and they also make me feel very middle class, comfortable. I have to get out of my comfort zone and I don't like it. I really don't like it. So yes he was a bit of a thorn in the side really. 21

The more you prepare the more you can get out of the pilgrimage. I didn't prepare enough. Maybe I couldn't have. Maybe I didn't know how to prepare. Maybe I didn't realise the opportunity. 3

I was cut off from local people by barriers of language; emotionally distanced even from other pilgrims because I felt so inadequate if I did not speak their language, always travelling and never having a "home" to return to and not knowing where my bed would be for the night. 7

I think a pilgrim needs an open mind, an open heart. I think you need a willingness to accept help along the way, to accept healing. 3

¹¹ Cf. Palmer, "Dancing with Shadows", p. 15.

Admittedly, none of these recorded statements reported particularly heightened levels of emotionality. The responses generally derived from experiences which were much gentler, and more intellectually focused, in keeping with Goleman's rationale of affective states.¹²

The significance of the "shadows" confronting the pilgrim is considerable. These travails have been well described by Palmer. One of the pilgrims acting as scrutineer, however, wished to qualify the original notion of shadows defined simply as "difficulties". It was felt that the sense of "salvific suffering" had to be recognised as well. In the pilgrims' experiences, the hard work and disappointments can also be interpreted in a redemptive and healing light – as had already been mentioned.

c. Walking on pilgrimage

This Specific Theme has its basis in conceptions of the human person and mobility treated in Church pastoral guidelines and other writings of a more psychological and developmental character. Walking pilgrimages, by their very nature, make the pilgrim constantly aware of the body. This is particularly the case when the pilgrimage is conducted over such an extended period as the *Camino*, with physical capability and performance a central ingredient. The experience described by Joyce Rupp¹³ has particular bearing on this theme.

The sample of statements below focuses on the body and its capacity to walk the pilgrim way. The trail itself, in the sense of sacred ground, acts as a symbol of liturgical movement. This is especially so of the entry into the sacred trail in the morning and out in

¹² Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, pp. 317-318.

¹³ Rupp, *Walk in a Relaxed Manner*, pp. 51-58.

the afternoon, only to be repeated day after day. The specific characteristics of “walking” will be developed through the three orientations: *the hard road*, *bodies that delivered*, and *oneing through walking*.

The first orientation of this theme is *the hard road*. In terms of basic Christian reference, it evokes the experience of Jesus as described in the Gospel of John: “Now Jacob’s well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from his journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.” (Jn 4:6). The following instances witness to the unusual discipline demanded by the routine of the pilgrimage such as the differing demands in the various stages of the journey, concentration on the fundamentally spiritual nature of the exercise, overcoming inevitable fatigue, facing the risk of the whole undertaking, changes in the weather, and the physical stress of blisters and the aches and pains resulting from the long road:

Doing it day after day is much more than what you would normally subject your body to. 6

Some of these days were quite gruelling as we travelled between 20-28 kilometres a day over some stretches. 8

I couldn’t have walked another day. I am happy I made the effort but am still insecure about the wrong turns. I focussed right to the end. 13

It was a great experience. It had that spiritual approach to it really. The physical did interfere with it as I wasn’t feeling so good. I still had a wonderful feeling about it. 1

I certainly had doubts. I set out on that morning not knowing whether I would last the day let alone last a seven or eight day longer period. It really took a couple of days for me to be absolutely certain. 11

It isn’t long before the pain of sore limbs becomes part of the story and blisters and possible cures are much discussed by sufferers. The weight of the back-pack is an ever-present reality, happily put aside on reaching the refuge. 23

Toward the end of the trek it turned very cold and wet. As we approached Samos I started to feel my feet warming and potential blisters emerging which forced me to stop. 8

For others, walking the road was quite benign. They reported that they were comfortable in their bodies, and their capacity to deliver what was needed. They experienced *bodies that delivered*. We find expression of surprise at achieving so much and going so far with so little pain, a feeling of increasing fitness and well-being and a general sense of attunement to one's physical and spiritual being:

For a start I was very well prepared particularly; for a friend had taken me out and bought everything for my feet and I didn't need them. I didn't get one blister and I had done absolutely no training all together. 6

I didn't find it difficult. I got tired a little because you are in another country, but also it is a full day of physical activity which you would not necessarily have in your everyday life; but I didn't get as tired as I expected. And I didn't get sore feet like I expected. So really, no, I didn't feel particularly tired. 9

I didn't find it stressful at all. I didn't find it demanding at all. I could have done more. I didn't even get one blister. So, for me it was nothing. I am not that fit; I was actually the youngest person in the group. Physically it wasn't demanding except one or two days when we were pushed a bit. 21

You do become physically fit and because you don't have anything else to think about, you don't have day to day worries of work and house and office and so on you are free of all that and so you can concentrate. Because your body is becoming fitter then you are more observant, more intuitive. 4

On the pilgrimage I kept thinking shouldn't I be suffering more. 10

But it was a very meaningful experience. What I noticed was the memory of my body being attuned to the walking, especially when we got into it, the fourth and fifth day. 21

Beyond the obvious conditions of physical fitness and capacity is the integration of the walking itself into the holistic experience of the pilgrim. These pilgrims'

experiences of a communion of body, heart and mind could well be expressed by extending Julian of Norwich's concept of *oneing*, to include *oneing through walking*.

I was more reflective than having some major experience on the *Camino*. The whole idea of being on your life's journey was certainly a coming together of all of me. And that started for me most clearly in doing the labyrinth in Chartres Cathedral on the way to the *Camino*. That was a special experience for me. That feeling of walking and reflecting was very strong there and of being one in that. 20

The *Camino* gives you the real sense that your body, soul and mind are all one and you tend not to separate them, as we have been always taught to concentrate on the higher things and forget the base body. Well the thing is on the *Camino* it is intertwined and everything becomes one. 4

Walking makes a huge difference. On the bus was one thing, but every time on the bus I had a sense that we were going to walk. For me the walk was the important part and you have time to think and have time to get in touch with what is going on inside you, but the walking adds the physical dimension to the whole thing. 9

You were following in this wonderful tradition, this public display of the love of God and the searching to do God's will and to meet God; then that feeling for me of the walk itself, that everyday walking, of being with God in that very special quiet in a lovely way. 20

Your body has been basically given the job of walking each day. You are going to walk twenty, twenty-five kilometres each day, and that is its job, go with it. There were times when I was basically walking, and my mind was pretty blank. I don't feel there is any problem with that. 19

While we could count every hill that we had ascended, every river we had crossed and our feet recounted each kilometre we had trod there was an understanding that this pilgrimage was one which helped us to become one with ourselves and each other. 8

The idea that I would walk where people had walked for hundreds of years appealed to me. Another part of my spirituality is that I like to do it. I find that after a while I get totally frustrated sitting around thinking. To actually do my thinking while walking, I feel more connected with God in creation and the universe. 10

These statements convey a pervasive sense of moving forward in body and mind, while the length of the journey was all the time increasing personal integration and communion with God and others. And yet there is a realistic acceptance of the physicality of walking a long stretch.

General Dimension 2: *Oneing* with the kaleidoscope of creation

Oneing in the sense already explained is connected with walking the pilgrim trail. The spiritual connotation of this term is well captured in Hide's summary of Dame Julian's sense of the word:

At creation humanity is *knit* and *oned* to the Trinity and kept in this inviolable *oneing*. Humanity is always one with divine love. God never disengages from this original *oneing* in any way that would separate the divine and the human. Yet *oneing* also increases and fulfils this destiny of being one with God. The movement is paradoxical. We are one and are becoming more completely one.¹⁴

In this respect, there are some five specific themes that belong in the pilgrims' awareness of the full reality of their experience: natural beauty in all its forms, the dimensions of time and space, the encounter with people of many nationalities and cultures, the hallowed traditions of those who had walked in times past, and the sense of being Australian Catholics on pilgrimage. A word, then, of each of these aspects of the *Camino* experience:

a. Natural beauty

Here in the background is the Genesis account of creation, with its recurring statement "God saw all that he had made and it was good" (Gn 1:31). The original or

¹⁴ Hide, *Gifted Origins to Graced Fulfillment*, p. 54.

protological sense of God's creative goodness looks to the eschatological fulfilment that is basic to Christian hope:

The visible universe, then, is itself destined to be transformed 'so that the world itself, restored to its original state, facing no further obstacles, should be at the service of the just' sharing their glorification in the risen Jesus Christ. (*Catechism*, 1046)

The sample of pilgrim reflections presented below conveys the multiplicity of images they encountered throughout their journey, with its changing landscapes, new experiences and all the variety of reactions resulting. There are two aspects of this overall experience which can be expressed, in the terminology of Julian of Norwich, as *oneing with nature* and being *blessed by creation's beauty*. We note the following expressions of *oneing with nature*:

We talked very little. We just walked in our own rhythm in relation to what was going on within us and in relation to the beautiful environment that we were in. 22

While I was on it, I am a person who sees the world through my senses. Everything I see, taste, touch, hear, lights me up. When I was a little girl I used to sit in trees and think about things, think about beauty. So when I went on this and got into it I had a hard time just not loving the entire time. It was the beauty of it. It was looking at the people. It was smelling. It was tasting. It was watching other people pray. 3

Coming from drought stricken Australia, we were delighted by the clear flowing rivers and streams often with little trout swimming around. 23

I learnt not to be afraid of being alone for long periods particularly in the early part of my pilgrimage. I met very few pilgrims at the early part of my journey. I was used to being alone on the track. My human encounters were fairly sparse and fairly limited and all the more precious for that. And because of that, encounters with animals became important on that part of the route. I would feed and nuzzle the horses, talk to the dogs. 19

I fell in love with a dog, a giant Mastiff. He was at a Refugio in Burgos. All of a sudden the door burst open and this wonderful Pyrenean Mastiff came in, sort of with huge presence. I am here, make a fuss of me. He was a great big heavy dog,

maybe 80 kilos but he floated. He hardly seemed to touch the ground. He was on pilgrimage. His owner, I don't know where he would have slept. 4

There is in evidence a sense of silent communion and rhythm in which consciousness is attuned to the external world, heightened sensory experience, awareness of animals and the abundance of nature. With some of the pilgrims, the experience of beauty was profoundly contemplative and centred in God as the source of all blessings. Hence a second aspect can be detected, the sense of being *blessed by creation's beauty*. It finds expression in a positive remembrance of people and places, in associations with the geography of home, and the evocative power of creation in regard to the loving presence of the Creator:

Again and again I have been so blessed by the pilgrimage remembering the people, remembering the beauty. 3

When we stood on the first big hill and looked over the vastness of the plains was like standing in parts of my mountains, the Flinders Ranges, which are not mountains by their standards. But the vastness of northern South Australia is for me a very, very powerful image of God. I felt deeply that same sense of vastness; the mountains in the Pyrenees up there and then the plains below, and then that particular crucifix. 6

I think to change people's image of God, they need to think of creation, the world which he created for us to live in. Can you appreciate the mind or the heart which was behind even the tiniest thing in creation? 15

When you get to Santiago and you go to the pilgrim's Mass – that was wonderful, but mainly I found the spiritual moments in the landscape. It was coming on to spring and the flora is just so different to ours and it was just amazing to see primroses and violets growing wild along the way, and that for me was very special. 4

In summary, this theme, Natural Beauty, focuses on the startling beauty of the trail that was constantly confronting the pilgrim – including the massive stands of Australian Eucalypts the pilgrim meets as early as Samos and then later, in their thousands, at Arzua.

b. Time and Space

This specific theme is in agreement with the vision suggested in *Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee* when it states: “Pilgrimages symbolise the experience of the *homo viator* who sets out, as soon as he leaves the maternal womb, on his journey through the time and space of his existence” (16). It finds expression in the pilgrims’ heightened awareness of the pilgrim-character of the whole of human history:

Since the very moment of their appearance on the stage of the world, human beings have always walked in search of new goals, investigating earthly horizons and tending towards the infinite. They navigated rivers and seas, climbed sacred mountains on whose summit the earth ideally meets the sky. They walked through time marking it with sacred dates. (1)

Many perspectives converge on this point: the phenomenon of travel, the language of narrative and journey, seasons of personal growth. As we have seen, Framework 1 dealing with *Homo Viator*, presents the temporal succession inherent in personal existence and the development of the spiritual dimension. On that level there is not only a pilgrimage through space and time, but also it reaches beyond such earthly dimensions to eternal life and the resurrection of the body (cf. *Catechism*, 1040-1046).

Moreover, this temporal and spatial progression is relatable to mindfulness¹⁵ in action. Sensitisation of the pilgrims to their surroundings, their space and time as they covered comparatively small distances in any one day, opened up fresh experiences for them. Mary Wilkie described it as: “To see distance in terms of a day’s walk makes the world larger. When you can look at a map of the world ... and measure the small portion you have walked over, you can see that fragment as a fraction of the whole, and that

¹⁵ Germer, Siegel, and Fulton, *Mindfulness and Psychotherapy*, pp. 3-28.

translates the whole surface of the world into walking distances and makes it accessible in a new way.”¹⁶

This experience can be expressed in terms of *pilgrim time* and *pilgrim space*. Some pilgrims reported explicitly on their response to time. While the sense of time is polyvalent, there is a common thread in the responses of our Australian Catholic pilgrims, namely, its close relationship to this one significant life-event, the *Camino*, in that it highlighted the nexus between time and the movement of the journey to *Santiago de Compostela*. As Palmer has it, “To live in the present is to live a life informed at every point by an awareness of the One who is always present to all people at all times.”¹⁷ And as Theresa Burkhardt-Felder described it: “We allowed ourselves two months in order to absorb, without haste, the enchantment of the journey. Spiritual rejuvenation arose almost imperceptibly as we progressed.”¹⁸ The group’s responses report both a moving forward, and yet a slowing down in terms of what is experienced, the growth in contemplative awareness of the divine Companion on the journey, and a deeper appreciation of time itself as a gift:

I was incredibly conscious of actually seeing grass as grass, rather than stuff whizzing past. 6

You meet God in a lovely way; the wonderful time out with God in the daily walk; that really special feeling that you are right out of your normal life and that you have that very close feel of God with you. 20

There was an urge to complete the journey but there was also a sense that our image of time changed. No longer were we walking by the clock but by the rhythm of our own feet. 8

For me not even a search for God but an opportunity to be with God in a different way over time, to me that was the essence of what it was about. 20

¹⁶ Wilkie, *Walking to Santiago*, p. 246.

¹⁷ Palmer, "Dancing with Shadows", p. 6.

¹⁸ Burkhardt-Felder, *Pray for Me in Santiago*, p. 13

It is very different. I think that is part of the beauty of it that you are taking your time and you are taking in every step of the way, and you have time to do things like admire gum trees and see people in the fields. Do odd little things like looking into funny smells. 9

I reflected on this on many occasions – as a way of living, not simply of walking the *Camino*. It is to live in the present. It means giving attention to what is at hand or who is there. I often live in the past, reflecting with pride on achievements or consumed with regrets about opportunities lost. Sometimes my focus is entirely on the future goal with the attendant hopes and fears. 7

All those sorts of things and yes it was definitely a special experience. We are so blessed to be able to say that we can take this chunk of time and say this is what we are going to do with it. Rather than taking a chunk of time and saying well we could do thousands of things with this amount of time but to settle on focusing on one thing. 9

In terms of space, some of the pilgrims enjoyed the experience of a new relationship to the spatial structure of their existence. It was an immediate phenomenon as they left their footprints on this hallowed pilgrim trail formed by the footsteps of the thousands that had gone before them. Both time and space are restructured to larger proportions as the following statements imply:

These days we talk a lot about the sacredness of the everyday, the walk is the epitome of that. It is a very privileged living of the everyday on the *Camino*, because you are completely out of any space and time in terms of your normal, everyday responsibilities. 20

This Cathedral stood out so much, standing there beckoning. You could see it from so far in the distance, then imagining that in medieval times. That was really powerful to me. You had a feeling of people's faith being so strong, and images like this so much a part of their everyday lives. So you can imagine people almost walking from Cathedral spire to Cathedral spire. 20

Such fresh perceptions of life's basic dimensions had a long-term effect for some of the pilgrims at least since they reported an enduring attraction to a different pace of life and sense of time. They exhibit a greater awareness of time and space as gifts in ways that contrast with their previous existence.

c. Intercultural encounters

The theme of natural beauty obviously deals, in this present context, with the experience of the world of creation. But besides a fresh exposure to the beauty of the world, there is a new world of encounters with the people, places and cultures that make up the world through which the pilgrims are moving. Robinson,¹⁹ for example, devotes a full chapter to this topic under the title, “The Company of Others”. Then, in the condensed words of the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People, a pilgrimage moves to “a meeting with oneself, humankind, and the cosmos” (41). The pilgrim is exposed, and cannot take refuge in any culturally or personally familiar place. Each day faces the pilgrim with new challenges to be open to the new and expand one’s experience in conversation and *encounters with other people and their respective cultures*. In this regard, we note the following responses:

I found myself very much enjoying an evening with other pilgrims and locals over a meal in a very different cultural climate. 18

I liked the attitude of the people. Everywhere else I have been and I know it happens for all sorts of reasons, the people of the area are seeking your money from you and it took me by surprise what I experienced a number of times that there was a totally genuine feeling of the local people towards those people like me who were walking through their land on this pilgrim track. 2

The biggest group of pilgrims were the Spaniards, followed by Germans. We came to make some good friends among the Germans and I saw a softer side of them than I had previously experienced. 23

That is an enormous lesson to take back to Australia and say, do we have any idea about how to be hospitable to people because we have met people over the last three weeks, and especially over the last week that to us have been unbelievably accepting and generous and non-grabbing. I can’t get over that people are not trying to rip me off because I am a foreigner. They are not treating me like a foreigner. 5

¹⁹ Robinson, *Sacred Places, Pilgrim Paths*, pp. 67-83.

I thought they were going to be basically difficult to get on with, but they have accepted us and they haven't wanted our money. In fact I have never come across a place where we have actually wanted to give them more money than they will take. They have not tried to cheat us in what we have bought and they have charged us far less than what we expected. 11

Every person's motive for undertaking the pilgrimage would be unique just as everyone's experience; but there is a real bond shared by the "companions on the journey", and great encouragement given by the locals along the way. 23

My feet were hurting and I had gone ahead on the bus and I got to the *refugio*. I was wandering down beside the river nearby and this woman came up to me and said do you speak English or German. We went and had a bowl of soup together and we met up with each other, we didn't walk together, but we met up with each other all the way then till we got to Santiago, and it was wonderful to meet her because she had done this *Camino* so many times and she had several languages and so it was good to have her to speak for me when it was necessary. As I listened I found myself realising that if I were in her situation I would want someone who believed in me, to walk with me and to give me encouragement. Quite slowly, for the rest of the day we walked together. It was very late in the day before we reached our destination. She, very charitably, said she would never have done it without me. I reminded her that she'd taken every step herself. 4

Wasn't the French lady an interesting entry into our day? 11

Other pilgrims reported how they reacted to the characteristics of their own Australian culture through the backdrop of these intensive intercultural conversations. They observed the need for Australian culture to develop inter-culturally as a kind of pilgrimage in itself. This meant for Australians a process of becoming more culturally self-aware – and self-critical – in their encounters with "the other". They were prompted to view *Australian culture through a pilgrim lens*.

