Travel to Northern Spain for a week, arriving in Bilbao, a principal city in the Basque Country, staying in Pamplona and Bilbao, and spending days with a combination of pilgrimage and travel experiences. Start the day with breakfast at the retreat center, and end the day with a light supper upon your return. During the day, experience the provinces of Navarre, Rioja, Zaragoza, Gipuzcoa, and Biscay, and seeing important cities and towns in each of these provinces, many of them associated with “El Camino de Santiago” or Way of Saint James. Tour the cathedrals, monasteries, and other historic sites associated with this historic pilgrimage route, known simply as “El Camino”. The group will be limited to 40 persons.

**Dates**

- **Departure from Miami:** Thursday, April 16th
- **Arrival in Bilbao:** Friday, April 17th
- **Bus to Pamplona, 90 min:** Friday, April 17th
- **Return to Miami:** Saturday, April 25th
Cost

625 € euros, (approximately $875 at exchange rate of 1.40) would include the following:
- Retreat Center Accommodations for 8 nights, double occupancy
  (Add 115 € euros, approximately $160 if you require single occupancy)
- Breakfast and supper daily in the retreat centers
- Bus transportation for all day trips

Not included:
- **Airline transportation** (approximately $900 round-trip)
  It is less expensive if people book their own flights. After searching for various airlines we found the Portuguese airline, TAP, to have the most reasonable fares and timetable, several hundred dollars less than other airlines. TAP connects through Lisbon.

**Miami - Bilbao**
*Thursday, April 16th:* TAP Portugal #228 departs Miami at 6:30 p.m., arrives in Lisbon at 7:35 a.m. 4/17. Friday April 17th
*Friday, April 17th:* TAP Portugal #1062 departs Lisbon at 8:40 a.m., arrives in Bilbao at 11:15 a.m.

From there we will be taken by private bus to Vitoria for lunch, approximately one hour away, and then to Pamplona in the late afternoon.

**Bilbao - Miami**
*Saturday, April 25th:* TAP Portugal #1065 departs Bilbao at 6:45 a.m., arrives in Lisbon at 7:25 a.m.
*Saturday, April 25th:* TAP Portugal #229 departs Lisbon at 10:00 a.m., arrives in Miami at 2:30 p.m.

Also Not Included:
- **Lunches**, (breakfast and dinner are included at the retreat center)
- **Entrance fees to museums, tour guides, gratuities to chauffeur, or lodging staff, etc.**

To Register:
- Return the attached form with a $100 deposit (non refundable) per person to the Rev. Dr. Carlos Sandoval by **September 30th.** Make the check to **Carlos Sandoval** and write “Trip Deposit” as the notation. Address is given on the form. (Please note: Reservations are made on a first-come, first-served basis. Reservations are limited to 40 persons!
- **After receiving e-mail confirmation** from Fr. Sandoval that there are enough persons registered for the trip, make your airline reservation as indicated above. Inform Fr. Sandoval by email regarding your travel arrangements: **cjsandoval@bellsouth.net.** If you have different travel arrangements, make sure that the arrival time is the same or earlier than the TAP flight from Lisbon. If you cannot arrive earlier, then you must make your own arrangements to Pamplona.
- Travel insurance is suggested. See: **http://insuremytrip.com.**
- **Note:** The balance of funds will be paid in euros, upon arrival in Pamplona. Any rate change will be announced prior to the trip.

If you have the time, you might want to arrive in Portugal earlier and meet the group at the Lisbon airport, or arrive Bilbao, or Pamplona, or linger in Spain or Portugal, after the group departs.
Itinerary for Spain 2015: April 16th-25th

Thursday, 4/16: Leave Miami in the evening, fly to Lisbon, and arrive Friday morning. We will take a connecting flight to Bilbao and arrive by midday. A private bus will be waiting for us at the airport to take us to our first destination, the city of Vitoria. We will visit Bilbao at the end of the trip.

Friday 4/17-Vitoria: Our bus will take us from the Bilbao airport to Vitoria, a Basque city founded in 581 by the Visigothic king Liuvigild. [http://www.euskoguide.com/places-basque-country/spain/vitoria-tourism/](http://www.euskoguide.com/places-basque-country/spain/vitoria-tourism/). The trip will take approximately an hour, and we will spend the afternoon in the historic quarter, sight see, and have lunch. Vitoria has the best preserved medieval quarter of all the Basque cities, and has the shape of an almond. So take the “Ruta Almendra” through old quarter and enjoy a good lunch as well. In the late afternoon we head for Pamplona, the capital of the Navarre province, once an independent kingdom of medieval Spain. We shall be staying at the “Casa de Ejercicios Don Pedro Legaira”, a Catholic retreat center. [http://www.esclavasdecristorey.org](http://www.esclavasdecristorey.org). It is run by the “Esclavas de Cristo Rey” sisters. We will have dinner, and then to bed for a good night’s sleep!

