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04 October 2025+ Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

Our pilgrimage to Spain was an incredible series of experiences that were beyond our imagination or expectation. We landed in Barcelona, with our first event being the tour of the newly blessed Sagrada Familia Basilica, and the celebration of Mass together. Words cannot adequately describe this church. I swear it will be the eighth wonder of the world. From Barcelona, we journeyed to the Benedictine Abbey of Monserrat hidden in the surrounding mountains. From there we traveled west to Zaragoza, to the Eucharistic miracle in a little village of Daroca, and then to Madrid. From Madrid we traveled north to the city of Toledo, the monastery and burial tombs of the kings of Spain in Escorial, then to Avila, Salamanca, and Santiago de Compostela, the tomb and Cathedral of the apostle St. James the Greater (elder). From there we stopped in a small village of Astorga and then back to Madrid to fly home. I estimate that we travelled on bus over 1600 miles. In addition, one of our pilgrims and parishioner, Marilyn Bowe, estimated that we walked an average of 5 to 5.5 miles per day, and little of it on level ground.

The pilgrimage was not only a powerful experience of faith and culture, but it was arduous as well. Thank God there were no serious problems or issues with travel and health. The pilgrims were real troopers. People have been asking about our trip. I mentioned to the pilgrims from our parish and area that once we get settled and our pictures in order, we might have a gathering at our hall in Stanley for a social and presentation of our trip. As I said, it is hard to put into words the beauty and splendor of the churches in which we celebrated Mass, and the medieval history and architecture of Spain.

While I was gone there were some issues back at home with Masses. Fr. John Mary was not able to cover for me because of a health issue. The priest from Cross Catholic was not able to arrive in time for the 4pm Mass in Stanley, and I was not able to offer the funeral Mass for Dr. Sanchez's wife, Aurora. I worry about those things when I am gone! I want to thank Fr. Sedlacek and the other priests who came to help along with Deacon Willkom. In short, it is good to be home!

Blessings and best wishes,