I think the Australian personality is constantly changing and it is constantly growing. With globalisation Australia is changing. I think we take our country for granted, the beauty of our environment and physically we are so well treated. If that is part of who we are I hope that never changes, but all of us are changing and changing Australia too. 22

I noticed there is a big difference in the cultures – some similarities, as when you went to Mass there were still the grey hairs. There were no young people. 4

I guess words to describe Aussies would be friendly, outgoing, perhaps introverted for some. I think the wide range of personalities in Australia would not be very different from any other culture. People I have met from other cultures are much the same as Australian personalities. 16

To go and see how people live, we always come back here very grateful for what we have. We have a wonderful lifestyle. There is poverty but it is not as bad. It sort of makes you aware there are differences in value; differences in how much people can have here. It does make you come back and be more aware and it is a humbling experience. It is a learning experience how other people actually live. 1

For some, the result of encounters with people of a different culture was a

deepening capacity to reflect on what spirituality and its basic relationships entailed:

I came away with a strong appreciation that everyone is searching; whether they know just doing that is good for them, or whether the meaning of life or some sense of direction would be good for them. 10

It has given me a great insight of other people's construction of God. It gave me an insight into how something like this could be placed within their lives, and what it stands for is part of their lives, it is how they celebrate God. 8

Is this a holiday for many of them? Is this mainly a holiday for them – a religious holiday? It is not a one off for them, I think. We have to collect our experiences because we are so far away. 11

These people aren't pious. They are not trying to sell us Jesus. I don't know that they are that way inclined. In fact I think it may be the other way around. They are not trying to do anything other than just treat us. They might well be all atheists for all we know. They are just trying to treat us as normal human beings who need their care. I wonder whether we are capable of it in Australia. 5

I looked at the *Camino* very closely, who are they, why are we different. I felt [they were] very different from me, not because they were making me feel like that. It was my presumption I guess. 22

As well as the richness and enjoyment of the experience, pilgrims also reported disappointments. These *constraints on intercultural encounters* took different forms. For

example, some reported frustration on their limited capacity to relate to the others they met up with, especially in terms of language:

I did feel guilty a bit about not doing more with the Spanish language. We did try different types of food and that was exciting. We didn't know what we were eating half the time. It depends on whether you go for an experience or not. 10

I still have vivid memories of the *Camino*. The Spanish people are quite wonderful. What disappointed me was that I did not have the language. You would come to a park bench and an old lady would sit beside you and talk about the *Camino* because the Spanish people are so proud of their pilgrims but I couldn't say anything so that was a disappointment. 4

When in Spain we happily accepted people were there for different reasons but we honoured their stories, their circumstances. 10

I think I expected a bit more on engagement of the locals, various spots, various churches. From what I have read that is a common experience for pilgrims. They often find the locals are a bit jaded or something. 21

I felt I was a foreigner in another land. I find that generalisation impossible but yes I thought I was in a foreign land. 22

I didn't relate all the time; the cultural overlays are different than mine. 6

There was a big difference I found between the old men and the young men. I think that the old men were lovely. They were affectionate with each other. They would greet each other with a kiss and so on, but I found the young men – there was a harshness even a cruelty about them like as in matadors. As they age they really mellowed even more than men in Australia do, and the women I found self-possessed and confident in themselves. 4

We recognise the complexity of the situations faced by Australian pilgrims, coming as they do from a separate continent and an island nation, and now having to cope with being foreigners in a distant land. This underlines that reality of intercultural encounter as an all-pervading aspect of the *Camino*. Any person of any nationality can drop in or out of the trail at any time. There is no policing of the *Camino*, nor any screening or requirements on the way. Only on arrival in Santiago is the pilgrim questioned as to his or her suitability to receive the *Compostela*.

Intercultural dialogue has been promoted by the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant Peoples as a virtually essential condition for those who live in the First World and have the privilege of being able to move voluntarily across the globe: “In this way the dialogue [of pilgrim/tourist with local people] that begins will be sustained by respect for persons, be a living encounter, and avoid the risk of transforming culture into a mere object of curiosity.”²⁰ This particular theme, then, is of importance in any exploration of the purposes of pilgrimage and of what is needed to support the pilgrims themselves in terms of “appropriate pastoral responses”.

d. The hallowed tradition of the *Camino*

This long-trod pilgrim train is a palimpsest of traditions and associations – when the term is understood as “something having usually diverse layers or aspects apparent beneath the surface” or as “an overlay of classes and generations.”²¹ Elyn Aviva uses this word to describe the phenomenon of pilgrims over many years continually on the trail, and leaving behind traces of themselves, e.g., the derelict hospitals that can be seen still on the way. She noted that: “The *Camino* is a kind of palimpsest – a piece of parchment scraped almost clean.”²² Speaking generally, the term is useful for describing the polyvalent reality of the *Camino* as it awaits the pilgrims concerned. It evokes a hallowed tradition manifest in the *long lineage of pilgrims* and the *eons of a faith carried and shared* with those in the past and communicated now in the present. The sense of a *long*

²⁰ Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant Peoples: Guidelines for the Pastoral Care of Tourism, p. 9.

²¹ Merriam-Webster, *Palimpsest*, (Encyclopedia Britannica Co., accessed 25 Nov. 2010); available from www.webster.com.

²² Aviva, *Following the Milky Way*, p. 195.

lineage of pilgrims going back hundreds of years and looking forward to those who are still to come clearly inspired the following responses:

I think the place that had more history than anything else was when we came right up the hill to a cross with a pile of stones and looked at these stones and thought, my goodness, probably not every single person has not brought a stone so – how many stones was that. 9

As I got closer to Santiago, I encountered much more a pilgrim culture – staying in their *refugios*, reading what was in the visitors' book and writing my own was very warming. There was a sense of being part of the movement of people, people behind me, people in front of me, those who had been along this same road, and of course it is that wonderful time-hallowed tradition of walking on these pilgrim roads for so many hundreds of years and that feeling of one's slotting in to that. I use the words, that liturgy of pilgrimage and knowing that one is getting strength and fortitude from so many people who have done this same trip already. 19

The fact of a pilgrimage got to me. That was really special – that you are walking along the track that others have followed years gone by – hundreds of years and you are walking along the track. 1

The *Camino* was the most marvellous experience really. To go, to take my time, walking through the countryside, the knowledge that so many thousands of people have done it before and they have been doing it for centuries. And there is just a really special experience in so many ways. It was just a beautiful experience. 10

The *Camino* for me was a real sense of walking the history of others who have walked before. I was walking these paths with people who had gone before me. I could look at a Baroque building or 13th century church and not so much feel I have been here before but that, yes, this is all part of my story, my history. This is my family. I am part of this. So there is a real sense of being part of it for me. 6

As the pilgrims walked their trail, they were conscious of a history stretching far back and yet continuing into the present and promising to endure into the future. Their experience was many-layered – the external journey of pilgrimage over so long a period and through so vast a space, and the interior journey of a shared faith. We have used the expression *eons of a faith carried and shared*. There is the continuing celebration of the Eucharist and communion in the Body of Christ, a sense of this communion realised for

millennia in the experience of pilgrims, a feeling of solidarity with the humanity whose steps had formed this pilgrim path, and the present perception of sights that had lifted the hearts of those who had first seen them hundreds of years ago:

There is a sense of history when the priest invokes the Body of Christ. It is just not now that it is the body of Christ. That has been there since the beginning of Christianity. 9

This is my image, the image that I had for much of time was the sense of being in that stream, that endless stream of 2000 years of people who have been walking their lives to God or the 900 years or so of the actual stream on the walk to Santiago so for me it was a real catholic experience. 6

It was much more than a contemporary trip for me. The knowledge of humanity, the knowledge of the people before who had literally trodden that track before and were doing the same sort of thing that I am doing. 2

I could see these two little blips on the horizon and I wondered if they were the two towers of the cathedral. And as I drew nearer they got larger. And there is that wonderful feeling that for hundreds of years, people have been seeing this as they walked, walking with God. 19

As already mentioned, the sense of belonging to a pilgrim church on an historical journey is a particularly strong theme in the Church's pastoral guidelines on pilgrimage, and a central feature in the ecclesiology of Vatican II (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, Ch. 7). This ecclesial-theological sense of pilgrim existence was reinforced along the route in the Eucharistic liturgies celebrated in churches many centuries old. And then, the arrival in *Santiago de Compostela*, and the pilgrim Mass in the ancient Cathedral on the Sunday, celebrates in a special way the goal of the whole human journey, in time and beyond it, in the world to come.

e. Australians on pilgrimage

Pope John Paul II spoke in the following terms: “Instead of shutting themselves away in their own culture, people today are invited more than ever to open themselves to other cultures and to see themselves in the light of other ways of thinking and living.”²³

The consciousness of the pilgrims being Australian in a foreign land is a fifth consideration of *oneing* with the kaleidoscope of creation. As outlined above, the influence of culture on the development of the spirituality of pilgrims has been a focus of this research. The importance of culture is reinforced in White’s description of its sometimes oppressive influence in people’s lives,²⁴ and the freeing effects in therapy when the client recognises the “cultural context” as an external determining factor.²⁵ Relevant characteristics of Australian culture have been reviewed above. Also, the Church pastoral guidelines stress the respect and reverence that the pilgrim should show when entering other cultures and other lands. This section, “Australians on Pilgrimage”, pauses over the question of how big a part our national culture plays in the experience of the *Camino* in the case of pilgrims from Australia.

On the most general level, some reported simply on *noticing cultural differences* with an awareness of moving into a different cultural milieu.

As far as being an Australian is concerned I got a real sense that this is their culture. That walking on the *Camino* made me feel this belonged to them and their culture. I didn’t feel I was unwelcome or anything, but I found this was them living their culture. 10

²³ John Paul II, *Message for the 22nd World Day of Tourism*, p. 2.

²⁴ See White, *Re-Authoring Lives*, pp. 45-46. In particular, note his opinion that “psychologies and psychotherapies play an entirely significant role in the reproduction of the dominant culture.”

²⁵ For a further explanation of the objectification of the person in Western societies, and the freedom which is gained from separating out and externalising the cultural context from the client’s own self, see White, *Selected Papers*, pp. 22-26.

A lot of Europeans will go and do ten days walking and then go back home and work for the rest of the year, then go back and start where they left off and do it over a number of years. But for most of us it is a one off opportunity and I think for Australians in some ways it was quite hot and some parts were fairly dry but it's quite a different climate generally all over from the Australian climate. So it is very different for us. 9

However, others went further to comment on the isolation of Australians. The pilgrims expressed the view that, while they were walking the *Camino*, they became more conscious of how distance is such a significant feature in the lives of Australians. Australia is *so far away* and to some extent has bred an insularity into its inhabitants and tolerated an ignorance of the larger world and its languages. On the other hand, these factors heightened the sense of the novelty and privilege of the experience:

I did notice that when we met quite a few people on the walk, and this is a generalisation I am prepared to make, that those born in Australia, most of us, are pretty insular when it comes to learning other languages. We met people from other parts of Europe that could talk to us and could speak six languages. 22

Where do Australians fit in to this? Are we the odd country out? We are not from Europe. It is a distance thing as well as a cultural thing. We have invested so much more in what we are doing. It takes us so much more money etc. We are not just going around the corner, or taking a train. We are going across the world. That is a psychologically huge step. 11

I think sometimes because we don't get the chance to travel as much as other people we are not switched in to some of the dangers that exist because we are in a foreign country. We forget we won't be able to talk with everybody that we meet because they speak a different language. It is little things like that are hard to grasp. 9

I had a very big sense of being Australian near the end. It was a drizzly sort of day and we got all our wet weather gear on. Up until then it hadn't been raining. We walked around a corner and the smell of eucalyptus brought tears to my eyes. And I thought this was home. That was powerful. 10

Whereas for us we have got to do what we can while we are there. We will probably not go back. The world is such a big place and there are other things that you want to do with your time as well. 9

Is this a holiday for many of them? Is this mainly a holiday for them – a religious holiday? It is not a one off for them, I think. We have to collect our experiences because we are so far away. 11

Some respondents were quite *critical of Australia's culture*, and saw the need to change it in some way:

In terms of culture Australians can be very friendly, but can also be very unfriendly. In my life I have experienced it all. 3

I think Australians get on with life and have social justice values and I love that. I think as well Australians can sometimes stand on high moral grounds occasionally. I think they can do that when they get off a bit. 3

I think the way we live is shallow, irrelevant and luxurious. We should work towards giving as many people as possible the chance to live our life. 17

I would change whatever it is about us where we find it hard to see somebody else's viewpoint. I feel so despondent that we keep returning governments that promote individualistic competition and lack of compassion for people who have rough times. There is something cultural and it is globally connected. Perhaps I wish we were not so influenced by American culture. 22

Do you have to come away with a public service outcome? Do you have to come away with any outcome? Isn't that a real flashing light – I have to have an outcome? If I don't have an outcome I have failed. Isn't that a real consideration? 11

Others expressed general satisfaction and connectedness with our culture. Such a *benign assessment of Australian culture* is based on the generally friendly attitude to others and some evidence of cultural achievements and opportunities, even on a spiritual level:

I think Australians are easy going friendly, not too serious. 10

I feel no real sense that being Australian made much difference to me. I felt that it did not impact on my journey for being Australian. 18

I don't think on the whole I want to change who we are. I know we've had some traumas and some successes in our history but I don't personally think we would have a need to change anything about who we are. I guess some Aussies would like to describe themselves as spiritual I think. 13

I think that we know to a certain extent where we want to be and we are prepared to take the initiative. 9

I feel God in all nature, but I felt God more here in Australia. For example when I went to Central Australia I felt really mothered. I didn't feel as spiritually mothered on the *Camino*. 4

I think Australians are good people; they are aware and as they meet others their awareness will increase. 22

I like how we are. I think we are an easy-going friendly sort of people. I think we have variations of people and personalities. On the whole, I find I only know Australians really but I am comfortable with that and that when I am away I really miss the Australian culture. 13

These indications point to a general satisfaction with Australia and its culture, while also an awareness of Australia's distance from the influence of other nations. Nonetheless, there was also the sense of privilege for Australians able to travel to a distant land and undertake a pilgrimage. The implication was of Australia still being regarded as a "lucky country", and the respondents seemed generally satisfied with that status.

In the light of the Church pastoral guidelines frequently referred to, considerable benefits are expected from the pilgrims' withdrawal from their own culture and immersion in another. How pilgrims perceive culture – both their own and those they visit – is crucial to the mission of the Church which recognises that "it is one of the properties of the human person to achieve true and full humanity only by means of culture." The Pontifical Council for Culture clarifies what the characteristics of that process are:

The Good News which is Christ's Gospel for all men and the whole human person reaches them in their own culture, which absorbs their manner of living the faith and is in turn gradually shaped by it. This symbiotic imperative of living out the Gospel within a culture, but also as a Christian taking a role in the

transformation of that culture takes on poignancy for the pilgrim through the withdrawal from one's own culture and immersed in others.²⁶

This raises the question as to the extent a radical change of lifestyle – say, as proposed by Clive Hamilton²⁷ – can readily occur in the Australian context. And yet the Pontifical Council is insistent that contributing to a transformation of culture is both demanded and possible, despite the entrenched attitudes inherent in being people of an island continent. As Pope John Paul II states: “Tourism is a privileged occasion for this dialogue between civilisations because it sets before the traveller the specific riches that distinguish one civilisation from another.”²⁸

General Dimension 3: Sacred People on Sacred Ways

The importance of this third General Dimension in the overall taxonomy cannot be overstated. The interaction of the pilgrim with the sacredness of the trail is spelled out in the Church pastoral guidelines on pilgrimage. Not only do they highlight the crucial place this interaction has in the itinerary of pastoral opportunities and responses while on the trail, but they also show how the characteristics of pilgrimage have the capacity to present to the pilgrim an enduring life-course: “The pilgrimage symbolises the experience of the *homo viator* who sets out, as soon as he leaves the maternal womb, on his journey through the time and space of his existence” (*Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee*, 1). The Spanish word *camino* actually means “the way”. This evokes the role of Jesus as “The Way, the Truth and the Life” as portrayed in John’s Gospel (Jn.14:6) Thus, this third General Dimension, titled “Sacred People on Sacred Ways”, explores the interaction

²⁶Pontifical Council for Culture, *Pastoral Approach to Culture*, pp. 1-2.

²⁷ Hamilton, *Affluenza: When Too Much Is Never Enough*, pp. 131-198.

²⁸ John Paul II, *Message for the 22nd World Day of Tourism*, p. 2.

between the sacredness of the pilgrims' lives and the sacred status of the *Camino*, in the light of Jesus, the Way. This multidimensional interaction generates many of the symbolic practices of the *Camino* such as touching the many public crosses spread across the trail, and the sense of particular sacred places, objects, ceremonies and persons. A number of themes in this context deserve specific emphasis.

a. Australian Catholics on the Way

Because this research project has Australian Catholics as its primary participants and subject, one of the more important aims of the data collection has been to establish influences that the two cultures – that of Australia and that of the Australian Church – have exercised on the experiences of the pilgrims. As stated earlier, Church pastoral guidelines on pilgrimage reveal a clear focus on this topic, and as such, this theme takes on particular significance for Australian Catholics. The spiritual life of Catholics is essentially affected by forms of ritual and symbolic activities through the sacraments and liturgical life. Continuing daily prompting through an abundance of sacramentals, sacred objects and devotional practices, including pilgrimages made on foot, play a part in disposing people to participate in liturgical life. As well as this, each person on the *Camino* is encouraged to take on an individualised iconography, say, by carrying the pilgrim pole, or wearing the cross of St James or the scallop shell.

The responses of this cohort reveal mixed appreciation of these opportunities for spiritual growth. One liturgical event that does stand out in their reports, however, is the place Eucharist held in their priorities and practice. Eucharist has, therefore, been treated in its own right in the fifth theme of this third General Dimension. We note a certain distancing from devotional practices, an interest in caring, a disposition towards spiritual

issues from an Australian perspective, and consistent reaching out towards unity with others. First, on the subject of *diffidence to devotional practices* related to iconography, symbols, rituals and sacred images, we have the following range of somewhat condescending responses:

The problem is we look down on that [devotional practices]. Everything that doesn't seem to be what we have manufactured in our church to be, we look down on it, e.g., people look down on the May procession at Galong because it is only Asians and ethnics – only old people say the Rosary – all those sorts of devotions, the Sacred Heart, the divine mercy, all seem to be fringe things. Only fringe people would do that which is actually not true, but that's the perception that only the odd do that. 24

Statues and holy relics and all those sorts of things is almost like a superstition, in their blood if you like; sort of the difference between religion and spirituality. Religion was ingrained in them. Even though young men didn't go to Mass they all wanted to carry the Virgin at Easter. I liked the carrying of the Statues made in beautiful wood and stone and especially those depictions of the Holy Family. 4

I think that different cultures have different approaches to faith and I think that in some countries it is what I would call, without wishing to sound derogatory, a primitive type of faith where they believe very much in tangible things and having to see stuff and having to do mantras and follow the party line and do all the things you have to do to get the end result you want and I just accept that that is the way some people operate but that is not the way I operate. 9

And yet there is a strongly personal dimension in that a number of pilgrims exhibited a clear *desire to care for the other*, the companion, the poor, the stranger, and be influenced in return:

I think the Australians cared about what was happening, they cared for me, celebrated with me. They were really good people. They were all respectful of things and even when things did not go their way they were gentle about it. 3

The concept of God – brought up in my own culture of Irish grandparents, a real sense of the God of the poor. That's always been part of my culture, my religious culture; the parish was very poor but incredibly supportive of everybody. 6

It does strengthen that sense of injustice around the world because you see people from other countries and other cultures and other places who are just the same as you, have the same loving values as you and the same care for family, but because

of where they were born, they just can't do things that you think people should be able to do. 2

There is a third point to be made. A number of pilgrims reported a *growing awareness of spiritual issues from an Australian perspective*:

A person who has God within me – that God is in everyone and that there is a purpose to my life that I have to shape with a certain responsibility but with a uniqueness and a certain joy about the uniqueness, also personal challenges. My sense of identity is inextricably linked with being a child of God in some way. I probably would have said Catholic as well, but I don't know how to separate the two since it has always been that perspective, but I say a child of God, Christianity, that sort of thing. 10

I guess that there will always be Australians who are striving for more spiritual life and I guess I would be one of those. When you've described yourself as a Christian and a Catholic it has always been part of my life, the spiritual life, but it isn't something that I regard as having obtained so far as I am certainly hoping to become a more spiritual person in the years to come and I hope that I know just what I would like to strive to do. 13

I think Australian spirituality is different, yes, because I think of a lot of Australian Catholicism takes its roots from the Irish priests that came, but it is not the same as Ireland because we have added our own flavours and I think it is because we are further away from mainstream, distance-wise, and we are fairly free thinkers in Australia and I think Australians have a reputation for doing things the way they want to do it. 9

There is a deepening requirement by the Church to cater for people who are at my place and my spirituality. I feel that the church does not do that for me at the moment and that I would wish to continue my journey definitely within the church. 18

I think there is an element of Australian society of not being good at discipline. There is an element in Australian Catholicism of people thinking things through for themselves, and exercising their own conscience. I am not saying that that doesn't exist in other countries but that the sort of people that I mix with are people who have developed their own consciences. They have their own definite ideas about God and spirituality and religion. 9

Beneath all the particular different practices, there was also evidence of a *deeper reaching out towards unity with others*, a feeling of relationship in the common search for God over many centuries:

What was important for me is the fact that the pilgrimage has drawn so many hundreds and thousands of people over the centuries. So that feeling you are doing what so many others have been doing is a search for God in some way. 20

The feeling that you are following along a tradition of so many people who were drawn to be with God or whatever the reasons were, it might have been St James, at the heart of it was to live their lives with God. And for me that was true. 20

There are clearly a wide range of views expressed by this pilgrim cohort in the context of their being Australian and Catholic. The participants' responses reacted to iconography, symbols and devotional practices. There was a certain reluctance to articulate their own spirituality in the kinds of external and public ways they observed other people doing on the *Camino*. And yet there a caring disposition in evidence, and a sensitivity to spiritual issues from an Australian perspective, along with a desire to reach out towards unity with others.

