



Walking in the Good Way

By Stacey Wittig, Munds Park AZ

Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls... Jeremiah 6:16-19

This scripture reminds me of my first day walking El Camino. My eye was not yet accustomed to seeing the yellow arrows or other markings that pointed the way from sometimes-inconspicuous locations. I stood at a crossroads contemplating which way I should go. When I strode out to the left, a woman's voice called out from an apartment window three stories above, "*Va la manera equivocada. Vaya el derecho.*" You are going the wrong way. Go right. I looked up towards the sound of the admonishment and saw nothing but an open window with its curtain catching the breeze. I stopped, trying to understand the words delivered in a language unfamiliar to me.

Sometimes life leads us to a crossroads, and we wonder which path is the good way. We might be trying to make a decision about a job, or which college to attend, or whether to marry, stay single or divorce. In any case, we don't often hear audible instructions like I did that day when I set out on the ancient path.

The verse above says that we should ask for direction. If we ask and pray for discernment, often God will reveal to us the good way. His

revelation comes through dreams, visions, scripture and – as it happened to me – through others. We can check what we think is the answer from God by comparing it to scripture. God will never lead us in contradiction to what the Bible says. You could ask, "God, is this direction truly from you?" I don't make a significant decision without the divine directive being first confirmed by scriptures. I might ask trustworthy people what they discern about the guidance I believe may be from God. In addition, I look for a sense of inner peace. Ask yourself, "Do I have God's gift of peace about this?"

Big or small, God wants to be part of your decisions. "Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, *This is the way; walk in it.*" Isaiah 30:21

For Reflection:

1. Describe a time when you heard God's voice.
2. Consider what could improve your spiritual hearing.
3. How do you determine if the prompting that you hear is really from God? ♦

Excerpted from her book *Spiritual and Walking Guide: León to Santiago on El Camino*

The Schengen Area Issue

Is there a limit to the length of time I can stay in Europe?

Actually, yes, there is. And for U.S. citizens generally speaking it is 90 days. There is a consortium of 26 European countries, which comprise the Schengen Area (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schengen_Area), more or less but not exactly the European Union countries, that have agreed to abolish internal border control, but to strengthen external controls. The U.S. Department of State has a Schengen Fact Sheet (<http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/go/schengen-fact-sheet.html#FAQ>) that has all the information needed for U.S. passport holders. Without going into the possible difficulties of obtaining visas, the basic rule is that one can stay in the Schengen Area for 90 days within a 180 day period. For most people that would mean that after you have stayed in the Area for a continuous 90 days, you have to leave for 90 days. Although you may read about people who ignored this rule and got away with it, if you are caught leaving the area in violation of the regulations, a very stiff fine might apply and you might have your passport stamped so as to be unable to reenter the Area at all in the future. ♦