

*"The father of Monasticism, Saint Benedict, had a lovely phrase:
Vacare Deo – finding space for God.
It means changing the tempo of our lives, taking it easy, stopping after a week's work to
see where we are going...."*

Source: Sacred Space, Irish Jesuits website

Vacare Deo – making space for God – By Pierrette Lavertu, Pilgrim in 2016

I love going on a pilgrimage.

I love seeking, carving out and cultivating a space for God.

I love doing that – outdoors.

I love negotiating the relationship between the space that I take up and the space that is out there– between terra firma and the sky.

Within the parameters of a physical destination in mind and with logistics in place, I love being free to challenge and to permit myself to be open to encountering Nature in all its moods and permutations: sun, road-side shade, sun rise, red tuque-on-head morning chill, wind, rain, forest, river, mountain, valley, desert and plains.

I grew to love starting out the day in Silence – permitting our Vacare Deo to envelop us in its warm embrace.

It has been said that "Nature absorbs pain."

It is also been noted that within Nature, transformations can take place.

I love going on a pilgrimage and mindfully choosing not walk alone – but with companions.

I love encountering 'Others' and inevitably...I also encounter myself.

As pilgrims, we are linked by a desire to 'know, love and serve God' but we are also linked by the desire to be doing that - in movement.

Ruah – the Holy Spirit is not static, it moves....and so do we.

We want our heart, mind, body and soul to be engaged.

We choose to eat, sleep and walk in the footsteps of St. Ignatius.

We walk alone, in pairs or in small groups, but during the course of the day we also sing, proclaim the Word of God, join hands (at times) in the Lord's Prayer, offer each other the sign of peace, break bread at the Eucharist and drink the wine...and laugh. A lot. Often.

Walking in the footsteps of Saint Ignatius, we connect to St. Ignatius-the-man and by extension, to Jesus – the- man.

The Orange Arrow points this way.



Manresa old bridge and La Seu Church