The Australian pilgrims' lack of feeling for iconography, symbols, and rituals in their daily lives, and their reluctance to articulate their faith in the public forum, point to the need to develop in the future an iconographic, symbolic and ritual orientation which is culturally acceptable to Australians about to set out on pilgrimage. To judge by the responses from this research group, the divide between the secular and the sacred appears to start at the church door. It thus raises the issue as to whether the Australian Catholic Church might play a role in providing pastoral opportunities for preparatory forms of liturgical practice such as sacred times, ceremonies, objects and sacred art, which may help to bridge the gap between private and public practices. All this is in the general

context of responding to “the signs of the times”, in the hallowed phrase of Vatican II. (See Chapter 8 for further elaboration).

b. Sacred Places, Sacred Objects, Sacred Ceremonies

This section deals with particular devotional opportunities available to the pilgrim, and the choices made by the pilgrims in this respect. The *Camino* abounds in sacred objects and practices, from first setting one’s feet on the soil of the trail, to crosses and shrines, churches and liturgies, greetings and sayings. Here, we keep in mind that our research cohort showed itself to be generally diffident when it came to expressing themselves in this devotional fashion, and were more likely to accept such expressiveness among foreigners than among their own people. In the background of our evaluation of reactions under this heading is the emphasis on public piety as it has been expressed by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments,²⁹ as when we read,

Genuine forms of popular piety, expressed in a multitude of different ways, derive from the faith, and, therefore, must be valued and promoted. Such authentic expressions of popular piety are not at odds with the centrality of the Sacred Liturgy. Rather, in promoting the faith of the people, who regard popular piety as natural religious expressions, they predispose the people for the celebration of the Sacred Mysteries.³⁰

In regard to the Australian experience on the *Camino*, the responses record reactions to bells, statues, church decorations, relics, the pilgrim shell, wayside shrines and ritual phrases, and much more. The orientation here is *noticing, questioning and occasionally personalising*.

The church bells and the statues in terms of your faith being built by such objects, I think in Europe you have that. You can see the centuries and centuries of faith

²⁹ See Ch. 4.

³⁰ Congregation for Divine Worship, *Directory of Popular Piety and Liturgy*, p. 6.

that actually built these things and you can feel the people's faith and that to me is astonishing, is wonderful. They are such tangible reminders of people's faith. 20

I suppose that having been to Europe before I was aware of the different churches, and this time I noticed the difference but I knew I was going to see different churches, the statuary, the decorations. 9

Relics of Saints I am not drawn to, but what I am drawn to is going through churches, and into churches and around churches, and looking at the way they present themselves. 2

When you see the shells and the symbols of the *Camino* that was just so powerful to me I did get that feeling that this is a holy route. That people have been doing this for so many centuries and that God is drawing us in some way. 20

At the beginning I felt very self-conscious of making the prayer in front of a wayside cross. I had the usual Anglo-Saxon reticence. I thought you only cross yourself in a church; you don't cross yourself in the street and things like that. After a while it became totally natural, like I would pass a wayside cross and I would bow my head for a moment and make the sign of the cross and say a little prayer and you would be strengthened by that and you would walk on some more. 19

I think the statues are very helpful to people to focus but I don't know we can learn anything from that. We have to go in a different direction now with religion. We have to have a new age of religion I think in Australia. 4

The church where the young Opus Dei person was welcoming, I found that crucifix very powerful; the finger pointing down to touch the earth almost, the closeness of it all. 6

Vaya Camino (Go forward on *Camino*); to say that to each other as you are walking, that is a very powerful thing and I like to remind myself of that. 22

I look around Santiago Cathedral and all these people are amazingly fortunate. They have centuries of material. I look around mine and basically I have junk. I have nothing at home. I go into my cathedral wherever it might be and I do not have any great history. It does not have an awful lot to offer. The liturgies they do have are low octane. 11

Further, the pilgrims could not but observe the response of the local people to the routine expressions of devotion in their own culture – the icons, symbols and rituals.

While this was appreciated, it did not necessarily lead to their participation in this more

exuberant form of devotion. They were *more observers than participants* in this other dimension of culture:

The culture of the *Camino* was very important to them. I thought it would be seen by them as a bit of a tourist thing. I found it very different from our Australian culture. It seemed to me that their people would ride or walk this *Camino* every day. While to do something like that in Australia you would have to be a different sort of character. It would have to be an overt, deliberate act for us to do something like this within our own culture. 11

I bought a staff at O Cebriero. I found it very useful, crossing streams and so on. You do need one, but I didn't carry a shell. 4

Body parts do not do anything for me I am afraid. We had seen them all over Italy. To me it is a bit morbid. 1

Pilgrimage like this is much more entrenched in their culture and as an Australian I noticed this. For them it is an alive and active thing whereas for us in Australia it is not. For them it is a part of their lives, for us it is a separate sort of thing. 13

Here (on the *Camino*), they're often not terribly professional, you can't hear what they are saying (the language) yet they have a naturalness about them, which we don't. This is a rich Catholic faith that I do not know any more. I have such low octane faith at home. Here, they don't think about all these varieties of worship in the one church; this is just natural to them. 11

The *Camino* reduces your spiritual inhibitions because you are in a much more religious environment than you are here in Australia, and I mean because we live in such a secular environment it is very hard to reproduce the ritual and the liturgies of a sacred environment and now I know the Italian Catholics of my city have a procession every year. I have never been on it, but obviously it is a very important event and I wish we had more things like that here. I wish we had more public affirmations of sacredness. 19

One of the things I wrote down was religious immersion into the Catholic faith. I enjoyed that bit when at times I could immerse myself in a way that I could not here in Australia. Sometimes it can almost appear superstitious. Occasionally we would come to a little church and locals would talk to you and you would get that sense – and the statues and the extravagance of Spanish Catholicism, the importance of that history. 21

In this local area they have a certain feast day that is quite interesting. We happened to turn up in O Cebreiro in September where there was a feast going on, but I wasn't sort of involved. On one level you think, well, we are one part of this universal church and this birthday is celebrated this way here (Our Lady's

Birthday) and in Australia it might get a bit of a glance somewhere but not to that level. 10

These responses are indicative of a pilgrim cohort who clearly identified their experiences as worthwhile, but who were at the same time aware of being situated in the Spanish culture. The value and legitimacy of that culture's devotional practices were recognised while at the same time provoking questions as to how – if at all – it could be transposed into an Australian context and way of life. If ways of Australians taking part in more devotional practices are to be developed, these responses at least suggest that any such practice should be connected with Australian cultural identity.

c. The Iconography of St James the Apostle

It goes without saying that St James – Santiago – is accorded a central place in the iconography and spiritual practices on the *Camino*. Some research participants offered specific reactions to the Apostle James. The *Camino* is stamped with Santiago images, and the pilgrim would be very likely to be curious about the many portrayals of St James. The destination is the Cathedral of the Saint after all, *Catedral de Santiago de Compostela*. Rubbing the back of the Saint's statue, perched up as it is as a centre-piece behind the High Altar, is performed by most of the pilgrims, who queue up in order to be part of this ritual.

This research project, however, has revealed two attitudes of Australian Catholics which seem to work against a full attentiveness to the Saint. Firstly, as reported earlier, there was a certain timidity or reluctance on the part of these pilgrims to engage in the many popular devotional practices which are available to them on the *Camino*. The research participants note that many Europeans, in dress and ritual behaviour, act in ways

that predispose them to sacramental participation. Australians, for their part, generally shy away from such expressions of faith. As reported above, one pilgrim described participating in pilgrimages to holy shrines in Australia as the province of fringe worshippers, i.e., those who had migrated from European and South American countries. Secondly, the pilgrims had no prior exposure to the iconographic orientation that Melczer places on the persona of the pilgrim St James. In fact, some acquaintance with Melczer's thinking may have created opportunities for the Australian Catholic *peregrinos* to have an understanding of their place as symbolising not only the Apostle James, but also the pilgrim Christ himself. According to Melczer, the character of St James the Pilgrim is identified by the way his adherents – in this case the pilgrims themselves – behave. Melczer considers, however, that the Saint prefigures Christ, so that the pilgrim “puts on Christ”. The pilgrim does not just walk with Christ, but takes on the role of Christ as a pilgrim. The role of the pilgrim, therefore, represents far more than a walk down a pilgrim trail; it signifies a share in the action of Christ. These symbolic resonances were, unfortunately, largely unknown to the Australian Catholic pilgrims. As a result, they were limited in the understanding of the drama that was being played out. Still, there was in their responses a sense that something not easily graspable was happening in the figure of St James. For this reason, Melczer's “The Iconography of James the Apostle” conveniently sums up what we are here considering, for instance, in terms of *Santiago the helper*, *meeting with St James on the road*, and *St James the Moor-slayer*. St James was perceived as benignly intervening in the course of the pilgrimage:

I noticed that good things happened beyond my imagining, things I could never have organised but which brought immense delight. I call it ‘serendipity’ – the fingerprint of the loving presence of God. Some people simply refer to such experiences as the miraculous intervention of Santiago. 7

The question that started to emerge for me was what was important in life and who accompanies us on our way? There was a sense where the rituals within the Santiago Cathedral did not seem as relevant as the walking rhythm that had been established upon the *Camino*. There was no miracle at the place of St James, the miracles and shifts had happened upon the way. 8

Secondly, it was observed that some local people recognised a *prefiguration of St*

James in the Australian pilgrims:

Isn't it interesting to contemplate the thought that all these people are passing through this part of Spain, but part of what they are doing here is ministering to, bringing Jesus to, being James to, the local people. We think we are coming here and the local people are looking after us. I wonder how much it is going the other way. It is a two-way thing. We are coming along. They are seeing something in us. We are seeing something in them. Isn't that a wonderful balance? 11

I guess because you are wearing the insignia of the pilgrim, you have your scallop shell around your neck, you might have your staff, people look at you slightly differently than they look at someone who was just a tourist, say. They relate to you differently. They say this is someone doing something special. It is that sort of faith and recognition and familiarity of the people that you are doing something different, something a bit special that is so enriching and adds to that feeling. 19

For others again, there was a search for that presence of James. There was a sentiment expressed by some pilgrims of *meeting with St James on the road:*

Who is St James for us? We meet him on the Way. How do I recognise him? How am I to recognise him? Have we met James already and we have been so busy getting our 24 kilometres under way that we have not recognised him. I really want to meet James on the way but how do we meet him? 11

It was a day for me that confirmed the adage that you don't meet St James in Santiago but you meet him on the way. And a wonderful end point of a day was not what it was all about. It was about walking and the experiences along the Way. 17

Because of the solitude, the mountains and the incredible scenery we met James many times on the Way. 13

In the responses of others, there was a *more critical and sceptical tone:*

The Aussie cynic comes out in me a bit about James. In lots of way it doesn't matter. It is somewhere which is special and sacred for some reasons and there are legends around it. That is the thing. You take it for what it is. You don't sort of poke around too much, but I don't feel that it invalidates the pilgrimage by not believing that James sailed up the river in a stone boat or something. 9

What you get out of it at the end is not so much the story of James but the footprints of the people on the track who were working things through and you are working through your spiritual bits too. 1

James was probably the least focus for me on the *Camino* because I am very sceptical of the relics and whether he was there or wasn't there. So for me it was not important. What was important is that it has drawn so many hundreds and thousands of people over the centuries. 20

I felt an affection for St James. You know how everybody queues up and hugs him or something; I just patted the back of his head, and said, "good on you", sort of. You wonder of course about the person of James. Is it all just a legend, or whatever? 4

In summary, St James takes a rightful place in this taxonomy of the pilgrimage to Santiago; and despite some caution with regard to the full appreciation of the iconographic representation of the Saint, there are clear signs of some levels of acceptance, especially with regard to those features documented above. Firstly, some of the pilgrims do attribute to St James certain happenings on the road. Others are aware of being seen to symbolise St James through their presence as pilgrims. For others again, there was a conscious desire to "meet" James, despite their reservations about the authenticity of the saint's history in this part of the world.

The shadow-side of the iconographic orientation of St James, namely *St James the Moor-slayer*, played only a very minor part in the interest of these Australian Catholic pilgrims. The emergence in this research, however, of the language of salvific suffering reaching back to the early stages of the *Camino* as a Christian pilgrimage, may give a greater sense to the figure of St James as *Matamoros*, the Moor-slayer. On this matter,

several poignant comments were recorded, pointing to the ambiguities of this representation and a history that is today all-but unimaginable:

Legends abound and not all of them politically correct today, especially the image of James the Moor-slayer. Apparently in the first millennium when the Christians were getting a hard time of it from the Moors and about to drop their bundle, a vision appeared in the sky of James slaying the dread Moors ... Along the way and in Santiago itself there are lots of depictions of James on his horse, sword in hand and the heads of hapless Moors lying on the ground. 23

Like our lives, the *Camino* is riddled with paradox. Santiago [St James] is the benevolent pilgrim, the wise and respected father of all pilgrims. He is also depicted as the Moor-slayer, riding a mighty horse leading conquering Christians into battle. The *Camino* was walked by the humble St Francis and fought over by powerful knights. 7

d. A Pilgrim God

This section moves us close to the heart of the pastoral-theological considerations already raised. Pilgrimage is about walking a trail, but more deeply, it refers to an interior journey. If that is lacking, the practice of pilgrimage is spiritually pointless, whatever about physical and recreational advantages. For our research cohort of participants, God and Christ were much more prominent than St James. Their responses were strongly oriented towards God images, with some expressing a sense of God on pilgrimage with them as well, going before them and preparing the way; hence, the title of this section.

The image of *God as a companion on the human journey through history*, and as with each one throughout *the pilgrimage of life*, found expression in the following:

One is the sense of the God who walks with us throughout our history. I am very conscious of scripture and hymns that talk about that; not being alone, God being with us all that way; the pillar of cloud by day and the fire by night. I have that sense of that very ancient tree over there and St Francis may have seen that when he walked. And you know it was God who led Francis to do what he did and the same God who was with us that I found daily. It was a daily experience for me. 6

There were special God points with so many people today. It makes you feel God is walking with you. 13

We are all on a journey with God. I went hoping for a healthier relationship with God myself and others. Hoping for a healthy relationship with God is who I am and I think I got that. At various times I felt really little mystical experiences, e.g., O Cebreiro. 21

For others, the pilgrim experience meant a growing sense of *God who is close and present* to them. It was a time of meeting God in a special way, and of communicating with him in a familiar and friendly fashion:

I met God over there. People do talk about it. There is a special energy over there [on the *Camino*], the way you walk, and in all the wonderful people that you meet. You meet God in all of them really. The Pilgrim Mass was the special one for me. My friend was there and she had kept a space. She wanted me to hear the first blast of the organ which she loved. 4

The other thing I do is talk to God all the time. God is a friend of mine. I never ask him questions. I talk to him like I talk to you. 11

I would describe God as benevolent. I don't think this has changed for me. For me this is a positive image and I do not wish to change it. 17

I don't think he [God] asks me to be focussed on him, not at all. I never get the impression of, "Excuse me but you are not paying me attention!" I never get that impression. 11

I opened myself up to talking to God. At the beginning it was not much of a conversation. At the beginning it was just silence and contemplation. But as time went by I began to think searchingly about my mortal life. The good things I had done and the bad things I had done, the people I've made happy, the people I've hurt. 19

I began to think about the people I had become harshly judgmental on. I became more charitable, more compassionate and I think this was a product of my growing relationship with God – not in any structural, formal way. I wasn't doing any spiritual exercises. I wasn't saying prayers. I wasn't using any devices of creating a structure for talking to God. It was just a growing awareness. 19

Hypothetically I probably have never done it before, of spending four hours with God but given the opportunity and I have partially done that, I would say yes. I could cope very nicely with that. But I would have to be completely on my

own. 11

There was an understanding that the experience could not be contained by a structure but that the structure of the walk had enabled the experience so that I became aware of a profounder sense of God, each other and myself. 8

I was particularly keen to get myself to Santiago for Mass on the Friday and pushed well ahead to arrive there. I made the Eucharist. 18

The *Camino* was a very important religious moment in my life. 19

In some sense, *pilgrims and the local people mediated to each other the meaning and experience of the Pilgrim God* through their actions:

People recognised you as a pilgrim. They felt you were doing an important thing, being an important person. They have a lot of time for you as a pilgrim. They want you to get there. You are a sign of God, and they want you to be successful. 13

Certainly when you look at the sheer number of the people doing this and how you are accepted by those people I think that there is a mutual something. They do revere the pilgrim. They still identify and respect the pilgrim for what they are doing. 20

You are literally throwing yourself on the comfort of strangers, on the kindness of strangers. In that situation, just a simple greeting on the road and a blessing becomes enormously important. Little encounters became very precious. And the warmth of people to a stranger, who is not part of their community, was just a very heart warming thing – the graciousness and the warmth of people in the place, sharing their space with me. Those simple little encounters were so wonderfully warming. 19

I was with this person on the *Camino* and we didn't really know each other. But we got lost together. He had no food, nothing. I started to get worried that we were going the wrong way and there we were with him with nothing. Then he said, "Don't you worry you are doing a wonderful job. You are doing everything perfectly". Here was I thinking that he was the one I was worried about and he was caring for me. There you are, worried about someone else and they are the ones giving you the lift all along and you think you are the one. You do not forget these things. 3

The image of God in the pilgrim's responses is one of benevolence, familiarity and companionship throughout the human journey. As already mentioned, some

reflective responses pointed more directly to how the *Camino* affected one's personal faith and spirituality, so as to deepen the relationship with God – and with the people met along the way, both as fellow pilgrims and as local citizens of the place.

e. Pilgrim Jesus and the Eucharist

In the religious context just implied, the pilgrims spoke of *Jesus as a travelling companion*, and, further, evidenced a consistent commitment to the Eucharist. In evangelical terms, the *Camino* offered something of an Emmaus experience (Lk 24:13-35):

I had quite a significant experience, what I would call a spiritual experience with a God that journeyed very close with me. Jesus was very close to me and we talked of him coming to people in their lives. Since then I have continued to express my relationship with Jesus and live out my spirituality in the way that I sense Jesus in my life. 18

Perhaps St James never took the good news of Jesus to Santiago or to Spain, but over the centuries millions of people who have walked the way of St James have discovered that Jesus – or St James – walks alongside them on the *Camino*. 23

As the story of the road to Emmaus was read we started to recognise the points where Jesus had accompanied us along the route and where the scripture started to speak to our lives. 8

The celebrations of the Eucharist were an important part of the day, but I wouldn't say I found Christ any more than during the day. I felt Christ during the day as well. I suppose in the Eucharist it was a different meeting with Christ. It was the culmination of the day. It was an important part of the day too. 20

It is noteworthy that the pilgrims translate their spiritual experiences through images. They report at various points an easy association with St James, God, Jesus Christ in a way that suggests the reality of multiple layers of interpretation. In some cases, their spiritual awareness takes in Jesus/Christ and God, all at once. The iconography, however, appears to carry the same meaning across all three images, that of

close relationships with companions walking the journey with them and evoked as such in the mutual helpfulness shown by both fellow pilgrims and local people.

