

Camino Pilgrim Foundation



Fundraising Resources





Fundraising for the Camino Pilgrimage

A Practical Guide for Seminarians

I. The Heart of Fundraising: Mission, Not Money

Fundraising for your Camino pilgrimage is more than a financial task—it's an act of missionary discipleship.

- **Pray** | focus yourself, and humbly ask God to provide for this mission He's called you to. Entrust all aspects of fundraising to Him!

Through this process, you learn to:

- Invite others into God's work in your life
- Share your vocation story
- Build a community of prayer
- Grow in trust, humility, and gratitude

People don't give to "trips"—they give to mission, formation, and your vocation.

2. Your Three Audiences

Most seminarians find support through:

- **Family** (parents, grandparents, aunts/uncles, godparents, cousins)
- **Friends** (college friends, coworkers, youth group leaders, mentors)
- **Parishioners** (people invested in your vocation journey)

Potential Pilgrim Companions

- Develop an initial list of 30+ potential pilgrimage partners
 - No name is disqualified! Don't decide for an individual whether they're interested or not
 - Expect the unexpected and don't be shy about sending letters!
- Collect all addresses and phone numbers
 - Your parents may have an address list you can reference
 - Utilize your parish directory

Your goal is not to pressure anyone—it is to **invite** them into something beautiful.

3. The Flow of a Good Conversation

A strong fundraising conversation has three parts:

A. Connection

Brief greeting, warm tone, 10–20 seconds max.

Avoid long small talk—get to the purpose with kindness and clarity.

B. The Mission

Share briefly:

- You've been selected for a Camino discipleship pilgrimage
- You'll begin in Lourdes and walk the entire Camino Francés
- You'll invite a companion from León to Santiago
- This formation deepens spirituality, prayer, evangelization, and fraternity

Communicate excitement, not obligation.

C. The Ask

Be simple and direct:

"My goal is to raise \$. Would you consider supporting me with a gift of \$?"

Always offer a **specific number**, because it helps people think concretely.



4. How to Ask in Different Ways

- **Phone Call Ask**
Most effective—personal, relational, meaningful.
- **Text Message Ask**
Short, simple, good for younger supporters or people you don't call regularly.
- **In-Person Ask**
Ideal for parishioners, godparents, or close relationships.
Letter + Follow-Up
Letters explain the mission; follow-up asks make it real.

5. What to Do if They Say YES

- Thank them sincerely
- Give clear instructions:

“You can donate online at [personal link], or mail a check to the Camino Pilgrim Foundation with my name in the memo line.”

- Ask for prayer intentions to take to Lourdes and the Camino
- Follow up later with gratitude

6. What to Do if They Say NO

Respond with grace:

“Thank you for considering it. Will you pray for me and the pilgrimage? Your support means a lot.”

A “no” is not a rejection—many people prefer praying to giving financially.

7. Best Practices

- ✓ Pray before and after each ask
- ✓ Be joyful and confident
- ✓ Keep track of gifts and send thank-yous
- ✓ Share stories of preparation for the pilgrimage
- ✓ Remember: you are inviting, not selling

8. The Spiritual Fruits

Through this process, seminarians often experience:

- Growth in humility and courage
- Freedom from fear of rejection
- Deeper trust in God's providence
- Strengthened relationships with supporters
- A powerful sense of being “sent” by the community

Fundraising is part of formation—embrace it as a step toward priestly ministry.



Sample Phone Script for Seminarians – Camino Pilgrimage

“Hi (Uncle Leo), this is (your name). How are you doing?”

Allow just a moment or two for small talk, then gently shift to the purpose of your call.

“I’m really glad to hear that. I wanted to check in because I recently sent you a letter about my upcoming Camino pilgrimage, and I wasn’t sure if you’ve had a chance to see it yet... oh good!... I’m really excited about this opportunity, and I’m calling to see if you might be interested in supporting me and to answer any questions you may have.”

If they haven’t received the letter: briefly explain the pilgrimage, what it means for your formation, and why you’re participating—then continue with the ask.

If they say **YES**:

“Thank you so much! It means a great deal to have your support. My goal is to raise (\$____) toward my pilgrimage costs, and I’m keeping track of the gifts I receive. Would you consider contributing (\$___) to help me take part in this Camino discipleship experience?”

