

August 16, 2010 - Italy – 110 Young people from the Salesian Youth Movement, Santiago de Compostela



(ANS – Milan) – The pilgrimage of young people from the Salesian Youth Movement (SYM) from the Lombardy-Emiliana Province reached its climax at the festivities for the feast of the Assumption at Santiago de Compostela. The most important moment, marking the arrival at Santiago, was Mass in the cathedral at the altar of St. James.

On this occasion of the Jacobean holy year, 110 young people from the SYM, coming from Salesian works in Lombardy and Emilia Romagna regions of Italy, completed the pilgrimage, the famous "Santiago Walk," along the route coming from France. The group, which left on August 5 from Saint Jean Pied de Port, arrived in Santiago on August 15, having covered 110 miles by foot – split across the main stages of the Walk – and used a bus to cover the remaining 370 miles.

But those who took part were able to experience the pilgrims' sense of poverty and reducing things to essentials: the overnight stays were in Salesian houses or public buildings, while lunch and supper was prepared by a "kitchen group" who used a field kitchen to prepare meals.

The spiritual intensity of the pilgrimage was strong, organised as it was by Fr. Elio Cesari, delegate for youth ministry in the province. He had proposed an approach for the youngsters, in fact, which they could use as a tool once back home again: every day had Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, Mass, two opportunities for meditation while they were walking, with a commentary on a gospel passage and the telling of the life of a saint.

To foster the community dimension, at the end of each section of the walk, each one shared with a companion on the journey--a different companion each time. This allowed them to create a strong spirit of sharing and bonds of friendship that will certainly last beyond the 10 intense days of the walk.