Further, apart from a general reference to the Eucharist, a number of pilgrims singled out the special place that *Eucharist* played in their lives. This researcher had first-hand experience of this during the five times he walked the *Camino*. The Eucharist was usually celebrated every night in each village, around 8 p.m. Australian pilgrims were very keen to participate, despite the difficulties with the language, the late hour, and for most, a long, demanding day. The Eucharistic high-point, and the climax to the whole *Camino* experience, is the Pilgrim's Mass at noon on Sunday at the Cathedral in *Santiago de Compostela*. At that time, the pilgrims from every country who have arrived in Santiago during the week enjoy hearing read out their country names and the number of pilgrims. (Five times this researcher has heard Australia named in the Cathedral during that pilgrim Mass, and each time it has been a deeply moving experience). In the words of the pilgrims themselves,

The biggest sense of Church was the Eucharist. That's what I think joins us around the pilgrimage. These other religious practices were interesting but more as an observer than when we shared and were part of Eucharist. 10

The Mass was a very special part of each day I think. It was the bonding of the group. There was something very special that we shared. 1

When I look back at my going on pilgrimage there was certainly a sense of belonging to a bigger group, a bigger church but not being bogged down by the local interpretations of that. So the Eucharist and coming together for that was fundamental. 10

We arrived at *Santiago de Compostela* for the pilgrim Mass on the Sunday, which was very moving. 10

Initially before I left I wanted to be very clear in my mind just how churchy it was going to be. I had to ask whether there was going to be the sorts of things they do in India of getting down on prayer mats every little distance and then they do it

again. And yet the one day on the *Camino* when I did not have Mass I was like an addict coming down. I looked for it every day although parts of the process didn't sit very well with me. I was despairing on that day because the local priest would not open the church for us. 2

I was particularly conscious of Eucharist, and the Eucharist I now see as the centrepiece for the Church in Australia. 18

We were lucky to get to the Mass at the Cathedral. I felt God was tracking me. He knows I am a Mass person. God wanted me to have a Mass today. Mass is my style of communicating with God and also a method of praying. 13

The General Dimension that we have been considering in this section, "Sacred People on Sacred Ways", points to the spiritual centre of the pilgrims' experience, and echoes the words of the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People:

Jesus Christ enters the scene of history as "the Way, the Truth and the Life" and since the very beginning; he includes himself in the journey of humankind and of his people, uniting himself in some way with each man. In fact, he descended from being "with God" to become "flesh" and to walk along the paths of the human person. (*The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee*, 9)

This third General Dimension gives an indication of the itinerary of the *Camino* as a way of conversion. A change of heart is the goal of every phase of the way travelled. Again in the words of *The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee*: "It is necessary to keep in mind, first of all, that evangelisation is the ultimate reason for which the Church proposes and encourages pilgrimages, such that they are transformed into an experience of deep and mature faith" (2).

General Dimension 4: Steps on the Journey

The document of the Pontifical Council also states, "'The way' is a symbol of existence which is expressed in a wide range of actions, like leaving and coming back, entrance and exit, descent and ascent, walking and resting" (*The Pilgrimage in the Great*

Jubilee, 1). Or, in Helen Curry's words, "At its simplest, you prepare yourself on the journey in. You receive at the centre. You accept and own what you have received in the journey out."³¹ This section, "Steps on the Journey", aims to suggest the larger ambience of the pilgrimage as cryptically sketched in Curry's words.

Questions necessarily arise: Why do people go on pilgrimage, what have they noticed about themselves and others as they come to the end, and how do they feel about leaving the trail?³² Preparatory rites of initiation into the pilgrimage commence in Australia before the pilgrims leave. These may take the form of a public blessing and "sending off" or *missio* during a Eucharistic celebration, or simply a short blessing in a church or home. Indeed, the initiation may be purely material, like trying on new hiking boots, or as an imaginative anticipation of what is store. Anticipation matures with a growing commitment to the point of finalising the decision and making arrangements for an epic journey. Since pilgrimage trails are open to all, acceptance of the invitation to walk and the eventual farewells are all at the discretion of the pilgrim. The only moment of official recognition is when they queue up at the Cathedral in *Santiago de Compostela* to record their names as part of the long traditions of the *Camino*, and receive their *Credencial*.

Some pilgrims recalled their entering and joining the journey. They were *responding to promptings* whatever the source – a particular priest, a spiritual attraction, a physical or psychological need:

³¹ Helen Curry, *The Way of the Labyrinth: A Powerful Meditation for Everyday Life* (New York: Penguin Compass, 2000), p. 208.

³² See Robinson, *Sacred Places, Pilgrim Paths*. These reflections pick up some of the sentiments reported by Robinson in the literature review, where he explains "preparing for the journey", and "the destination".

I was definitely in a situation of saying who in the world am I at this point in my life. I was sitting next to a priest. He said, "I am going on a pilgrimage" and I just said, "Take me along". 3

I was very entranced at the idea of walks that had been undertaken by so many people seeking the truth or seeking God, or seeking themselves over thousands of years. 10

I wanted to be involved in the walk, being encouraging, and participating. I became stronger and more committed than I realised. 13

I like the physical challenge and the idea of getting out there and walking it. I need that. I needed the change to kind of go back to basics. Whenever I feel that I need change I need to go back and get physical. 3

I went to walk with someone close to me, to spend time in a part of Europe and its culture, and to enjoy the physical nature of the event. 17

The business of going on a pilgrimage started and I got ready for that. It was what I am going to see and with whom am I going to be. I had no idea of what to expect. I had not gone into it. I had no idea what to expect spiritually. 3

I needed help in giving expression to my own search for meaning. There was a need to step outside the everyday activity which seems to have led other people to embark upon pilgrimage. 8

A number of the participants reported on their farewells at the end of the pilgrimage. Some found the moment tinged with *sadness* as their world of the last period came to an end:

The physical end of it just broke my heart, but I thought here are people that I had come to know in a moment in time and now it was gone just like a gap. It makes me sad, so sad it makes me cry. 3

This was the moment I had been anticipating and yet dreading: the end of the journey. 7

The thing about God with you is that you finish it and then you want to do it again. You just want to come back. You want to do more of it. You want to do it again. 20

When it ended I felt very sad. I knew that the person was not going to be walking with me again. I found that really hard. 3

For others it was *a moment to cherish*, with its memories and achievements, and its experience of being close to God:

It is very much a matter of the journey rather than the arrival, although the arrival was a miraculous and wonderful moment for me. 19

The Gregorian chant, a moving *Taizé* chant for the responsorial psalm, led by a vibrant nun, and a special feeling of belonging to the people of God were all part of the wonderful liturgy. When they lit and swung the censor, the *botafumeiro*, at the end, we felt “our cup runneth over”. 23

The people I have walked with have added something for me. Those people I have walked with have an indelible link with me. For any of those people I would go through a lot to assist them later on in their lives. 1

A rainbow showed us the way to the Cathedral earlier in the day and as we walked into the square we were welcomed by Celtic music. We had come to a profound point on the journey where we recognised how God had drawn us to that place to be one. We simply stopped in this place, embraced and prayed. 8

I reviewed the trip along the road – the young man who appeared from nowhere in the early morning and gave us directions when we were kilometres off the trail. We only got to the Cathedral just in time for the Pilgrim Mass. The God moments were common. God was close to us; the seat we got, the beautiful breeze, the swinging of the thurible. 13

I did not know that this was all waiting for me. And even if I never walk again with these people, they will always be with me. 3

Others reported a sense of *closure* to their experience:

The Cathedral is the strangest building. It starts there and just goes up. I like the old town. I didn’t get a flat feeling. I suppose it was a completion to something then you are ready to move on to the next thing. 9

I focussed right to the end. I was happy that everything went well. At the end I was not excited but that was just me. It was good for the other person to be that. It was a great experience for me. I felt comfortable living like that. 13

The pilgrimage is a metaphor for life. The pilgrimage, particularly if it is a longer one, becomes a life of its own because it has a beginning, middle and an end. And the things you encounter on a pilgrimage are like the things you encounter in life. And as you leave the pilgrimage you have feelings of separation as you leave that life, as perhaps we feel the sadness at the end of our earthly life. 19

Some felt impelled to *encourage others* to undertake the pilgrimage:

I think I would encourage people to think carefully about what they would want to find in the pilgrimage. If they wanted solitude and vulnerability, I would encourage them to pursue that on one of the less travelled routes. Try to do the pilgrimage which suits you. Don't try to fit into someone else's blueprint. Everybody gets something out of it in a different way. 19

I would encourage people to do the *Camino* because I think it gives everybody something different. People go for different reasons and then they find when they are on the way that they are experiencing something else perhaps from the reason they went. 4

I think most people who do the *Camino* get something out of it even when they just start off with the idea that this is coming to be a bit of a laugh. 19

Several pilgrims were disposed to discourage others from making the pilgrimage with questionable or what seemed to them *superficial motives*:

I just wonder whether those we met from Europe treat this as, dare I say, a superficial thing or more a humdrum thing of life, and for me it is important. I have come half way across the world and I expect an experience. 11

For them (Europeans) a lot of people do it because it is an historical walk not necessarily for a spiritual walk. 9

I am interested even why people bother. There are easier ways aren't there how people can get their spiritual kicks. You don't have to put yourself through two weeks, three weeks, two months of pain and discomfort. 11

Concluding Summary

In the Church pastoral guidelines for pilgrims, the pilgrimage is proposed as a microcosm of the journey of life. This experience of living a pilgrim trail for some period allows people to focus, in a particular setting, on the journey of one's life as a whole. The taxonomy that has been presented in this Chapter provides conceptual orientations, language and structures, thus forming a framework of interpretation for all of life. The statement in *The Pilgrimage of the Great Jubilee* is worth repeating here:

Pilgrimages symbolise the experience of the *homo viator* who sets out, as soon as he leaves the maternal womb, on his journey through the time and space of his existence, and when we reach it (the heavenly Jerusalem) the gates of the Kingdom will open, we will abandon the travelling attire and the staff of the pilgrim and we shall enter our house indefinitely “to stay with the Lord forever. (16)

The object of this research was to discover what is expressed above “first hand”, as it were, through the pilgrims’ experiences and responses, and to bring it to expression. While on the trail, every thing, every moment and every action in the pilgrims’ experience is sacred. As one pilgrim put it, they were conscious of experiencing the liturgy of the *Camino* (19). The language and taxonomy that has been developed in this analysis of the pilgrim interviews – summarised in Framework 2 below – is intended to raise the consciousness of those wishing to understand and realise the Camino experience in its all its applications—and as an ongoing inspiration in the course of life.

Framework 2: From experience to interpretation, on the taxonomy of pilgrimage, is presented in its entirety on the following pages. General Dimensions 1 to 4 have been articulated in detail above, while General Dimension 5 is to be discussed in the following chapter.

In summary, the search for an encompassing set of descriptors has led to an introductory presentation of language and taxonomy. Each component is, of course, open to refinement over time. The eight pilgrims who agreed to be scrutineers to the material have given their approval to this current level of development. Time and experience will be the test of its sustainability.

Framework 2: From experience to interpretation: taxonomy of pilgrimage

General Dimension 1: Thinking, feeling and walking

a. Thinking while on pilgrimage

noticing

taking time to be alone to think

seeing opportunities for reflective thinking

consciously thinking as a pilgrim

b. Feeling while on pilgrimage

ponderings

movements of the heart

shadows

c. Walking on pilgrimage

the hard road

bodies that delivered

oneing through walking

General Dimension 2: *Oneing* with the kaleidoscope of creation

a. Natural beauty

oneing with nature

blessed by creation's beauty

b. Time and Space

pilgrim time

pilgrim space

c. Intercultural encounters

encounters with other people and their respective cultures

Australian culture through a pilgrim lens

deepening capacity to reflect

constraints on intercultural encounters

d. The hallowed tradition of the *Camino*

long lineage of pilgrims

eons of a faith carried and shared

e. Australians on pilgrimage

noticing cultural differences

so far away

critical of Australia's culture

benign assessment of Australian culture

General Dimension 3: Sacred People on Sacred Ways

a. Australian Catholics on the Way

diffidence to devotional practices

desire to care for the other

growing awareness of spiritual issues from an Australian perspective

deeper reaching out towards unity with others

b. Sacred Places, Sacred Objects, Sacred Ceremonies

noticing, questioning and occasionally personalising

more observers than participants

c. The Iconography of St James the Apostle

Santiago the helper

prefiguration of St James in the Australian pilgrims

meeting with St James on the road

more critical and sceptical tone

St James the Moor-slayer

d. A Pilgrim God

God as pilgrim companion on the pilgrimage of life

God who is close and present

pilgrims and the local people mediated to each other a Pilgrim God

e. Pilgrim Jesus and the Eucharist

Jesus as a travelling companion

Eucharist

General Dimension 4: Steps on the Journey

responding to promptings

sadness

a moment to cherish

closure

encouraging others

superficial motives

General Dimensions 5: Disturbing the immunity to change: *the three* in real-time

a. Salvific suffering

facing shadows

prefiguring Christ's salvific suffering

carrying out hard restoration work

b. Awareness of Present Experience

God

noticing

personal responses

c. Strangers in a foreign land

caring for the stranger

stranger feelings

CHAPTER 7
FROM INTERPRETATION TO LIVED SPIRITUALITY:
DYNAMICS IN *ONEING*

This chapter treats of the dynamics of change and integration in the pilgrims' experience of the *Camino*. The first consideration is theoretical as it relates the dynamics of change, and of resistance to change, to the notion of *oneing*. The aim here is the construction of a third Framework, "Stages in lived *oneing*: an holistic, re-generative model". We move then to the practical consideration of extending this framework to six aspects of the pilgrims' experience. These applications are as follows:

- Application 1: Readiness for change;
- Application 2: Participants' post-*Camino* aspirations;
- Application 3: Mapping post-*Camino* changes against the taxonomy;
- Application 4: Lack of take-up by the pilgrims;
- Application 5: Iconography: a specific instance of lack of take-up;
- Application 6: Observations of *the three* in real-time

1. Framework development

In our model of investigation, "questioning" is an essential activity. As the *Catechism* describes it:

With his openness to truth and beauty, his sense of moral goodness, his freedom and the voice of his conscience, with his longings for the infinite and for happiness, man questions himself about God's existence. (33)

The pilgrims were all involved in the process of questioning, as the results indicate. While the research makes plain that the pilgrims' "longings" came from many sources and moved in many directions, it also points to an enduring "embeddedness" which act as a brake in the pilgrims' subsequent ways of life, whatever their explicit intentions to the contrary. Accordingly, we now examine more closely these experiences in light of the dynamics of *oneing*.

Much of the underpinning for this theory development draws on the work of Kegan and Fowler. The conceptual elements of growth and its stages which have been particularly influential in the design include:

- embeddedness at a particular stage of the evolutionary process;
- imbalances caused by competing desires for both inclusion and independence;
- the contextual influence of environments as either enabling or subjugating the self;
- the progress of the self through restlessness and emergency;
- the process of "recapitulation" as the self returns to earlier stages with opportunities for redirection of these.

These specific theoretical concepts of developmental stages in the life-cycle formed the basis of an initial theory aiming to illuminate the changes observed by the pilgrim participants in this research. A limiting factor, however, is that while both Kegan and Fowler present linear, formative growth models, pilgrimage trails are open to many kinds of experience and a diversity of developmental rhythms. As a result, there is a

greater randomness in the responses and reactions recorded. Fowler himself

acknowledges the strengths and weaknesses of his own position when he states:

In these pages I am offering a theory of growth in faith. At the heart of the book you will find an account of a theory of seven stage-like, developmentally related styles of faith that we have identified. A theory means an elaborate, dynamic model of very complex patterns in our experiences and ways to understand and express what we have lived. They can also become blinders, limiting our ability to see to only those features of phenomena that we can name and account for. Erik Erikson, himself a great theory maker, once said, “We must take our theories with a serious playfulness and a playful seriousness”.¹

With these caveats in mind, we have developed an approach based on key elements in the theories of Kegan and Fowler, in the hope of providing a useful framework in which to interpret the dynamics of the pilgrims’ experiences. Both the theoreticians just mentioned use displays for the purpose of presenting their theoretical concepts. For Fowler, this is the “most economical way”.² He presents a five-stage model of development, including the concept of return to earlier stages with new insights. This return he terms “conversion – giving rise to recapitulation of previous stages.” Fowler states:

Certain ego psychologists speak of therapy and some of the dynamics of natural stage transition as involving “regression in the service of the ego”. By this they mean to describe a process of return from present levels of ego functioning to earlier and more primitive ones in order to rework or reconstitute certain aspects of ego formation. Such movement can lead to release from and transformation of crippling patterns of earlier development, making ongoing growth possible.³

¹ Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, p. xiii

² Knowles and others, *Faith Development*, p. 184. Fowler presents his concepts in three charts, the most relevant of which is reproduced in Appendix O below.

³ Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, p. 289.

Applying this insight, Fowler says: “I have been trying to suggest what such a recapitulation in the service of faith development might look like in structural development terms.”⁴

Kegan, as well, employs modelling for theory presentation. Kegan’s model of the “constitution of the self”⁵ is, like Fowler’s, presented in five stages, in an elliptical format which he names “a helix of evolutionary truces”. He explains this helix as follows:

While any “picture” has its limitations, the helix has a number of advantages. It makes clear that we move back and forth in our struggle with this lifelong tension; that our balances are slightly imbalanced. In fact, it is because each of these temporary balances is slightly imbalanced that each is temporary; each self is vulnerable to being tipped over. The model suggests a way of better understanding the nature of our vulnerability to growth at each level.⁶

As with Kegan and Fowler, model development has also been utilised in presenting our introductory theory of pilgrim change. The tentative title given to our model is: “Stages in lived *oneing*: an holistic, re-generative model”.

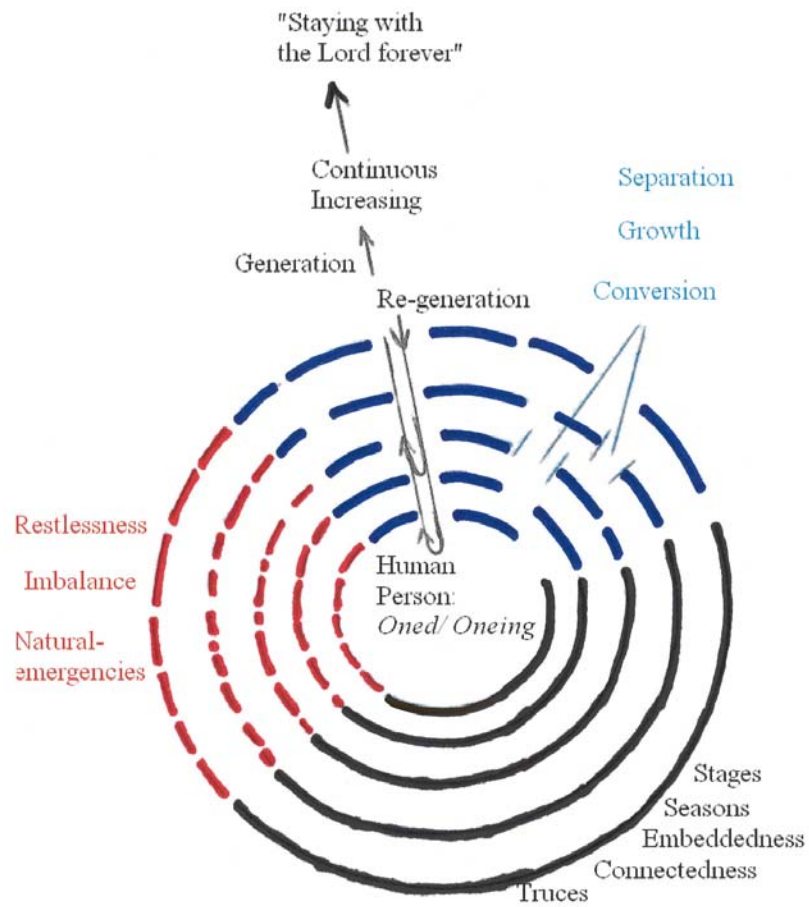
The model as proposed is flexible and adaptable to differing capacities. It is circular, and therefore, not rigidly hierarchical. It is thus able to portray both an inclusiveness and an holistic ambience in line with the spiritual and theological understanding of pilgrimage as a condition for all human beings. This model is also open to all eventualities in that it caters for any circumstance in life as a potential point of change.