Saturday 4/18-Pamplona: After breakfast the bus will take us to the city center of Pamplona. Pamplona certainly owes some of its fame to their adopted son, Ernest Hemingway, who spent a considerable amount of time in Navarre during the Spanish Civil War and was a big fan of the San Fermín Festival. Hemingway wrote about the festival and its “Running of the Bulls” in his book, “The Sun Also Rises.” [http://www.euskoguide.com/places-basque-country/cities/spain/pamplona-travel-guide.html](http://www.euskoguide.com/places-basque-country/cities/spain/pamplona-travel-guide.html). The Vascones tribe settled in Pamplona and founded what is widely believed to be the first Basque city. The city was called Iruña (“the city”), a name which is still referred to today in the Basque language. It wasn’t until 75 B.C. when the roman general, Pompey, camped in the city during the war against Sertorius that it was officially renamed Pompaelo (Pamplona). See the Cathedral, Old Town Hall, the Navarre Museum, and enjoy “pintxos” the Basque name for tapas, with a glass of “Txakoli” a Basque white wine from the Rioja region. In the early evening we will return to the retreat center for dinner. For those who want to stay longer in the town center, or return later, it is only a short taxi ride.

Sunday 4/19-Jaca and San Juan de la Peña: We will offer an early morning Eucharist before breakfast. Afterwards, we will first go to the city of Jaca. It is built on a terrace in the Aragon valley. Its 16th century citadel is well preserved and is a reminder of its strategic location in olden times. Jaca was renowned for warding off a Moorish invasion in the 8th century, after which it became the first capital of Aragon. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jaca](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jaca) It also has the oldest Romanesque Cathedral in Spain. After lunch, we will go to the Monastery of San Juan de la Peña. It is a religious complex in the town of Santa Cruz de la Serós, southwest of Jaca, in the province of Huesca, Spain. It was one of the most important monasteries in Aragon in the Middle Ages. Its two-level church is partially carved in the stone of the great cliff that overhangs the foundation. San Juan de la Peña means "Saint John of the Cliff". [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Juan_de_la_Peña](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Juan_de_la_Peña). In the early evening we will go back to the retreat center for dinner.

Monday 4/20-Puente, Estella, Viana: Today we will visit three towns which form part of “El Camino de Santiago” or Way of Saint James. The first one is Puente de la Reina, which means “Bridge of the Queen”, named after Doña Mayor, wife of King Sancho III. She built the six-arched bridge over the Arga River for the use of the pilgrims on their way to Santiago. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Puente_la_Reina](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Puente_la_Reina)

Next we will go to Estella, known as Lizarra in the Basque language. This town was founded in 1090 when the fortified settlement of Lizarra was granted a charter by the Pamplonese king Sancho Ramirez. The town became a landmark on the Way of St. James pilgrimage rout. It thrived on its privileged location and became the melting pot of French, Jews and the original Navarrese inhabitants. The wealth resulted in a development of Romanesque architecture, well represented in the town: Church of San Pedro de la Rúa, Palacio de los Reyes de Navarra, Church of San Miguel, among others. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Estella-Lizarra](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Estella-Lizarra)

Finally we will go to Viana. It is the last Navarrese town on the Pilgrim's Way. King Sancho VII officially founded Viana in 1219, in order to defend Navarre against the Kingdom of Castile. Perched up on a hill, the urban layout is that of a fortified square, with narrow streets surrounded by part of its thick medieval wall. Fields of cereals, vines, almond and olive trees surround this small town of 4,000 inhabitants. Distinguished by the Pilgrim's Way to Santiago de Compostela and the economic and cultural boom it experienced between the 16th and 18th centuries, this era has left us some fascinating examples of civil and religious architecture. The majestic church of Santa María is one of the most striking monuments in the town. It was built between 1250 and 1312 in Gothic style. At the foot of the church, under the slabs of the atrium, lie the remains of the soldier, prince and cardinal Cesare Borgia, who died close to Viana in 1507. [http://www.turismo.navarra.es/eng/organice-viaje/recurso.aspx?masInf=1&o=2670](http://www.turismo.navarra.es/eng/organice-viaje/recurso.aspx?masInf=1&o=2670).
Tuesday 4/21-Zaragoza: Today we will go to Zaragoza, capital city of the Zaragoza province and of the autonomous community of Aragon, Spain. It is situated on the Ebro river in a valley with a variety of landscapes, ranging from desert to thick forest, meadows and mountains. The city was called by the ancient Romans “Caesar Augusta”, from which the present name derives. The remains of a Roman amphitheater can still be seen there. In 714 the Moors took control of the city, renaming it Saragusta, a corruption of the original Roman name. It later became part of the Emirate of Cordoba. See the beautiful Aljafería Palace from that historic period. The city is famous for its folklore, local gastronomy, and landmarks such as the Basílica del Pilar, La Seo Cathedral as well as the Aljafería Palace. Together with La Seo and the Aljafería, several other buildings form part of the Mudéjar Architecture of Aragon which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. After some sightseeing, perhaps you will be ready to sample some of the local gastronomy. Some of the best known regional specialties are: Bacalao al Ajoarriero, cod-fish with garlic and eggs, Huevos al Salmorejo, eggs with a sauce of asparagus, Longaniza de Fuentes", a highly appreciated kind of sausage, Ternasco Asado, roasted veal, Pollo a la Chilindrón, chicken in a sauce of cured ham, tomatoes, onions and paprika, Cordero a la Pastora, "Lamb Sheppard's style", Lomo de Cerdo a la Zaragozana, a Pork cutlet, and Recao, made of beans, potatoes and rice. The excellent wines of the region, Cariñena, Borja, Paniza, Lecera and Valle de Jalón, are a perfect company to the recipes mentioned above. With a good dose of Medieval Christian and Moorish history and architecture, and a hearty meal, you will be ready to return to the retreat center in Pamplona for a light dinner and rest. Of course, you could probably sneak out and get a taxi to the town center for one last spiritual libation before sleep!

