



VIA ♦ FRANCIGENA

Pilgrims to Rome

Press release

Three England bishops walk part of the recently established pilgrimage and walking route which now links London directly to Rome.

On July 10th Bishops from London, Southwark, and Dover joined the charity, Pilgrims to Rome, at the Scoop on the Southbank, which itself now forms part of the new route, to celebrate the launch of the recently established walking and pilgrimage route – the Via Francigena Britannica.

“I was delighted to join my fellow Bishops of London and Southwark to symbolise the important connection between our respective dioceses as part of the proposed Francigena Britannica. This extension of the well-established Via Francigena will give future pilgrims the opportunity to begin their passage in London, following in the steps of those who have journeyed through the ages to visit the shrine of St Thomas Becket in Canterbury. I pray that those travelling these historic pathways will be truly blessed and uplifted by their experience.” Bishop of Dover, Rose Hudson-Wilkin

Bishops Sarah Mullaly, Rose Hudson-Wilkin, and Christopher Chessun showed their support for pilgrimage both within the UK but also beyond, by helping Pilgrims to Rome to celebrate this new walking route which now joins London to the Eternal City.

“It was great to join friends on just a small part of the new Francigena Britannica pilgrimage. I am overjoyed to see the Via Francigena extended, and can think of few better places to renew one’s connection with God and the natural world than from the lofty spires of Southwark Cathedral to the tranquil rolling hills of the North Downs Way. I offer my prayers for all who embark on this special journey.” Bishop of London, Sarah Mullaly.

The Francigena Britannica is a 146km northern extension of the well-established, Council of Europe approved, Via Francigena, which already extends 2000kms from Canterbury to the Vatican City. Within the UK, the Via Francigena will now cover 177kms crossing London, Dartford, Canterbury and Dover.

"In today's busy and demanding times, pilgrimage - the act of slowing down, concentrating on the journey, rather than rushing to the destination - is more important than ever. It's a great joy to mark the extension of the Francigena Britannica to London - and I hope that many will take up the opportunity to slow down and invite God into their journey." Bishop of Southwark, Christopher Chessun.

The Francigena Britannica was developed on behalf of Pilgrims to Rome, by its current President, G Carlo Laurenzi OBE with help from fellow trustees and other volunteers.

Notes

Carlo Laurenzi is available on 07778-186478, and chair@pilgrimstorome.org.uk

Pilgrims to Rome - is a small UK charity driven by its trustees and volunteers since 2006 -<https://pilgrimstorome.org.uk/>

Francigena Britannica - <https://pilgrimstorome.org.uk/the-via-francigena/london-to-canterbury-route/>

Via Francigena – 2000kms pilgrimage route from UK to Italy - <https://www.viefrancigene.org/en/introduction/>

EAVF –European Association of the Via Francigena - <https://www.viefrancigene.org/en/>

Council of Europe cultural route - <https://www.viefrancigene.org/en/council-of-europe/>

The three bishops:-

Southwark Diocese - <https://southwark.anglican.org/about-us/who-we-are/brief-history-of-the-diocese/>

Bishop of Southwark - <https://southwark.anglican.org/about-us/who-we-are/diocesan-leadership/>

Canterbury Diocese - <https://www.canterburydiocese.org/>

Bishop of Dover - <https://www.canterburydiocese.org/our-life/our-people/bishop-rose/>

London Diocese - <https://southwark.anglican.org/about-us/who-we-are/brief-history-of-the-diocese/>

Bishop of London - <https://southwark.anglican.org/about-us/who-we-are/diocesan-leadership/>