⁴ Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, p. 289.

⁵ Appendix P.

⁶ Kegan, *The Evolving Self*, p. 108.

Framework 3: Stages in lived *oneing*: an holistic, re-generative model



In the concentric circles, with the human person at the centre, the *unbroken* lines in black (bottom right) convey a sense of remaining stationary at a particular stage or season of life and being embedded in it. Moving to the left, and around the circles, the *broken* lines, first in red and then in blue, suggest progression beyond any particular stable stage/season and its inherent embedded blockages, and signify pathways to new discoveries.

The concentric circles represent in an outward movement the conventional life-stages from infancy to old-age. This standard trajectory is indicated by the arrow progressing outwards from the centre. The arrow returning to the centre, on the other hand, creates a sense that, when new growth occurs, the earlier stages are not left behind. The possibility of returning to these earlier stages in a new way is thus recognised.

This allows for a positive valence to be given to degeneration through ageing or other circumstances. The model thus respects and reverences the gifts to be found during periods of decline in all its forms, and embodies hope through the use of the concept of “re-generation”. It is contended that the term “re-generation” captures the experience of the life-long pilgrim better than Fowler’s language of “recapitulation”. “Re-generation” recognises the capacity to grow throughout life and in all circumstances. It reverences the ageing and disabling process as a potential time for growth, even as the person returns to earlier stages, but now with an added capacity for new dimensions of growth.

This model presents a grounded hope for people at all stages of the life-course. Their personal pilgrimage of growth endures beyond this life to new life. This contrasts with a traditional model of growth and degeneration. This new model reflects the

message of hope and inclusivity of *The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee* that the human journey reaches its conclusion when “the gates of the Kingdom will open, we will abandon the travelling attire and the staff of the pilgrim and we shall enter the house definitively ‘to stay with the Lord for ever’” (16).

By way of example, this entire perspective of generation and re-generation is captured in a sixty-year old, recently retired woman, who left from Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, crossed the Seine to Rue St Jacques to set out alone on her 1400 kilometre pilgrimage to *Santiago de Compostela*. Afterwards she wrote:

The level of conscious faith I have lived with for most of my life had faded somewhat before I undertook the pilgrimage and it did not return on that journey. I remain on the faith path that is called Catholicism and only recently have begun to re-experience a livelier sense of belief of God ... I have no profound revelations to hand on. Some things I knew before I now hold with greater certainty. They are not new truths but ones many people find out and constantly rediscover for themselves. We need little to live on the earth; we can travel light. If you see with the eyes of faith you will live in a world where everything conspires for good, where little miracles happen daily – where all is, indeed, well. This is not a world devoid of pain and sorrow, malice and evil, but a world through which the pilgrim passes protected to the end.⁷

In summary, even though there are some areas of difference between the model here proposed and those of Kegan and Fowler, these two authors do inform much of the new model’s construction. For instance, they both build on Piaget’s paradigm of movement from embeddedness to readiness, and so to change and development. As well, they incorporate some element of randomness when they both recognise the human context as a factor in maintaining the embeddedness and/or encouraging change. Beyond that, they both recognise the traces of earlier stages in the person who grows into higher

⁷ Wilkie, *Walking to Santiago*, pp. 247-248.

levels of development, and also the return of that person at times to these lower and earlier stages.

Clearly, Kegan and Fowler espouse evolutionary structural/development models of growth. In this, there is an analogy with Hide's analysis of Julian of Norwich's concept of *oneing* in that it too incorporates a dimension of emergence, now in a spiritual sense. Julian proposes a "process of being re-created" and that "re-creation does not occur only once". Included in Julian's perspective is the dynamic of "continuous increasing. It occurs again and again ... Christ engages in a process of continual *oneing*." Hide notes that Julian, in using the word "increasing", gives it an energy that conveys the dynamic, renewing relationship that Christ sustains with humankind. This bestows a specifically theological meaning in that it relates human increasing to Christ's work of *oneing*. Of particular relevance to this research project is a clarification that Hide offers: "Increasing, however, is not simply saving creation. There is an evolutionary sense of perfecting creation. Increasing has a transformational, evolutionary outcome that makes the God/human relationship more complete than it was before the fall."⁸ Her interpretation of Julian of Norwich is closely aligned to the notion of growth that appears in the work of Kegan and Fowler. In short, all three have contributed to the design of the model presented here.

In summary, the principles underpinning the model are:

- (i) The scope of the model is expressed in the choice of title: Stages in lived *oneing*: an holistic, re-generative model.
- (ii) The model draws on Hide's presentation of Julian of Norwich's concept of *oneing*, namely the human person being simultaneously united with the maker and yet

⁸ Hide, *Gifted Origins to Graced Fulfillment*, p. 92.

still in the process of “becoming”. Thus the human person is placed as *oned* and *oneing* in the centre of the model, with the person open to growth and expansion through “continuous increasing”.

(iii) The arrow indicating “continuous increasing” growth is balanced by the arrow portraying return (re-generation) in the vein of Kegan and Fowler’s modelling. Hide’s anecdote of the person with Alzheimer’s disease receiving the Eucharist exemplifies this positive image of growth while undergoing return (see pp. 27-28 above).

(iv) Each human person is always at the centre. Growth is open to all humans, under all circumstances, throughout their entire life-course. Using the visual holistic of a circle, the model draws attention to this totality of opportunities available to each individual person at every point of life.

(v) The model emphasises the continuing ownership by each person of the process of staging and changing. It does this by leaving to the subjective interpretation of the person:

- individual personal agendas for staging and growth across the full range of options;
- the current level of staging of each aspect of her/his life through the identification and choice of a particular circle on the model;
- the naming rite of that aspect of *oneing* which is occurring.

(vi) The three distinct groupings displayed on the model are:

- Stages, connectedness, and embeddedness by being displayed as unbroken black lines;
- Restlessness, *imbalance*, and natural emergencies by red partially opened lines;
- Separation, growth, and conversion conditions by the spaced blue lines.

2. Six applications of the “Stages in lived *oneing*: an holistic, re-generative model” to the experiences of the pilgrims

The “Stages in lived *oneing*” model is now applied to the data collected on *the three* during the pilgrimage, and the twenty-three pilgrims afterwards, following the six headings listed above. Fowler’s core descriptions in his theory are especially apt to this discussion. He writes: “First there is the idea of *process* or *journey* ... second, there is the idea of seasons: a series of periods or stages within the life cycle.”⁹ As reported in the pilgrims’ responses, the learning processes from the *Camino* fall across a wide canvass of opportunities for change. Beyond the wealth of personal material for the Australian Catholic pilgrims to digest, there is the return to an Australia which has not changed. The pilgrims are faced with the tensions of the evolutionary “truces” in Kegan’s model, to separate from, or to remain connected to, the past. The pilgrim participants are faced with this drag back into old ways. The pilgrim trail does not make obvious the immediate demands on the pilgrim’s future. It presents itself in a benign and accessible way. As we have seen, at the end of the pilgrimage, apart from the collection of an evidential *Compostela* (certificate), there are no rules or plans for the future. There is no one to farewell the pilgrim. They exit the way they commenced, unofficially. As one pilgrim asked: “Is this a holiday, a healthy holiday, perhaps, but merely a holiday? Is it a one-off experience that ends at *Santiago de Compostela*, or is it an invitation to embrace a life-long journey of living the orientation of the pilgrim?” (10) It is to this question that the applications of the proposed model are intended to respond.

⁹ Knowles and others, *Faith Development*, p. 182.

Application 1: Readiness for change

The first application focuses on why pilgrims choose to leave home for a while and go on pilgrimage. In the context of the model of “stages in lived *oneing*” and the theories of Kegan and Fowler, there are examples of the restlessness, the “natural emergencies”, which made people ready for change. It may then be asked whether there was also a readiness on the part of the participants to explore a specifically pilgrim approach to their spirituality. Certainly, there was some inkling of this when one of the pilgrims reported that “I could use some money on spiritual development and I did not want to go on retreat”, and another said, “I go mad if I am locked up all day on the usual spiritual development courses.”¹⁰ The modern-day phenomenon of travel, generally, may be indicative of such choices – of a readiness for a spirituality embracing the elements of journeying. That is a possibility, but hardly a conclusion when there is such little evidence available. What has not been collected as data for this research regards the choice these pilgrims made to undertake this particular journey rather than other ones that they may have considered. If further more detailed research reveals this readiness for spirituality to be present, however, then the imperatives of educating people into the spiritual opportunities offered on pilgrimage, as have been presented in this research, become more urgent.

Application 2: Participants’ post-*Camino* aspirations

All pilgrims reported change of some kind. Not one pilgrim argued that they did not gain anything from the experience. While caution needs to be exercised, given the exploratory nature of this research project, the pilgrims’ desire for a change in lifestyle

¹⁰ These two pilgrims were coded 3 & 10 respectively.

can be reported. This desire echoes the opening paragraph of the *Catechism*'s first entry: "God calls man to seek him, to know him, to love him with all his strength" (1). In the context of pilgrimage, the significant word is "seek". For some participants, as they reflected on the experience, they saw a direction towards a permanent, pilgrimage-oriented life-style for themselves. They saw themselves being drawn towards living more permanently in pilgrim ways, and considered the implementation of a pilgrim life-style. The restlessness that they experienced in themselves should not be understated. White, Kegan and Fowler, each in his own way, express this threshold phenomenon leading to personal evolutionary expansion. White's re-storying,¹¹ Fowler's challenges,¹² and Kegan's re-cognising,¹³ all provide language for this restless desire for change. On the first set of responses reported here, there are signs of positive aspirational take-up by the participants which would seem to fit Kegan's theory of *imbalances* in evolutionary truces, i.e., the desire to separate from old connections and have "yearnings to be independent or autonomous, to experience one's distinctiveness."¹⁴ Such points appear in the following responses:

The features of the pilgrimage I had should be the features of my life. 10

I think I want to spend a bit more time on cultivating the spiritual part of myself now and it is one of the things on my list. I am not sure how I am going to do it but it is like setting a bit of time each day and I am really interested in the idea of pilgrimage and what that means everyday. As you do on the pilgrimage. 22

I've been drawn to the notion of life as a pilgrimage and the image of the pilgrim Church. Many of the blessings of the *Camino* as well as some of the hardships were a mirror for me of what it means to be a Christian today. 23

¹¹ Michael White & David Epston, *Literate Means to Therapeutic Ends* (Adelaide: Dulwich Centre Publications, 1989), p. 31.

¹² Knowles and others, *Faith Development*, p. 186.

¹³ Kegan, *The Evolving Self: Problem and Process in Human Development*, p. 82.

¹⁴ Kegan, *The Evolving Self*, p. 107.

Walking along in the wilderness, in the bush was, oh well, but now I realise for me it was good thinking time. Processing it all since, it was a really good experience. Walking along, having time to talk didn't seem so important but looking back on it, to have that opportunity was important. 17

I expected my memory would fade a bit but it is still very strong in my memory. After we got to Santiago and we got our certificates, we went and had Mass in the chapel. That was a really significant moment for me. I don't know why and I didn't know why at the time and I still don't know why but it was a significant something that I will never forget. 9

There is a big difference between saying you are going on a pilgrimage as compared with seeing yourself as supposedly a modern-day pilgrim. It is far more demanding of a personal response. I have said to the groups I have spoken to that my self-perception has changed in that now I think the on-going challenge is if I am a modern day pilgrim that is in my life everywhere. 10

I see everyday how I need to praise and thank him. I throw in a few petitions occasionally. I rant and rave occasionally: "Why me?" 15

You are almost protected during that pilgrim time. Because you are out of normal life, so that is the challenge to bring that into your normal life. 20

The findings reported so far have focussed predominantly on the pilgrims' desires for change in their lives after the *Camino*. But the pilgrims also reported that they had gone beyond their aspirations to realise that desire, and had actually started to change. There was evidence in their lives of a move away from their connectedness to their previous ways, and actual progress in experiencing their own distinctive journey. This next set of responses focuses on actual experiences of change:

There has been a gradual difference since I did the *Camino*. I don't think it was completely dramatic that I felt changes in how I perceived life. I have certainly been conscious of taking things more slowly, wanting to walk more. I haven't always achieved it but I have enjoyed walking more and I have made efforts to walk more and I have been conscious of the importance. 14

I had quite a significant experience, what I would call a spiritual experience with a God that journeyed very close with me. Jesus was very close to me and we talked of him coming to people in their lives. Since then I have continued to

express my relationship with Jesus and live out my spirituality in the way that I sense Jesus in my life. 18

I am still searching what God means and I guess that I have changed. Now, it is more a searching sort of change, a confused sort of change from the way the Church is heading at the moment – nothing is black and white. It is all left up to what you can decide for yourself. So I guess I have changed but I don't think this is being a good thing for the way my mind thinks about God so I guess I am still searching and I find that it is a very difficult and confusing time and I am not sure there is anything that is going to make much difference but I guess where there is life there is hope. 13

I think what it has done to me is open up that I do not just have to be linked only to a staid, conservative church in Australia. It has separated my thinking of religion out from just the church thing. 17

I feel very much that I am still growing spiritually and morally. I hope I am. And I will continually keep growing spiritually and morally throughout my life until my life ends. The pilgrimage has sharpened that feeling, certainly sharpened that feeling. 19

In terms of change in other areas of my life again I think it has been gradual and looking back now I can see a change in my thinking and in my spirituality which is only emerging now; but the impetus came from the *Camino* and that is I have always been much more in the past an action-oriented person. I have always been involved in causes, and really practical or hands-on kinds of spirituality, but in just recent times I have been much more into the contemplative, and actually interested in finding out more about centring prayer and more the *being* rather than the *doing* aspects of life. I think that really stems from the experience of walking, and being alone with your own thoughts as you are on the Road. 14

Certainly it had a sustaining influence on me. But it hasn't been a Eureka moment; it is just building on what was there before and another element of a life experience that was very particularly special because it had a religious focus that has gone into being part of my makeup and who I am and where I am. 9

I think what I got out of it was that wonderful sense of having had a privileged time in my life, there is heightened consciousness of God/Christ in your life walking with you – that desire to go back again as though God is beckoning you for more. What is difficult is you get back into your life. But I do think that richness of the experience is with me a lot. 20

From these responses, it is evident that the rich experience of the trail had already been embraced by the pilgrims as they sought to incorporate it into their lives. Against

this backdrop of choices and developments, *oneing* continued to be their preferred descriptor for the effects flowing from the pilgrimage itself, also in the longer term.

Application 3: Mapping post-Camino changes against the taxonomy

The discussion now turns to specific responses from the pilgrims as they reflected on what they had carried from the *Camino* into their everyday lives back in Australia. In interpreting this data one has to be mindful that, as outlined in the methodology, the design of information-rich research is a free-form, natural response data-collection model. To respect such methodology, there had to be no prior coaching of the pilgrims to respond in any particular direction. The pilgrims were, therefore, situated in a response environment conducive to personal narratives, rather than to the type of carefully prepared context such as they may have received in some preparatory program. Nonetheless, the outcome represents a rich tapestry of responses.

General Dimension 1: Thinking, feeling and walking

a. Thinking after pilgrimage

The emphasis in the pilgrims' descriptions of their post-*Camino* reflections on thinking centred on their heightened consciousness of their life-journey, an increased sense of gratitude for life, a capacity to see things differently, and an awareness of spiritual and moral growth. Some characteristic responses were the following:

I now find I am conscious of going along. I was going along this track but maybe the pilgrimage hastened it. 10

I feel very much that I am growing spiritually and morally. I hope I am. And I will continually keep growing spiritually and morally throughout my life until my

life ends. The pilgrimage has sharpened that feeling, certainly sharpened that feeling. 19

I have lots of memories. 21

I guess my language for that is raised appreciation of life, the experience of life. I think the expression of this is our walking on the week-ends. We are much more aware of what we are doing, more conscious of this. It is a time of allowing this experience to be part of our everyday life on the weekend – time for building in a sense of the richness of life that is not shaped by possessions or objects or tasks. 10

I try to express my gratefulness in my life more than I did before. I think that is what I was conscious of when I returned. I would like to be able to say that I have retained that ability to see things differently and I do think I have retained that ability, or certainly I have more of that than I had before. 6

These reflections on post-*Camino* experiences related to thinking mirror those reported by the pilgrims as having occurred during the pilgrimage itself. It might be expected that there would be a propensity in the pilgrims to long-term rethinking of their experience and its ongoing impact in their lives.

b. Feeling after pilgrimage

As exemplified below, reports from the pilgrims on their post-*Camino* emotions emphasized gratitude, compassion, forgiveness and the overcoming of anger, as well as a continued commitment to service. There was also the continuing effect of the perception that God could be celebrated as part of life as a whole, and not restricted to ritual religiosity.

I think what I have remained with is a real sense of gratefulness. I think that is what I learnt from the *Camino*, a great sense of gratefulness. 6

Since I have come back I think it has made me more compassionate, more forgiving, at least I hope it has. It hasn't stopped my passion for social justice and human rights and it hasn't stopped my determination to work in ways that are appropriate to my situation and my abilities and resources – all those things. 19

I have definitely lost the bitterness and rage that kind of consumed me quite often. That is what I hoped would happen, and it has happened. 19

Maybe it gave me an insight of other people's construction of God which is linking into that idea of it being part of their lives and it is not just something that conservative people would do. It was more of how they celebrate God or that side of things as opposed to the actual ceremonies. 17

As with the pilgrims' thinking, the direction of the feelings they experienced during the pilgrimage also appears to have continued afterwards. There has been some shift towards a different tone of feeling in the pilgrims' lives, with a desire to continue to develop in that direction.

c. Walking after pilgrimage

Characteristic post-*Camino* reflections on walking, as illustrated below, focused on how the walkers from the *Camino* become pilgrims in the eyes of people who learn of their experience, the link that pilgrimage enables between walking and a person's faith and spirituality, a heightened awareness of and changed attitude towards one's own body, and the sense of privilege at being able to walk at all, which issues in praise and thanksgiving to God for the gift of creation.

The idea of pilgrim life has not come up with me before. People know me as a walking person and now this pilgrimage idea has come up, and you talk about this with people. They have not heard about this before, and they become interested in it. 15

If I can walk it is the most wonderful thing I can do, I think. It is good there are pilgrimages and you can mix your walking up with faith and spirituality. 15

I feel that I now have a different view about my body. I am much fitter. I don't drink as much wine. I am much more aware of my body in terms of my own life. 18

I think it a great privilege walking, even if it is just walking around the block. I think of the people who can't walk and it is a great opportunity to thank God. So I see it as a thanksgiving thing – praising him for the wonder of his creation, thanking him for the gift of being able to see that, and thanking him for giving it to me. It is praise and thanksgiving really. 15

In closing this reflection on post-*Camino* thinking, feeling and walking in the context of the pilgrims' context and expression, it appears, for some at least, that a change for the good had occurred over time. Anecdotal evidence, both from these pilgrims and others not included in the sample, reinforces this view. There are solid indications of a re-orientation in the pilgrims' way of thinking, feeling and searching for life's meaning and purpose.

