

Sat Chit Anand

From: "Sat Chit Anand" <satchitanand@global.co.za>
Sent: 10 July 2011 07:49 AM
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Talk and slideshow presentation on Walking the Camino
 by Father Johan, Tuesday 7pm at St Christophers Church
 Hall
 followed by tea and cake (bring and share)

Draw near to God and he will draw near to you - Saint James



A friend of mine, Fr Johan, recently returned from a month's pilgrimage and retreat. He spent 2 weeks walking the Camino in Spain, and 2 weeks living as a monk in a Benedictine Monastery in the UK. When you walk the Camino, it is traditional to take a stone from your home country with you, and place it at the foot of one of the many stone crosses or Churches en route. This stone can be symbolic of

some burden in your life that you wish to leave behind, so that you may continue your life's journey free from this burden. The stone can also be carried for a friend or loved one, whom you carry with you in spirit on the pilgrimage with prayers for their well-being.

I have a collection of stones with messages written on them. When people come here on retreat, they usually bring certain problems or issues with them. At the end of their retreat, I ask them to choose a stone (which can be used as a paperweight on their desk), so that its message may be a reminder of some insight or clarity they gained while on retreat, or of something they wish to incorporate into their lives. Before Fr Johan left for Spain, I asked him to choose a stone to take with him. He chose one that bore the message: ALL IS WELL. Many people who walk the Camino have a personal issue they are hoping to come to terms with. We thought this was a nice stone to leave behind for others to read, giving them a message of reassurance that through the many hardships we experience during this pilgrimage of life, ALL IS WELL, and as it should be.

A friend of Fr Johan's committed suicide a year ago, and he was very upset by this. On the anniversary of his friend's death (which took place while he was walking the Camino), Fr Johan said prayers for his soul and left the stone at an ancient little church. He prayed that the stone's message would come back to him in some way, so as to know that his friend was ok.

After the Camino, Fr Johan went to Ampleforth Abbey. On his last day there, he was browsing in the library and was drawn to a book about the life of his patron Saint, St John Vianney of Ars in France, an incredible man who had clairvoyant powers and used them to help people. It was a thick book, so he opened it here and there and read extracts from it. He happened on a story about a lady who went to this Saint for help. But she saw rays of light shining out of his eyes and got scared as she knew he would be able to see into the depths of her soul. So she left without seeing him privately for confession and advice. However, the Saint saw her and said to her: ALL IS WELL. The next story was about a lady who was grief-stricken over the death of a loved one who had committed suicide by jumping off a bridge. The Saint told this lady: don't worry, HE IS SAVED. Between jumping off the bridge and dying a few seconds later, he had time to repent and prayed for forgiveness.

The stone ALL IS WELL came back to Fr Johan, via his patron Saint, bearing the message that ALL IS WELL with his friend. What an incredible example of how God / the Universe hears our prayers and communicates to us. On pilgrimages and retreats we take time to dedicate our lives in an intense and special way to our spiritual growth and to the Divine, and we are rewarded with amazing confirmations that we are part of God and held in his loving embrace. *Communion in the Holy Spirit is given in the measure of each one's faith. If you have done little work, you will receive little; if you have achieved a great deal, great will be your reward. [St Cyril]*

OM SHANTI, MAY PEACE AND LOVE BE WITH YOU, LEELA

Hatha Yoga: note new times

Tuesday mornings: 08h00 - 09h00 at Market Square gym

Wednesday afternoons: 16h30 - 18h00 at Sat Chit Anand

Thursday afternoons: 16h30 - 18h00 at Sat Chit Anand

Cost: R50 per class

Spiritual Retreats anytime

<http://www.satchitanand.co.za/programme.htm>

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