(Always ask for a specific amount—it helps people know how to respond.)

“Thank you! I’m truly grateful for your generosity.”

“There are two easy ways to give: the simplest is to donate online at (your personal link), or you can mail a check. Checks should be made out to the Camino Pilgrim Foundation with my name in the memo line. Either method is tax-deductible. If you prefer, you can send the check to me and I’ll make sure it gets to the Foundation.”

If giving by check, explain clearly what the memo should include.

If they say **NO**:

Respond warmly and pastorally—never abruptly.

“Thank you, (Aunt Leo), for taking the time to talk with me. I completely understand if you’re not able to contribute financially right now. Would you be willing to keep me and the pilgrimage in your prayers instead? That support means just as much.”

End the conversation positively, reinforcing gratitude and the relationship.

TEXT MESSAGE VERSION

(Short, warm, and easy to personalize)

Hi [Name]! This is [Your Name]. Hope you’re doing well! I wanted to share that I’ve been invited to participate in a Camino pilgrimage for seminarians this summer, beginning in Lourdes and walking the Camino de Santiago. I’m reaching out to see if you might consider supporting me through prayer and, if you feel called, a financial gift. You can give at [personal link]. Thank you so much—and please send me any prayer intentions to bring with me on the Camino!



Write & Send Appeal Letters

- Draft your appeal letter, including the following (see Appendix for example):
 - Date – when you are writing the letter
 - Greeting– Dear _____,
 - Introduction– Connect with your reader; bring them up to date with what you're doing
 - Information– Share what you will do on the pilgrimage, why you've decided to participate, and what you hope to accomplish
 - Needs– State your financial needs and your fundraising deadlines
 - Invitation– Involve your reader by asking them to cover a specific portion of the trip cost and commit to following up with them by telephone within a specific time frame
 - Practicals– Direct them to your Personal Fundraising Webpage via your link (create a shorter one at tinyurl.com!) or instruct them on how to donate by check
 - Conclusion– Acknowledge your relationship again with an emphasis on appreciation, partnership, and commitment
 - Contact Information – Make sure they can reach you by sharing your telephone number, address, and e-mail
 - Signature– Type out your name but be sure to sign in ink as well!
- Add a personal touch to your printed appeal letters so your mission partners know you care about them and not only their gift:
 - Sign each letter by hand and add a handwritten P.S.
 - Handwrite addresses on the envelope; they'll be more likely to open it!
- Begin mailing your first round of letters one week after you have received your Fundraising Packet



Sample Fundraising Announcements

Parish Bulletin Version (Short & Clear)

Support a Seminarian on a Camino Pilgrimage!

This summer, [Seminarian Name] has been selected to join a group of seminarians on a pilgrimage to Lourdes and along the entire Camino Francés—nearly 500 miles to Santiago de Compostela. This journey, led by Fr. Kevin McQuone of St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary, is designed to deepen seminarians' spiritual life, prayer, evangelization, and fraternity.

In the spirit of missionary discipleship, each seminarian will also invite a companion to walk with them from León to Santiago, reflecting Christ's call to "go and make disciples."

Seminarians are encouraged to invite their parish community to support them through prayer and financial assistance. If you would like to support [Name], donations can be made at:

www.caminopilgrimfoundation.org/donate

Please select 'Discipleship Camino' and then select '[My Name]'.

Thank you for supporting vocations and walking with our future priests!

📱 Social Media Version (Facebook, Instagram, Parish Pages)

☀️ Support a Seminarian on the Camino! ☀️

This summer, [Your Name] is walking from Lourdes all the way across Spain on the Camino Francés—nearly 500 miles to Santiago! 🙏🏻♂️✝️

Along the way, he will grow in prayer, fraternity, and missionary discipleship... and he'll even invite a companion to join him for the second half of the journey, walking from León to Santiago as part of forming new disciples.

You can support him through prayer and, if you feel called, through a donation to help make this formation opportunity possible.

👉 **Donate at:** www.caminopilgrimfoundation.org/donate

Please select 'Discipleship Camino' and then select '[My Name]'.

Thank you for supporting our future priests! 🙏🏻☀️

#Camino #SeminarianJourney #LourdesToSantiago #Vocations #WalkingWithChrist #CaminoFrancés
#SupportFuturePriests