General Dimension 2: *Oneing* with the kaleidoscope of creation

We recall Julian of Norwich's concept of *oneing* as presented above:

At creation humanity is *knit* and *oned* to the Trinity and kept in this inviolable *oneing*. Humanity is always one with divine love. God never disengages from this original *oneing* in any way that would separate the divine and the human. Yet *oneing* also increases and fulfils this destiny of being one with God. The movement is paradoxical. We are one and are becoming more completely one.¹⁵

The question now is whether there is a sense among the pilgrims post-*Camino* that *oneing* continues to increase and reach for completion. Reports from the pilgrims are presented below regarding their post-*Camino* attitudes to natural beauty, time and space, the encounter with people of many nationalities and cultures, the hallowed traditions of those who had walked in times past, and the sense of being Australian Catholics on pilgrimage.

¹⁵ Hide, *Gifted Origins to Graced Fulfillment*, p. 54.

a. Natural beauty

As far as *oneing* with nature is concerned, the two statements below illustrate a continuing increased awareness of the diverse actuality of nature, and of the presence of God there.

I think it heightened my faith and just made me realise that I think I am more aware of God in nature, that sort of faith where you are aware of, you are sort of praying most of the time, you know, you are just sort of being aware of God in your life, all the good things. So I suppose that is what I am saying, you can see heightened awareness of God in your life. 14

I was incredibly conscious of actually seeing grass as grass, rather than stuff whizzing past. Now I think I should be fairer than that, I do think I have retained that ability or certainly I have more of that than I had before. 6

b. Time and Space

The pilgrims' responses to this theme show that at the time of the pilgrimage itself there was both a moving forward, and yet a slowing down in terms of what was experienced, the growth in contemplative awareness of the divine Companion on the journey, and a deeper appreciation of time itself as a gift. Now, however, as indicated in the reports below, what has remained strong and explicit post-*Camino* is the importance of slowing down, however difficult it might be to have to wait, and the sense of being present and attuned to one's actual surroundings.

It helps you to use up every minute; to try to go slowly and be aware. I am attuned much more to what is going on around me. It is a hard decision to not run around madly any more. 10

One of the lessons I learned from the pilgrimage is to go more slowly, to be more observant. Like at the traffic lights it is to say this is my day, it is not just a nuisance for being late. This is life. It is the mind space you are in. 10

As I have returned from the pilgrimage I have found my pace of life has changed and I am more present to the realities around me. 8

In your life there are all sorts of time of waiting and I am trying to apply that to the moment, going slowly, to try to apply that pilgrim awareness of we are going along this road together, going slowly. I try to apply that but the consciousness of that goes up and down. 10

As reported earlier in the development of this theme, the pilgrims' appreciation of time and space has continued after the pilgrimage in different modes. The number of pilgrims who mentioned a change in this respect, now that they are aware of using their time and space in a way different from their past routine, is a good indicator of the *Camino's* capacity to inspire change.

c. Intercultural encounters

On the *Camino*, besides a fresh exposure to the beauty of the world, there was also a new world of encounters with different people, places and cultures. The reality of intercultural encounter was all-pervading, and made a significant impact on the pilgrims at the time. Now, in their post-*Camino* phase, some aspects of this reality that remain most strongly are the recognition of Australian prejudice and the benefit pilgrims have of learning from other cultures, the humbling confrontation with one's own limitations as well as with the injustices that mark the lives of others, and profound gratitude for the wonder of those whom one has met along the way. These and other dimensions are evident in the following statements:

I think that even primitive cultures have a spiritual side or a religious side so it obviously is a human thing, a basic human nature thing, so I think that Australians benefit from it [pilgrimage]. 17

I have learned so much from these companions that it is impossible to adequately express my gratitude. Walking, talking, eating and journeying together reveal our limitations and our vulnerability and yet at the same time the wonderful and precious depth of every person. 7

It has certainly strengthened a basic injustice that I was aware of before but I didn't really see before we travelled very much. But you certainly see it when you travel, so I see this as part of me. 1

What I believe lies at the heart of pilgrimage is a willingness to be present to myself and to others as I am. I have found an ability to walk with myself at my own pace and I am able to accompany others along parts of the journey. 8

As Australians I think we have been away from it all in the past. I think our parents' generation sort of had their prejudices because it was an insular nation ... But we have this wonderful advantage to meet people from other countries. To actually go into other countries is a very humbling experience because you start to see how other people really live.1

As suggested in the development of this particular theme, pilgrim trails immerse the walker in spontaneous conversations with people from many countries around the world. In fact, survival can require speaking to strangers. Some of our pilgrims were clearly touched by their immersion in the world of others. One happy outcome is a disposition toward a greater tolerance of those who were encountered. With this came an awareness of injustices occurring around the world. In Australia intercultural dialogue is limited, but in the case of our pilgrims a greater readiness to reach out to the other, in terms of language and culture, is evident. Moreover, the pilgrims are more tolerantly attuned to the various micro-cultures existing in their own country – a point deserving of further research, but one that goes beyond the limitations of this present project. Further research might also shed light on the extent to which the pilgrimage led to a greater awareness of injustice, and encouraged the pilgrims themselves, for instance, to support overseas charities.

d. The hallowed tradition of the *Camino*

As indicated in the previous chapter, the *Camino* evokes a hallowed tradition manifest in the long lineage of pilgrims and the eons of a faith carried and shared with those in the past and communicated now in the present. Only one pilgrim, however, mentioned this Specific Theme as having a continuing influence post-*Camino*.

For me the opportunity of meeting heroes of the faith along the way, who lived in those towns, were saints in those towns, or walked on the *Camino* like Francis, but there was also the stuff of the natural beauty. I was very conscious of that. 6

The lack of post-*Camino* resonance of this theme is all the more surprising given that there were nine reports of this experience from the time of the pilgrimage itself. The pilgrims' appreciation of those who had walked before them over many years was credited with intensifying their own sense of journey. They reported having the sense of belonging to a community of journeying believers over the centuries, walking where so many others had walked before. That realisation impressed many. But this does not seem to have translated into any particular new way of thinking or living. The reason for this could be the lack of a strong and extensive historical consciousness among Australians. Further research is called for on this matter and the way it affects the Australian psyche and spirit.

e. Australians on pilgrimage

The Australian identity as a general concept attracted no specific personal responses as a continuing cultural agenda for the pilgrims. In contrast, on the trail itself, there were twenty-two reports of the pilgrims' awareness of their Australian identity, ranking it fourth in the frequency of appearance of Specific Themes. It is difficult to suggest a particular theoretical reason for this discrepancy between the pilgrims'

perceptions of Australian identity associated with their being on the trail and the diminished impact of these when the pilgrims were back at home. Certainly, the data indicate that the participants have made significant changes in their personal lifestyles. It could be speculated, therefore, that the pilgrims are in fact engaging in cultural change on an individual and personal level by aligning their lives differently from before on a number of points, while at the same time remaining reticent about the need for major national cultural change at the communitarian and political level.

In summary, this General Dimension 2, “*Oneing* with the kaleidoscope of creation”, codifies and expresses a set of opportunities and responses which, except in the case of the *orientation* “Australians on pilgrimage”, appear to have held up over time. In this way, it parallels the outcomes yielded under the first General Dimension, “Thinking, feeling and walking”.

General Dimension 3: Sacred People on Sacred Ways

Pilgrimage, of its nature, is a very personal experience. There are no precise directions as to what to think about, or what to look for. In relation to the General Dimension, “Sacred People on Sacred Ways”, several comments can be made. For example, after the pilgrimage, St James as a sacred icon was not notably attractive to the pilgrims. The iconographic orientation of the figure of St James as the Moor-slayer was registered. Further, however, the “shadows” of the unfinished business of reconciliation did surface in the context of the pilgrims’ reflections on intercultural encounters where a sense of injustice came through. Secondly, while there were numerous reflections regarding the culture of the Australian Church as a backdrop to the pilgrimage, this did not appear to carry through in stimulating specific efforts to change. The references cited

below, however, point to areas of possibility for the Australian Church. If these signals of Australians' "spiritual inhibitions" were interpreted in terms of Kegan and Lahey's language of "natural emergencies", "imbalances" and "disturbances from the immunity to change",¹⁶ ways to a richer liturgical and spiritual life for the Church in Australia might be opened up.

I have to say to a large degree I really don't necessarily have a new view, but I have a considerably strengthened view on that, because I have for a long time felt that we have thrown out the baby with the bath water. What we have in the Australian church is a very low, common denominating church a lot of the time. The liturgies are not good; the music is not good, the homilies are not good, so therefore what are we going to do about it, where are we going to go to make the church listen? 24

Yes I think our culture would benefit if it was like that. It was a good thing, and interesting and a good thing that Spanish people would do in their lives, so why would it not be good for Australians? I think thinking of spiritual things is good for people too. 17

Europeans seem to be able to enjoy their faith in a very open way and icons help them to do that. I think we do need those reminders to bring us back to our faith as well but they need to be Australian. 20

The *Camino* reduces your spiritual inhibitions because you are in a much more religious environment than you are here in Australia, and I mean because we live in such a secular environment it is very hard to reproduce the ritual and the liturgies of a sacred environment and now I know the Italian Catholics of my city have a procession every year. I have never been on it, but obviously it is a very important event and I wish we had more things like that here. I wish we had more public affirmations of sacredness. 19

The call, stimulated by the experience of the *Camino*, for more public affirmations of sacredness and for the re-appropriation of culturally suitable icons by the Church in Australia, sounds through in these statements. Surprisingly, while the sense of a pilgrim God, the pilgrim Jesus and the centrality of the Eucharist were reported strongly in the pilgrims' memories of being on the *Camino*, the impact of these themes does not

¹⁶ In Robert Kegan and Lisa Lahey, *How the Way We Talk Can Change the Way We Work* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass: Wiley Co., 2001).

appear to have had a lasting spiritual impact in the lives of the pilgrims post-*Camino*. The tone of regret underlying the statements immediately above may reflect the contrast between the heightened liturgical and spiritual practice of the pilgrims while they were on the *Camino* and the pull of the inhibiting “embedded” practices experienced once they were again back at home.

Application 4: Lack of take-up by the pilgrims

The discussion above on post-*Camino* living as a pilgrim, presented a check-list of where pilgrims report they have changed their thinking and behaving. A practical exercise might well have been conducted whereby each pilgrim, provided with the model outlined above, marked where they would locate themselves before and after pilgrimage. New attitudes may be interpreted, in Fowler’s language, as examples of “journeys” through the prevailing “seasons” in one’s life.

On the other hand, it is also important to notice the continuing embeddedness of many aspects of the pilgrims’ lives post-*Camino*. The question can be asked, in this sense, as to what pilgrimage does not offer. Firstly, pilgrimage is not structured. There is no opportunity for preparation in order to obtain as much as possible from the experience. For example, Robinson writes: “The particular reasons which drive an individual towards an act of pilgrimage are inevitably deeply personal, and in many cases beyond the exercise of logic.”¹⁷ Secondly, there is limited “text” discourse. A body of literature is certainly available if one wishes to research “pilgrimage”. Most of the books immediately related to the pilgrim trail are likely to focus on maps, sites and/or historical interest points. At no time are pilgrims given the benefit of distilling what they have come

¹⁷ Robinson, *Sacred Places, Pilgrim Paths*, p. 11.

through in an educational setting. Moreover, for this pilgrimage route, the language is Spanish, and, since the liturgies are invariably also in Spanish, for the most part the word of God is proclaimed in a language that the pilgrims do not understand. The third point flows from this, namely, the lack of formal teaching while on the pilgrim trail can cause limitations to the experience. For example, it has already been pointed out that there was confusion as to the pilgrims' understandings of their relationships with St James, Jesus/Christ and God. There was a tendency to use these three arbitrarily in their reflections and prayer, with the consequent loss of the richness of relating to each in a distinctive way. On scrutinising the material popularly available, one of the pilgrim commentators also drew attention to the fact that there was no mention of the role of the Holy Spirit:

The pilgrimage to Santiago can teach humility, charity, wisdom, patience, and endurance; in fact, if I look at the list of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, I see them all now as central to my pilgrimage experience. It was, truly, a humble search for Wisdom, Intelligence, Good Counsel, Fortitude, Science, Compassion, and the Fear of God.¹⁸

Finally, because pilgrimage is such a personal endeavour, change experienced individually, no matter how keenly it may be sought, is vulnerable through lack of support once the pilgrimage is over. Both Kegan and Fowler refer to this phenomenon. For the pilgrims who have experienced intensely personal and communal sacred living, their restlessness post-*Camino*, expressed in a way that embodies the understanding of “seeking” in the first paragraph of the *Catechism*, risks remaining something they have to deal with alone. Without community follow-up or structured intervention, the pilgrims struggle with their restlessness in comparative isolation.

¹⁸ Kevin, *Walking the Camino*, p. 296.

Application 5: Iconography: A specific instance of lack of take-up by the pilgrims

Regarding the use of iconography, the following statement from one of the pilgrims points up the contrast between the continuous restlessness of the pilgrim and the “immunity to change” in regard to the Church’s present practices.

Europeans seem to be able to enjoy their faith in a very open way and icons help them to do that. I think we do need those reminders to bring us back to our faith as well but they need to be Australian. In your culture you build your own set of icons and symbols; for example in Australia I like being out in the bush. A friend of mine has always had the little parrots as her God symbol. There are a lot of things as individuals we take on board that remind us, things that become very intensely personal. I think the reason we do not have any in Australia, or we find it alien, is that it is not part of that history of our faith so much. 20

It can be argued that iconographic influences such as the use of objects, symbols, art and ceremonies, form a major part of the overall experience of being a pilgrim, and continue its inspiration. Yet these possibilities in the *Camino* were not embraced in any significant way by the Australian pilgrims in our research cohort. Their responses in this regard tended to focus on differences between the Spanish people’s culture and that of the pilgrims from elsewhere. For the Australians the pilgrimage represented an encounter with a remnant of a history of spirituality that Australians had not been exposed to. Consequently, Australians are not drawn to such outward exhibitions of Christian faith as they observed on the *Camino*. Besides, they had grown up with the conviction that the Eucharist is the central exercise in participating in sacred ceremony, in recognising sacred objects and symbols, and witnessing to one’s faith in the community of the Church.¹⁹

¹⁹ See Dixon and others, *Catholics who have stopped attending Mass*, p. 5. They argue that even this last, attendance at a Eucharist, is also dropping from the spiritual lives of Australian Catholics.

So does this mean that the iconographic element of pilgrim spirituality does not appeal to Australians? Further investigation into this apparent detachment from iconographic offerings may allow a better understanding of what is taken to be the predominant Australian attitude. Firstly, in the context of Australian Catholic children and their experience of spirituality, there is abundant participation in liturgical and sacramental activity. The Catholic school system has devoted considerable time and energy to paraliturgical assemblies, and to children's religious art, as well as providing sacred times of the day and sacred places. Children play out any number of roles in the enactment of important feasts of the liturgical season in their class-rooms, e.g., Christmas and Easter. There exists in the Australian Church a rich tapestry provided by the Catholic school system of sacred moments, sacred icons, sacred ceremonies, and sacred places. Children are immersed while at school in iconography and in the use of sacred objects, symbols and ceremonies.

With the huge amount of this professional pedagogical application to children's participation in their faith within the Catholic school system, school life might well be presented in the framework of the pilgrim taxonomy presented in this thesis. The encouragement given by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments to employ sacramentals, pilgrimages, etc., both as an experience in the children's present and as a preparation for the adult life of full sacramental participation, is to a large extent now carried out by the Catholic school system in Australia. Once the school years are completed, however, this wide array of opportunities and experiences virtually disappears.

It might, however, be argued that in Australia the iconographic practices associated with Catholic schools are, in fact, not discontinued, but rather acted out in different ways beyond the Church context. An introductory investigation can be made, therefore, into whether possibilities for predisposing people for the adult life of full sacramental participation might be present even in secular Australian life. The literature search has already indicated a tendency among Australians to find sacred meaning in pilgrimages to Uluru, Kokoda and Gallipoli. Secondly, the increased participation in Australia Day and Anzac Day ceremonies – and even the Christmas lunch – can prepare people for Eucharistic celebration. At the same time, it could be asked whether the post-Vatican II Church's direct and somewhat exclusive emphasis on Eucharist has been to the detriment of other iconography which might have been of value to the faith development of Catholics who were in their teenage years in the mid to late 1960's. One might ask how Kegan would express the deficits in spiritual growth possibilities of older Catholics who have not enjoyed such lower order practices of sacramentals, pilgrimages etc. This researcher's current responsibilities include managing two self-care Villas for the aged. In that particular context, it can be observed, the increase in forms of devotion and practices of popular piety has been remarkable in recent years.

Application 6: Observations of *the three* in real-time

In this Application 6 we examine specifically the responses of *the three* in real-time. The present researcher walked the pilgrim trail at different times with these three Australian Catholics. Because of the continuity of my contact with them, their roles tended to be more that of co-researchers. The information-rich data they provided suggests new perspectives on the pilgrims' experience. The immediacy of the data,

related to *the three* in real-time while they were actually on the *Camino*, contrasts with the post-hoc group. When these *three* were interviewed again after the *Camino*, however, their feedback – quite surprisingly – in fact paralleled quite closely that of the other twenty who were interviewed only after the pilgrimage.

During the *Camino*, the differences between *the three* in real-time and the twenty-three post-hoc interviews centred on what specific characteristics of the pilgrimage predominantly captured their attention. *The three* in real-time commented almost exclusively on the hard road, the constant demand on them for living in the present, the need to notice and be mindful, their lack of authority and privilege, and their status as strangers in a foreign land.

Others, apart from *the three* in real-time, also commented on elements of the three Specific Themes below, viz., “salvific suffering”, “awareness of present experience”, and “strangers in a foreign land”. There were, however, significant differences. For *the three* in real-time these Specific Themes dominated their conversation. During the *Camino*, there was very little else that they reported beyond these Specific Themes, whereas for the twenty-three post-hoc interviewees, these themes figured only as a passing reference compared to more prominent memories. This stark contrast was noted by the eight scrutineers. This was probably due to what Kegan and Lahey refer to as real-time disturbance of the immunity to change and the natural emergencies of the self. The factors outlined below, even though they were not permanent effects for *the three*, were, again in Kegan’s terminology,²⁰ elements in the separation from connectedness to old ways. In the words of Julian of Norwich, there was, in the actual time of pilgrimage, an experience of “continuous increasing” as an aspect of the process of *oneing*.

²⁰ Kegan, *The Evolving Self: Problem and Process in Human Development*, Part 1.

A second observation on the responses of *the three* in real-time is that their way forward was often difficult, and their sense of well-being was under pressure. These experiences are akin to what Kegan describes as “natural emergencies” and “restlessness within” – shadowy aspects of the unfinished business within the human person which disrupts resistance to change and drives the human being forward in evolutionary process. While these pilgrims may have met the iconography of the caring St James on the way, this was counter-poised with the image of the unfinished business of the Moor-slayer, the shadows within. St Augustine’s “Our heart is restless until it finds rest in Thee” (*Confessions* 1,1,1) is a classic expression of the same human itinerary.