Wednesday 4/22-Javier, Leyre, Sangüesa, Olite: Today we will go to several small towns, rich in Basque and Navarre history. The first one is Javier. The Castle of Xavier, built in the 10th century, was the birthplace and childhood home of Saint Francis Xavier, son of the Lords of Xavier, and from there took his surname.

The Monastery of San Salvador of Leyre is a religious complex in Navarre, representing one of the most important historical monasteries of Spain. The oldest records of the site date from 842, when Íñigo Arista, considered the first king of Pamplona, and Wilesindo, Bishop of Pamplona, made a donation to the monastery. The monastery grew in importance thereafter, and was expanded in the twelfth century. Several kings of Navarre were buried there. The monastery is located on one of the various routes of the Way of Saint James. Leyre was founded as a Benedictine monastery, but later came to be owned by Cistercian monks. Currently, the monastery belongs to the Chartered Community of Navarre, which has transferred the monastery to its original inhabitants, the Benedictine order, for care and operation. http://www.monasteriodeleyre.com/en

Sangüesa is a city in Navarre, Spain, near Pamplona. It is close to the River Aragon on the Way of Saint James. It has been an important stopping point for pilgrims since the Middle Ages. It has preserved its medieval image.
http://www.turismo.navarra.es/eng/organice-viaje/recuro/Localidad/2555/Sanguesa.htm

Olite is a town and municipality located in the province and autonomous community of Navarre, northern Spain. According to Isidore of Seville's Historia de regibus Gothorum, Vandalorum et Suevorum, the town of Oligicus was founded by Svinthila, Visigothic King of Hispania (621-631) in order to control and punish the Vascones (the Basque tribe). However, this town was not heard of again until five centuries later, when the present-day town was founded and chartered. The Palacio Real de Olite, a fine Gothic castle-palace, was the royal seat of Charles III of Navarre.
http://www.turismo.navarra.es/eng/organice-viaje/recuro/relacionado/2466/

Thursday 4/23-San Sebastian: Today we will say goodbye to Pamplona and head for San Sebastian, on the Basque Atlantic coast of Spain. San Sebastian is called Donostia in the Basque language, and lies on the Bay of Biscay, for which Miami’s Biscayne Bay is named. It is a popular beach resort in the summer. Lying on the coast of the Bay of Biscay, surrounded by hills, and offering a lively beach front means San Sebastian is a city that boasts a range of natural beauty, fabulous architecture, plazas and parks. It well deserves the title “pearl” of the North of Spain. In the late afternoon we will head to Bilbao, where we will be staying our last two evenings at the Hotel Seminario, a former Catholic seminary. http://www.hotelseminariobilbao.com

Friday 4/24-Bilbao: We shall spend our last day in Bilbao, the capital of the province of Biscay in the autonomous community of the Basque Country, the largest city of the Basque Country and the tenth largest in Spain. Founded in the early 14th century, Bilbao was a commercial hub that enjoyed significant importance due to the export of iron extracted from the Biscayan quarries. Bilbao is a magnificent “cocktail” where architecture, tradition, sea, mountain, character and history offer the visitor endless leisure and cultural opportunities. Start at the Old Quarter and admire the architecture; go to the Guggenheim Museum, one of the most admired works of contemporary architecture; take a ride on the “Bilboats” going up and down the Nervión River, … and of course, go shopping! Go to “El Corte Inglés” for anything you still have on your shopping list, including grocery items! Don’t leave Spain without trying some good Basque cuisine, which includes meats and fish grilled over hot coals, marmitako and lamb stews, cod, Tolosa bean dishes, paprikas from Leketío, pintxos, Idiazabal sheep's cheese, of course, txakoli sparkling wine, and Basque cider.

Saturday 4/25-Adiós España: After an early morning departure from Bilbao, we will change planes in Lisbon, and then return to Miami.
A Week in Spain 2015

Registration Form

Name(s):

Mailing Address:

Home Phone:

Cell Phone:

E-mail Address:

Emergency Contact:

Non-refundable deposit: 100 dollars per person

Make the check to: Carlos Sandoval

Send check and form to:

Carlos Sandoval
1000 N.W. North River Drive
#110
Miami, FL  33136

After receiving confirmation from Fr. Sandoval that the trip is on, and you have been registered, make your airline reservations. E-mail Fr. Sandoval with travel information: cjsandoval@bellsouth.net