5. **Disturbing the immunity to change: *the three* in real-time**

The reports of *the three* in real-time constitute a fifth General Dimension complementing the four General Dimensions sketched in the previous chapter. As such, its inclusion completes Framework 2. This General Dimension 5, evidence for which is supplied in *the three*’s statements below, can be articulated as follows:

a. Salvific suffering

facing shadows

prefiguring Christ’s salvific suffering

carrying out hard restoration work

b. Awareness of Present Experience

God

noticing

personal responses

c. Strangers in a foreign land

caring for the stranger

stranger feelings

a. Salvific suffering

The intensity required in constantly conquering the harshness of the road, and *the three*'s determination to endure for spiritual motives, suggest an atonement aspect.²¹ *The three*'s responses indicate a determination to offer their suffering for a higher good. Their desire to make reparation is related to the salvific suffering of Christ. As Cardinal Barragán has stated: "Since Christ is the most intimate model for every person, the Holy Spirit, the Love of God and salvific suffering enter into the actual objective, and we might say ontological constitution of humanity."²²

In the present writer's experience of the Cathedral in *Santiago de Compostela*, pilgrims, following their respectively arduous journeys, usually avail themselves of the sacrament of reconciliation. It occurs as a sacramental ritual intrinsic to the experience of pilgrimage itself. On the other hand, the iconographic image of St James the Moor-slayer, also present in the statue of the Saint in the Cathedral, bespeaks the unfinished global agenda of reconciliation. This connectedness between the hard road and winning through in a spirit of reconciliation suggests a learning-experience for the pilgrims of considerable

²¹ Some consideration in future research may explore whether the concept of "restorative justice" is not applicable as well. In civil life, new endeavours in the way that the offender, the victim, and the community are all viewed as part of the crime and rehabilitation may have, under the name of restorative justice, similarities with what is understood by salvific suffering. Under this approach, the justice system seeks from the offender both, rehabilitation towards acceptable behaviour in the future as well as increasing empathy towards the negative effects on the victim. As for the victim, she/he has the knowledge that reparation has been made by the offender and a commitment given not to engage in offensive behaviour again. As Wormer, "Counselling female offenders and victims", 2001, states: "It seeks redress for victims, recompense by offenders and reintegration with the community ..." (p. 17). The wider community is also part of the process in the fact that the community may not have taken sufficient steps to protect the victim nor assisted the offender though the employment of early detection and positive, alternative behavioural strategies.

²² Barragán, *Pain, an Enigma or Mystery*, p. 5.

pastoral importance. The redemptive living symbol is the hard road. To experience the demands of this is a preparation for a better way of coping on their return to the inevitable pains and sufferings ahead. It is a formation in hope for those who have known the joy of an experience of expiation. The *orientations* to be noted here are: *facing shadows, prefiguring Christ's salvific suffering and carrying out hard restoration work*

Facing shadows

From the statements of *the three* that are rehearsed below, beginning the Camino was accompanied by feelings of tension and uncertainty. Coping with the expectations of others and finding one's own way to meet the challenges of the pilgrimage were also important considerations.

I am tense now at the beginning. I am tense about the unknown – being able to walk the distance. It is not easy to be able to live like that. But I also know we can get out of it. 12

I am feeling pressured to doing the *Camino* in a particular way and feeling in a particular way all the time. I think you have to give yourself a reality check about what is important to you. 16

I have no idea how it is going to turn out – absolutely no idea. I have never walked twenty something kilometres. I have never walked this far. It doesn't worry me. I am not worried about performance. I am a little worried I might have blisters for the next day. That is probably a concern but I have no doubt about getting there tomorrow. I might have difficulties on day two. I might have to slow it down, be slow and do it so that I am ready for the next number of days. That is far more a challenge to me than getting there tomorrow. I need to be slow and sensible and ready for it. 5

Today made me think why I am here – linking in with the Australians and being influenced by them. I have to do what I want to do, and not how anyone else wants, or expects what you should do, what you should get out of it. 16

I am feeling anxious at the moment. I haven't got my mind around things. 12

Thus, the shadows falling on the beginning of the pilgrimage and its progress created a general sense of anxiety. Nonetheless, as expressed very clearly in one case, there was confidence that, despite the uncertainty, the shadows could be faced and overcome.

Prefiguring Christ's salvific suffering

As illustrated in the statements below, a long day on the road makes itself felt on the body. The back and feet are especially sore, and apart from putting one's feet up there is little relief. One values the capacity of the body to cope with the strain of the way

It was good to do that long day. It showed what you can do and how far you can go. I guess we pushed ourselves a little bit to make it. 16

My back was a bit sore because the rucksack was pushing in, well you are aware that you must do something about it and you are aware of your feet when you get to the hotel. That bit about lying down, get your feet up, it works and you're very much appreciative of how the old body is doing. 5

I have become stronger and more committed. I realised I would be able to cope with it. 12

I think I have become more appreciative of the body bits that are working and how they are working. Whereas at home we seem to take very little notice of things like that because even when I am sound I know there is always a backup if I strain something; whereas here there is none of that backup. If I haven't got it in my rucksack then I am probably not going to be able to fix up what happens to me. 5

We might have expected to find here some explicit reference to the pilgrim Jesus, making his own tiring journeys and the painful way of the cross. The implicit connection to the suffering of Jesus, however, is readily evoked, as will be amply clear from the following section.

Carrying out hard restorative work

In *the three's* statements that follow, it is clear that the pilgrims on the *Camino* find themselves far out of their comfort zone. The way is hard. It is a struggle. The day drags. There is pain and discomfort, day after day, week after week. The phrase in the first statement regarding “acceptance in a religious sense of the hard road” is open to an interpretation that links it to the salvific suffering of Christ.

I struggled with the walk today, all the hard work but also the acceptance in a religious sense of the hard road, e.g., when having to back-track, the heat, and up the mountains. 12

There were a few people around us, and it was a hard climb and you had a sense of other people working very hard around you as well and a sense of relief when you got to the top. 16

I am interested even why people bother. There are easier ways aren't there how people can get their spiritual kicks. You don't have to put yourself through two weeks, three weeks, two months of pain and discomfort. 5

We were not able to have a rest and we just had to keep pushing on. It was a really hard day with people struggling along the way. It was the sort of day that dragged on and on. We were glad to get there. 16

Today I struggled with myself, the heat, and the conditions of the walk. I got a bit emotional, frustrated. 12

I don't know what this is like. My normal *modus operandi* is to work it out in advance as to what this is going to be, but this time I have not, which is quite a choice because it is grossly unhealthy. I have to get out and try this, which is very difficult for me and for most of us really. 5

The day really physically tired me and looking back now from this afternoon it had an impact on today as well, because of how hard it was this morning. 16

I noticed how far away Australia was. I had the sense of being out of my comfort zone in the unknown of a foreign land. 12

This notion of the pilgrimage as suffering cannot be overstated. The *Camino* can at times be hard, tiring, and fraught with at least minor medical conditions. And yet if

pilgrimage exemplifies “the experience of the *homo viator*”, then part of the pilgrims’ suffering – as “particularly essential to the nature of man”²³ – is to include hope in the midst of suffering.

As we have seen, White and Kegan pay particular attention to circumstances in which people find themselves removed from their usual contexts. The pilgrim experience, which in the case of *the three* lasted for two months, is an intensification of this experience of unusual circumstances. When imbued with hope, the hard work involved and the commitment in body and soul that is demanded of the pilgrims may generate special energy towards “disturbing their immunity to change”.²⁴ Certainly the findings from this preliminary study point in that direction. On the basis of the reports coming from a real-time experience of the hard road, it is significant that *the three* also reported on the overall value to them of the pilgrimage experience.

b. Awareness of Present Experience

The concepts of consciousness and mindfulness,²⁵ as previously described, have a bearing on this particular Specific Theme. For much of the pilgrim trail it is a matter of living in the here-and-now and of being watchful and receptive.²⁶ Further, pilgrims are conscious that this experience is all new and, as such, they are free from limiting prior routines and habits which in their earlier lives worked to constrict their openness to the new.

²³ Pope John Paul II, *Apostolic Letter, Salvific Suffering, to the Bishops, Priests, Religious Families, and to the Faithful, on the Christian Meaning of Human Suffering*, p. 3.

²⁴ Kegan, *The Evolving Self*, pp. 107-108.

²⁵ See, e.g., Hanh, *Peace is Every Step*, p. vii.

²⁶ Ranson, *Spirituality and Leadership*, p. 2.

The beauty of the scenery can often be spectacular. The pace of walking is such that the landscape can be fully observed. Besides, all commitments are reduced simply to getting to one's destination. As Pope John Paul II remarks, speaking of tourists in general,

On their travels, tourists discover other places, other landscapes and different ways of perceiving and experiencing nature. Accustomed to their own home and city, the usual landscapes and familiar voices, tourists see other images, hear new sounds and admire the diversity of a world that no-one can grasp entirely. As they do so, they surely grow in appreciation of all that surrounds them and the sense that it must be protected.²⁷

The opportunity to soak up life in the immediacy of the pilgrim's surroundings invites feelings of appreciation, as is evident in *the three*. On the other hand, all *three* had the experience of losing precious time and expending extra energy when way-marks, usually in the form of yellow arrows, were missed. The *orientations* to be noted under this theme are: *God, noticing* and *personal responses*.

God

It was remarked above that *the three* in real-time had not explicitly referred to the pilgrim *Jesus* in the context of their struggles with the hard way. As evidenced in the statements below, however, the pilgrim *God* was by no means absent. Walking with the pilgrims, tracking them, leading them on, holding them in his hands, God was experienced by the pilgrims in a whole variety of places and people; for example, "at the funeral place, the lady at breakfast, the cool stream" (12). Even the pilgrim who found the going particularly tough on a certain day, and who did not then feel close to God, at the end of the day came to thank God "when we saw the place where we were going to stay" (16). Together with this awareness of God's presence, there are also in quite a number of

²⁷ John Paul II, *Message for the 22nd World Day of Tourism*, p. 2.

cases explicit highly positive references to experiences of the celebration of the Eucharist (Mass)

It was luck finding the Mass – God tracking me. He knows I am a Mass person. God wanted me to have a Mass today. 12

Where is God in all of this – God having a nice walk with us. 5

We went to Mass. We were wandering past a church at Sarria at 9 am just as Mass was about to start so it was really nice just to be able to go in there and sit down for half an hour and have Mass. Praying with the little old ladies of the parish. 16

I felt God walking with us today, at the funeral place, the lady at breakfast, the cool stream. 12

Here, they're often not terribly professional, you can't understand what they are saying yet they have naturalness about them, which we don't. This is a rich Catholic faith that I do not know any more. Here, they don't think about all these varieties of worship in the one church; this is just natural to them. 5

It was tough today. I didn't feel close to God today. 16

My hopes for the day are that everything goes along smoothly. I have all day. I have to get myself organised. God is right in the forefront. I am thinking I will go to a Eucharist this morning and get myself off to a good start. And put it all in God's hands. 12

My biggest sense of worship along the way was thanking God when we saw the place where we were going to stay and that we had a place for the night and we didn't have to go any further. 16

I think having faith in God I just know that I will be in God's hands and everything will go fine and I will experience lots of wonderful spiritual experiences and that I will have lots of great meetings with people of other cultures. 12

It was quite a spiritual day, just strolling along. 16

There were special God-points with so many people today. It makes you feel God is walking with you. 12

Some of the very best of moments I've had on the two weeks have been in church at Mass when I have had no idea what the priest is saying. I know what is happening because it is the Mass but the reading or the homily I have had very little understanding of interpreting and where I have tended to slip into

semiconsciousness I have found them (the Masses) to be very terrific times where I achieved what I would like to achieve when I am out walking. Being awake but not trying to do anything about it – this is good. One of the things that struck me forcefully so far and very obviously so this evening – we think we are passing through here and all these people are being nice to us. 5

There is an ease, a naturalness, to these reports of the awareness of God in the pilgrims' daily experience: "being awake but not trying to do anything about it" (5), "it was quite a spiritual day, just strolling along" (16). God and the Eucharist were at the centre.

Noticing

As examples of awareness of present experience, the following three statements report in some detail, and with unfeigned interest, on the beautiful landscape, the old buildings, changes in the weather, the local people and their animals, and the food.

We walked along through some beautiful little places and then climbed O Cebriero. There was a little town half way up La Fada, and as we were going through there a cow-herdsman brought his five cows with a little old lady following and us scrambling up the stone wall and that was really moving and made me think about how these people lived in their own tiny little circle here and what they think about and what they would talk about. They probably would not have much schooling and this is their little world that they live in. 16

O Cebriero, what an image, 1300 metres up, everywhere height, green, versions of green, plenty of green; accommodation run by the family – dinner in the kitchen basically. The walk we started at 7 a.m., very misty, real doubts about how the day will turn out. I am wondering whether the feet will hold up, the hips will hold up, but they do. Here I am at Triacastella, finished the twenty-one kilometres. Magnificent, beautiful breakfast here, absolutely extraordinary! As good as you would find in many hotels in Australia. Everywhere these houses are made of bits and pieces of stones put together. The O Cebreiro breakfast part of the building is 300 years old. And with all the old there is new, there is revival there, with the additions being made because there are more and more of us on the road. 5

It was a very pleasant day in that it was not as steep as when we climbed O Cebreiro. It was much more of a day when you could just walk along and think

about things other than the physical exertion. However, by the end of the day when we were walking into Triacastella my legs were starting to hurt but it was a good feeling even though I was physically tired and achy. It was good because I felt like I had done a day's exercise and was ready to have a big sit down and a big feed when we got there. The scenery today, when we started off, we were in the fog and wandered along. It was quite wet and cold and even a little bit dark. Gradually the fog subsided and the mountains were absolutely beautiful. It was absolutely beautiful countryside to walk through. You could see forever. 16

The appreciativeness and spontaneity of *the three's* responsiveness to their surroundings on the *Camino* are well captured in these statements. It might prove valuable on another occasion to probe the resonances of the term "little" in the phrases "some beautiful little places" and "their little world that they live in" (16). Is this a characteristically Australian way of thinking? The genuineness of the desire "to have a big sit down and a big feed when we got there" cannot be doubted.

Personal responses

The final aspect to be noted in regard to *the three's* awareness of present experience concerns their feelings about how the road had affected them personally. The illustrative statements that follow highlight the rewards of both the hard physical road to Monte de Gozo and "the journey within" (16). Even though the pilgrim now realises that her attitudes towards difference and towards others had actually begun to change earlier, that change has now come into its own.

I was on the path but this experience to me has been the biggest progress. Is my view of people who are different changed? I just don't know when I go home whether I just go back to that. That is another question for me in time. 5

It was that day that I started to realise that it is the journey within; that it doesn't matter if you get a stamp or *credencial*. It is how it affects you. 16

I can't quite work out how it happened over the last four weeks. I can't quite put into words at the moment how that has changed for me but I know it has. I feel different about those sorts of things. Although I did start to feel different about

them before I came, that has progressed in the last weeks – in the same way that my view of people who are very different has progressed. 5

I had a feeling on Monte de Gozo that we had been on a hard road to get there and I had the feeling with all the other tourists around you that it was really rewarding in the end. To think that I had worked pretty hard to get where we had been! 16

There is an emphasis here on both the outward and the inward journey, and on a sense of solidarity with others in celebrating the achievement of arrival. At the same time, the question is put as to whether the progress that one has made in appreciating the difference of others might be wound back when one returns to the settled (“embedded”) situation of home.

c. Strangers in a foreign land

As was pointed out above, the pilgrims are of little interest to a particular segment of the local inhabitants. In fact, the large number of pilgrims interrupts the rhythm of local life. On the other hand, the pilgrims’ conscious adoption of their role aligns them with the image of St James. They are regarded by many locals as holy persons. Something similar can be said of the locals themselves. They have a choice between exploiting and caring, knowing that there is unlikely to be any significant consequence either way. Does the pilgrim meet the caring face of God? Are the pilgrims vulnerable to being abused? While *the three* in real-time were actually living on the trail the figures of the stranger and the Saint frequently coalesced. *The three* reported much more robustly on this in their real-time responses than in their post-*Camino* responses. The *orientations* to be noted here are: *caring for the stranger* and *stranger feelings*.

Caring for the stranger

The following statements from *the three* deal with the pilgrim stranger's perception of the local people: firstly, in the locals' recognising the stranger as a pilgrim, and thus as a sign of God, whose project they fully support, and secondly, in the pilgrims' putting themselves in the local people's shoes in an attempt to understand the effects on them of strangers like themselves continually passing through their villages and lives.

People recognise you as a pilgrim. They have a lot of time for you as a pilgrim. They want you to get there. You are a sign of God and they want you to be successful. 12

That is where my heart is, with the locals, who somehow have to cope with this influx of foreigners everywhere. And we have been able to touch locals. I keep on thinking as a local how would I feel about all these people coming through, giving me money which I like, but changing my life. 5

God was strong in our walk today: the woman at the well, the couple at Canaima who had been very concerned about breakfast for us, the woman who warned us not to go to Deisobane, and the man who just came up on us coming in to Seguiri who told us where the refuge was. 12

As in the section on *God* above, under the theme Awareness of Present Experience, the pilgrim stranger is met by the pilgrim God, in two women, a man and a couple, about whose expression of care to the stranger there is a decidedly biblical resonance.

Stranger feelings

This final set of statements from *the three* emphasises the sense of distance from home, geographically, psychologically and culturally. It is recognised, however, that the risks and deprivations of being far away is actually "part of the journey". This is an integral dimension of what it means for an Australian to walk the *Camino*. The homesickness experienced can have the positive effect of leading the pilgrim to think personally of loved ones at home.

I felt very alien walking in these conditions. I would not do it again. 12

It is a long way from home. 16

Walking through pine forests earlier today, I thought of home and how much it means in my life. I am near the end of my journey and I am thinking of home again. At the Cathedral I was listening to the voices of Australians and as I was getting my *Credencial*, the person seemed to change her attitude on my being Australian. 12

You start to pick up you are a long way away, but that is part of the journey. 16

I noticed how far Australia is away and the sense of being out of my comfort-zone in a foreign land. 12

I feel quite unique really. There were not even many English-speakers around. It seemed such a long way from Australia to get where we are at in Santiago. 16

Two things I think about while here are family, individually more than as a full family. I think about the time and what they might be doing. I text them and I probably should stop doing that. I should try to detach a bit from all of that, but I keep my phone on Australian time. I want to text the family at home. This is what I want to do. I overcome homesickness by that. 5

People acknowledge how far you have come. 16

Acknowledgement by others of the scale of the undertaking for Australians to walk the *Camino* provides reassurance. Also, the fact of having travelled such a long distance to Santiago instills in Australian pilgrims a sense of uniqueness. It is rare for them to hear their own language spoken, much less in their own accent.

Finally, the first comment quoted above evokes a very bleak and forbidding scenario: “I felt very alien walking in these conditions. I would not do it again” (12). If this were a comment on the *Camino* as a whole, we would be in the company of a person for whom the hard road seemed to have proved overwhelming. In fact, the comment relates to the conditions at a particular stage of the journey only. This pilgrim kept walking till the end and received the *Credencial* at the Cathedral in Santiago. Even so,

the forcefulness of the statement “I would not do it again” returns us to the shadows with which we began this presentation of General Dimension 5: Disturbing the immunity to change: *the three* in real-time. By the end of the *Camino* the pilgrim has successfully negotiated the shadows of anxiety and uncertainty that were present at the beginning and along the way. The pilgrim has also faced down the hardness of the road and even the most profound feelings of alienation and aversion. The person now faces the new challenges of returning home and practising there the rich possibilities for personal growth that the long road to Santiago has yielded up.²⁸

In summarising the real-time experiences of *the three*, we discern the following characteristics: (i) emptying oneself of any trappings of power; (ii) placing oneself in a position where the immediate present is the most important moment in one’s life; and (iii) willingly surrendering all previous ties. These are compelling attributes²⁹ and should not be underestimated. The consistency of experience as reported by *the three* pilgrims yielded rare data. The characteristics of their experience indicate crucial elements in the conversion process which leads to enduring future re-directions in their spiritual lives. The experiences encountered on the *Camino*, especially the separation from the dominant culture back in Australia, fit very well with Kegan and Fowler’s theoretical imperatives in life-course development. The data on the reasons why pilgrims make the journey and their response to the opportunities that present themselves – especially as the pilgrims are

²⁸ See Slavin, *Journeys with the Sacred*, p. iii: “The pilgrim is both a stranger and home-comer ... S/he seeks social distance to facilitate a search for authentic being in order to further personal development ... Previous life changes are negotiated and new ones are precipitated resulting in profound personal growth.”

²⁹ Bishop Robinson described his experience of release from embeddedness as follows: “To find God I have to leave behind a lot of baggage and climb a mountain. It is only when I have reduced my spiritual life to its few basic essentials that I may begin to come near God. If I don’t do this, I will inevitably load many of my own longings and distortions onto God and end up with a God of my own creating.” See Robinson, *Travels in Sacred Places*, p. 16.

completely distanced from their normal life context and its pressures – embody the elements needed to shift from continuity and embeddedness to the evolving self with new discoveries and orientations. This focus on the real-time experience of *the three* allows an opportunity to witness the dynamics of change in action. For this reason the characteristics of *the three* in real-time have been included in the taxonomy as General Dimension 5: Disturbing the immunity to change, *the three* in real-time.

Concluding summary

The first task for this research project was to develop a foundational framework for the constitutive elements of the human person in her/his journey through life. This is shown in Framework 1, Pilgrimage through space and time: *Homo Viator*. It provides an overarching structure within which the specific interest of this research into the spirituality of Australian pilgrims on the *Camino* could be conducted. The key outcomes of this research have been the development of two further frameworks: a *taxonomy of pilgrimage* (2), and a *stages in lived oneing: holistic, re-generative model* (3).

In order to develop these frameworks, a comprehensive mapping exercise was first undertaken. It focussed on the pilgrims' actual experiences during and after the *Camino*. Secondly, there was the task of selecting and codifying language. This allowed for the development of a framework by which to assess the pilgrims' experience, and to learn from it pastorally for the future (see Framework 2). Thirdly, this process of assessing change in the pilgrims used concepts drawn from structural, evolutionary theories. These generated new insights into how the pilgrims changed – during and after the trail – through break-throughs from embeddedness in particular lifestyles.

Consequently, there emerged our preliminary model of staged growth, for which the concept of *oneing* has been used (see Framework 3).

Finally, this model of progressive generation and re-generation over the entire life-course has then been applied to six elements of pilgrimage. In fact, all the pilgrim participants reported significant change in their lives deriving from the experience of the *Camino*. At the same time, it has also been our finding that their spiritual journey remained incomplete. Framework 3, Stages in lived *oneing*: an holistic, re-generative model, can serve in the development of a suitable pastoral response to pilgrimage, helping people to embrace the opportunities that pilgrimage offers to move out of embeddedness to new ways of living.

For this research project the participation of these pilgrims is of the greatest significance. This in no way detracts from their own deepest reasons for going on pilgrimage – which in the end have been expressed in terms of “continuous increasing” in *oneing* in their lives.

We can now proceed in the final chapter to offer a series of reflections on seven outcomes of this work which provide insights into the directions that future research might take in this field of pilgrimage.

CHAPTER 8

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This chapter reflects on seven aspects of our work with a view to signalling directions for further research:

1. Positive outcomes for the pilgrims
2. Methodological challenges
3. Three Frameworks of interpretation
4. Aspects of two of the applications of Framework 3
5. The *Camino* and other pilgrim trails
6. Issues for *the three* during and after the *Camino*
7. Status of those assisting pilgrims on the *Camino*

1. Positive outcomes for the pilgrims

As this research investigated the growth in spirituality of a sample of Australian Catholics walking the *Camino*, it is significant that all participants reported favourably on their experience of the *Camino*. They report how it inspired spiritual growth for them, and that this had an enduring effect in their lives – a beneficial outcome. Leaving one's home environment and exploring new contexts in living, along with recovering an integrated sense of body and soul, were notable components of the experience.

The research focussed on pilgrimage as a symbol of life, and found that the pilgrimage experience was effective in generating, to use Julian of Norwich's terms,

“continuous increasing” in lived *oneing*. This research project aimed to demonstrate the positive effects of walking the *Camino* on the spirituality of a group of Australian Catholic pilgrims. These results discussed above (see Chapters 6 and 7) provide a good base for further testing and development of the three frameworks that have been constructed to map the progress of the research.

2. Methodological challenges

The second reflection on future developments concerns methodology. This researcher has now experienced life on the pilgrim trail to *Santiago de Compostela* on five occasions. On three of those occasions he travelled with other Australian Catholic pilgrims as co-researchers. This naturally raises concerns as to a potential confusion of roles. In this regard, much of the literature surrounds the issue of ethical guidelines for such projects. For example, Miles and Huberman, in their chapter on “Ethical Issues in Analysis”, state that “there is no well-formulated set of ethical guidelines usable by qualitative researchers across a range of disciplines.” Miles and Huberman, however, reproduce in their text a table entitled “Ethical Frameworks and Aspects of Research”, which locates research ethics within a wide cross-section of theoretical positions. Of special relevance to this research on the spirituality of Australian pilgrims on the *Camino* is the response made by Miles and Huberman to two particular approaches, viz., the *relational* and *ecological*. On the *relational* approach, these authors make the point that:

Researchers taking a *relational* view stress equal-status collaboration; researcher and researched are now more symmetrical. Fieldwork seeks to avoid imposition of any sort, and reports serve to “confirm” support, or even celebrate people who are defined as “friends”.

Such a viewpoint, according to Miles and Huberman, is vulnerable to criticism from accepted traditional approaches to researcher-subject relationships.

The *ecological* view on ethics takes this relationship agenda into still newer territory. Miles and Huberman report that:

Ecological views lead the researcher during recruitment to be sensitive to the language and meanings of the local “culture”; to avoid “detachment” in favour of being attentive to the wrong or harm one may be doing to the entire relevant environment; and to consider during report writing “how to act responsibly in making public what we have learned, with attention to the effects of implicit, multiplex, stereo-typic aspects of language.”¹

These two models of interactive relationship, one between researcher and researched, and the other between researchers and their entire environment, have consequences for this current research, especially in taking it further. For this particular project, the central issue is that of undertaking real-time research into lived spirituality on the *Camino*, and so raises questions of relationships over long periods of time. Further, this occurs in environments that are unfamiliar to both the researcher and the research participants. The real-time participants virtually live together twenty-four hours a day for up to four weeks at a time. A good example is the issue of the health of the two parties. This has the potential to muddle clear roles, particularly if it is the researcher who suffers the health problem.

As the modern phenomenon of population movement continues to gain momentum, further consideration will need to be given to the viability of research that is pursued under such conditions. The outcomes of this current research project suggest that interactive approaches, in which participants are incorporated as co-researchers, co-

¹ Miles and Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, p. 288.

authors, and/or auditors and evaluators, promise effective solutions in this matter. The close interest shown by the participants in the development of this project has assisted considerably in protecting the research's integrity.

Beyond that, the participants' sustained interest also offered to the project significant anecdotal input as well as opportunities for verification, thus adding robustness and richness to the codification process. An appropriate equality in relationships is desirable. Such relationships can enable an interchange between the researcher and those who provide the data, take on roles of co-authors and evaluators, and so bring a special ethical dimension to the process. This is worth pursuing in future research of this kind. The status of participants goes well beyond being simply protected and cared for. A more ample approach can be found in the methodological techniques which inform this current research project. The Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People's remarks on Gypsies are to the point. The methodological approach is influenced specifically by pastoral concern in that it moves from simple protection to the implementation of equality in intercultural dialogue. With reference to concerns related to Gypsies, for example, it writes:

Indeed, among the values that define their [i.e., Gypsies'] lifestyle, those that resemble biblical features stand out. Marked by persecution, exile, absence of welcome, even rejection, suffering and discrimination, Gypsy history is shaped as a permanent wandering that distinguishes them from others, preserving them in their nomadic tradition, to the extent that they do not generally allow themselves to be influenced by the surrounding environment ... Their wandering is, in any case, a permanent and symbolic reminder of life's journey towards eternity. In a very special manner, Gypsies live the way in which the whole Church should, namely to be on a continuous journey toward another homeland – the true and only one.²

² Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, *Guidelines for the Pastoral Care of Gypsies* (Vatican: Holy See, 2006), p. 12.

This brief review of some of the issues in our research methodology opens to a wider context. Research ethics are not restricted to the academic environment, for there are ethical considerations involved also in the wider domains of a society. These apply to the posture that should be adopted by all as travellers engage – albeit informally – with the cultures of others. Through increasing involvement in the modern-day phenomenon of movement, travellers should be self-critical as to their personal outlook and methodological mindset. As this research project on Australian Catholics on the *Camino* emphasises, respect for the communities and cultures encountered may well determine the quality and depth of their experience. Therefore, pilgrims are invited to adopt the attitude of learners as they enter into intercultural exchange with the people of the places that they visit. A further methodological issue, therefore, is the manner in which representatives of the places visited might act as advisers and co-authors of this kind of research.

3. Three Frameworks of interpretation

As we turn to conceptual outcomes, we recall the three frameworks that have emerged as this research project progressed, namely, (1) the development of theories and models for scoping of the human person's journey through life, (2) language and taxonomy for understanding and communicating about pilgrimage, and (3) the psychodynamics of change. In the process of developing these theoretical frameworks, the interviews presented several issues worthy of note. Firstly, only one of the pilgrims before going on pilgrimage had undertaken a comprehensive study of the opportunities offered by the *Camino*, or considered what spiritual growth people might expect to occur in this context. Secondly, all of the pilgrims had difficulty expressing in words the growth

they experienced. Thus the development of a language and form of communication related to the realities of pilgrimage became a key element in this project.

To clarify the theoretical concepts being generated through the research process, three data displays were constructed in accordance with the advice of Miles and Huberman.³ Framework 1 outlines key stages on the journey of the human person through space and time. Here the capacity of pilgrimage to symbolise life itself is recognised, thus giving structure and form to the research project as a whole. This framework held up well in the light of the feed-back from the group of pilgrim auditors. In future research, however, this framework will need to be tested with different sets of pilgrims in order to assess its more general applicability.

Framework 2 introduces a language and taxonomy drawn from the interviews with the pilgrims and from feedback from the pilgrim auditors. The process of developing this framework attracted the interest of the pilgrims themselves, both in the interviews and at the auditing stage. As with Framework 1, however, further work needs to be undertaken in order to assess its more general applicability, e.g., whether it meets the needs of other pilgrims of different ages, educational, and personal backgrounds and experience. Based on the evidence of the efficacy of the language and taxonomy provided by this current group of pilgrims, a further step would be to trial this framework as a preparatory learning and advisory tool for potential pilgrims.

The current general structure of the taxonomy will be of value for future research. Some of the terms initially suggested were omitted because of the pilgrims' unfamiliarity with them. One such term, for example, was "palimpsest" with its meaning of layer upon

³ Miles and Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, pp. 92-102.

layer, in reference to the ongoing march of pilgrims over eons on the *Camino*. So too with the term “labyrinth”, and what it might add to the richness of pilgrimage. Another aspect which, although noticed, gained little traction amongst the pilgrims, both when interviewed and during auditing, is that of the potential growth opportunity that *Santiago Matamoros*, St James the Moor-slayer, and his attendant “shadows”, may bring to the unfinished work of re-creation through *oneing*.

Whatever of the usefulness of the terms, “palimpsest”, “labyrinth” and “St James the Moor-slayer”, it needs to be recognised that the language and taxonomy actually adopted in Framework 2 was determined by the pilgrim participants themselves, and that it has shown itself to be sufficiently robust to constitute a contribution to a pastoral realisation of a “suitable response ... so that in the light of the word of God and of the age-old tradition of the Church everyone may share more fully in the spiritual wealth found in the experience of pilgrimages.”⁴

Framework 3, “Stages in lived *oneing*: an holistic, re-generative model”, has been designed to serve several purposes. Firstly, the word *oneing* has been adopted to give an alternative, more focussed language, in the domain of growth in spirituality. Following considerable reflection by the researcher in consultation with the pilgrim co-authors, Julian of Norwich’s concept of *oneing* was chosen as the core descriptor. A caveat, however, does need to be placed on this decision. *Oneing* did attract considerable positive interest from quite a few of the pilgrims when this particular word when brought up in the interviews for comment. A small number, however, found the term confusing – they were unfamiliar with this idea which had been introduced to them only post-*Camino*.

⁴ Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, *The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee*, p. 1.

Nonetheless, the responses were sufficiently positive to justify giving priority to the term in the title of the model at this stage. Further testing will determine the usefulness of the term across a wider sample of pilgrims, e.g., when it is used in future learning events preparatory to pilgrimage.

Tentative conclusions can also be drawn regarding the appeal to the pilgrims of the range of concepts included in the model – such as “staging”, “embeddedness”, “separation from previous ways through ‘continuous increasing’”, and “re-generation”. The holistic model showing the stages in lived *oneing*, which included six applications, was found to be sufficiently robust and flexible for the investigation of the pilgrims’ experience. As with Framework 2, however, the conceptualisation and language of change utilised in this research will need further scrutiny when applied to different sets of pilgrims. A point of interest, for example, is Slavin’s analysis of Turner’s notion of liminality. While Slavin recognises the limitations of the construct, he perseveres with it in view of its ability to identify catalysts for change: “While I acknowledge a range of limitations in his [Turner’s] work, I maintain that liminality in particular, is one of the most nuanced and useful concepts available to social scientists for thinking about many forms of alterity and marginality.”⁵ In the application of the notion of liminality to “Stages in lived *oneing*: an holistic, re-generative model”, it proved useful in describing what has been termed here “restlessness, *imbalance* and natural emergencies”. We are justified then in expecting that our theoretical model as it stands as Framework 3 will help future pilgrims to reflect on their experiences and get the most out of what they have come through.

⁵ Slavin, "Walking as Spiritual Practice: The Pilgrimage to Santiago De Compostela," p. 17.

4. Aspects of two of the applications of Framework 3

Regarding the applications of the model in Framework 3, there is, firstly, a growing Australian acceptance of secular signs, symbols, pilgrimages, and special places of meaning – e. g., Uluru and Kokoda. This tendency contrasts with the contemporary Catholic Church practice in relation to devotions and iconography. This difference can be analysed through application of this “Stages in lived *oneing*” model. It suggests that Australian Catholics might critically review their present reluctance regarding devotional practices, and come to appreciate their value in relation to participation in the sacraments. Such a trial in the use of this application could have considerable benefits.

Secondly, appreciation of the concepts of the overarching “embeddedness” of the home environment to which the pilgrims returned, and this environment’s “immunity to change”, helped the pilgrims in this difficulty by bringing about change in their post-*Camino* lives. The model contained in Framework 3 regarding the repressive effects of a particular context helped some of the pilgrims to become much more aware of the psychodynamics of change, in their pursuit of new dimensions of *oneing*. This suggested ways of coping with restlessness in the context of their dissatisfaction with the contemporary Church as they experienced it.

5. The *Camino* and other pilgrim trails.

The *Camino* possesses quite a significant world reputation. Can it, then, be regarded as a representative pilgrim trail? We have not treated this question in our research so far. Also, questions concerning how the positive effects reported in this study compare with other pilgrim routes have not been considered here. Further research is

needed to address these gaps. A related problem is the high financial cost for Australians of participating in a pilgrimage so far removed from their own country. Consideration could be given to whether a similar pilgrim trail, with some adaptations, could provide analogous experiences in an Australian context – e.g., developments surrounding the shrine of Saint Mary MacKillop can provide valuable data on emerging pilgrim practices in Australia.

Other factors worthy of consideration are, e.g., the length of the trail, or whether trails would be suitable for such programs as alternative sentencing, or how pilgrim trails might allow for the participation of pilgrims with a disability. Certainly, Australian Indigenous perspectives are an omission in this study, and it is suggested these should rank highly in future considerations.

6. Issues for *the three* during and after the *Camino*

It has been noted above that *the three* exhibited very different preoccupations while walking the pilgrimage than they did in retrospect. Afterwards, they demonstrated a desire for change much like the other pilgrims and exhibited similar strategies to bring it about. While on pilgrimage, however, they reacted to the demands of protracted walking as an opportunity for growth in spirituality. On the road, they were pre-occupied with living in the present, aware of thinking in the present, and conscious of having a different appreciation of time and space. They were also pre-occupied while on pilgrimage with their status as wandering strangers in a foreign land. They were aware of being ministered to by local people as seekers of holiness, but in need of care. These findings in relation to *the three* would seem to be particularly relevant in identifying factors likely to generate “continuous increasing” in *oneing*. The qualitative, methodological instruments

used in this project are not of a quality which can produce multiple regressions and/or correlation coefficients, so judgments of cause and effect have to remain of a subjective, qualitative nature. The results from the reports of *the three* while on pilgrimage, however, suggest that these factors should be re-examined in the future in a more controlled environment. On the face of it, the Specific Themes relating to *the three* in real-time show a very different life-experience: firstly, being away from the security and comforts of their own environment with its attendant immunity to change; secondly, the emphasis on the existential moments of their existence (e.g., “There were special God-points with so many people today. It makes you feel God is walking with you” 12); and, finally, taking on the role of the mendicant monk as symbolised in the figure of St James. These elements make up a General Dimension in their own right – “Disturbing the immunity to change: *the three* in real-time” – for orienting future research.

7. Status of those assisting the pilgrims on the *Camino*

This final reflection focuses on the status of those who assist the pilgrims on the *Camino*. There is quite a thriving support industry developed over many years along the *Camino*, including such services as accommodation, food and drink, other personal requirements, mementos, medical supplies, religious events and transport. Moreover, the local people maintain the pilgrim trail itself. They live and breathe pilgrimage. It is their way of life. This has been touched on in some of the responses of the pilgrims who expressing gratitude to the locals and, in some way, seeing St James symbolised in them. Thus, the locals become icons of St James. When they assist the pilgrim, it is as if St James himself assists the pilgrim. This characteristic is particularly strong in reports from *the three* in real time who were especially conscious at that moment of being the

strangers in a foreign land. Still, the iconic contribution of these generous local people remains to be researched in its own right in the future.

Concluding Summary

The aim of the three Frameworks was to provide a suitable language of pilgrimage, as well as a taxonomy of hermeneutical categories. An evolutionary growth-based model was added to a theoretical interpretation of the pilgrim participants' responses and experience throughout. Three features already noted in Church pastoral guidelines on pilgrimage permeate this research: the modern phenomenon of mass movement of people around the world, the call for a suitable pastoral response to this phenomenon and, most importantly, the theological perspective, namely, that "pilgrimages symbolise the experience of the *homo viator* who sets out, as soon as he leaves the maternal womb, on his journey through the time and space of his existence" (*The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee* 16). If pilgrimage is symbolic of the call of life itself, might not pilgrimage be examined as a way of life? While this research project has focussed on those who have physically walked the *Camino*, it is also directed to many others who do not actually go on physical pilgrimage to particular places. All who discern pilgrim orientations in their living and in their spirituality are invited into the conversation. Furthermore, this research is intended to frame a response to the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People's call. What is needed is a pastoral response to "contemporary society, which is characterised by intense mobility" and by which "pilgrimages are experiencing a new emphasis" (2). We conclude this study of Australian Catholics on the *Camino* with the words of one of the pilgrim participants:

It has been ceaselessly repeated that the Way (*Camino*) is an excellent metaphor of life. And, sure enough it is, and in every way, not just as a goal but also for the joy of the journey in all its fascination and fullness. The Way of St James, a wayfarer's way, offers not only the meaning of the pilgrimage, or of the journey, but also the wealth that, over the centuries, grew up at its sides and under its shelter: art, scenery, diversity, legends and communication between different people, the underlying idea forming the background to a way of living and feeling that arose along this route. 23

In such words, the link between this group of Australian Catholic pilgrims on the *Camino* and *Homo Viator's* pilgrimage through space and time is eloquently articulated.

Epilogue

A Pilgrim's Way

The Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People uses the image of *Homo Viator*. On the evidence that has been presented in this thesis on the *Camino*, the pilgrim is most likely to be drawn to experience wholeness through discovery-oriented attentiveness, and to exhibit curiosity and wonder. The pilgrim moves beyond self-protective structures, and is open to new challenges on the road, by engaging with new people and an unfamiliar environment. Pilgrims are often identified by their pleasure in seeing, touching, and embracing objects of devotion, including the rich and diverse iconography available as they pass through the sacred places of the trail, while wearing, both psychologically and physically, the talismans of the pilgrim. The pilgrim presents an image of an uncluttered life, attuned to the immediacy and wonder of existence, and yet pushing forward on a long road in readiness for new meaning, all part of the liturgy of life as it is celebrated in the Eucharist itself. In travelling attire and carrying the staff of the pilgrim, each one is on the road of “continuous increasing” in *oneing*, so as “to stay with the Lord for ever” (1 Thess. 4:17), in body and soul.