



El Camino Maltés: Connecting Malta to the Camino de Santiago de Compostela

A Public Information Session



Introduction | Order of Business



H.E. Daniel Azzopardi

Malta's Ambassador to Spain, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade

Russell Muscat

International Relations Manager, Heritage Malta

Jean Pierre Fava

Faith Tourism Manager, Malta Tourism Authority, Malta

James Portelli

President & Founding Member, XirCammini, Malta

Salvatore Trumino

Borgo San Giacomo Association of Piazza Armerina, Sicilia

Flavio Vandoni

President & Founder of the Association , Amici del Cammino di santu Jacu, Sardegna



Introduction | Order of Business

- 17:00 **Opening Remarks | Introduction** James Portelli
- 17:05 **Personal Reflection | The Role & Vision of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs and Trade**
H.E. Daniel Azzopardi
- 17:15 **Minister of Foreign and European Affairs and Trade**
Hon Ian Borg
- 17:20 **Minister for National Heritage, The Arts, And the Local Government** Hon Owen Bonnici
- 17:25 **The Heritage Malta Perspective** Russell Muscat
- 17:40 **Malta Tourism Authority & Faith Tourism**
Jean Pierre Fava
- 17:55 **XirCammini, Borgo San Giacomo & Gli Amici del Cammino di Santu Jacu**
James Portelli | Flavio Vandoni | Salvatore Trumino
- 18:25 **Closing Remarks** Guest Speaker: José María Cano



Camino Maltés de Santiago de Compostela

Maltese Way: 34.58km in Malta | 3,600km to Santiago de Compostela incorporating Il Cammino di San Giacomo in Sicilia, Il Cammino di Santu Jacu in Sardinia and the Camino Catalan in Spain.

Embassy of Malta in Spain

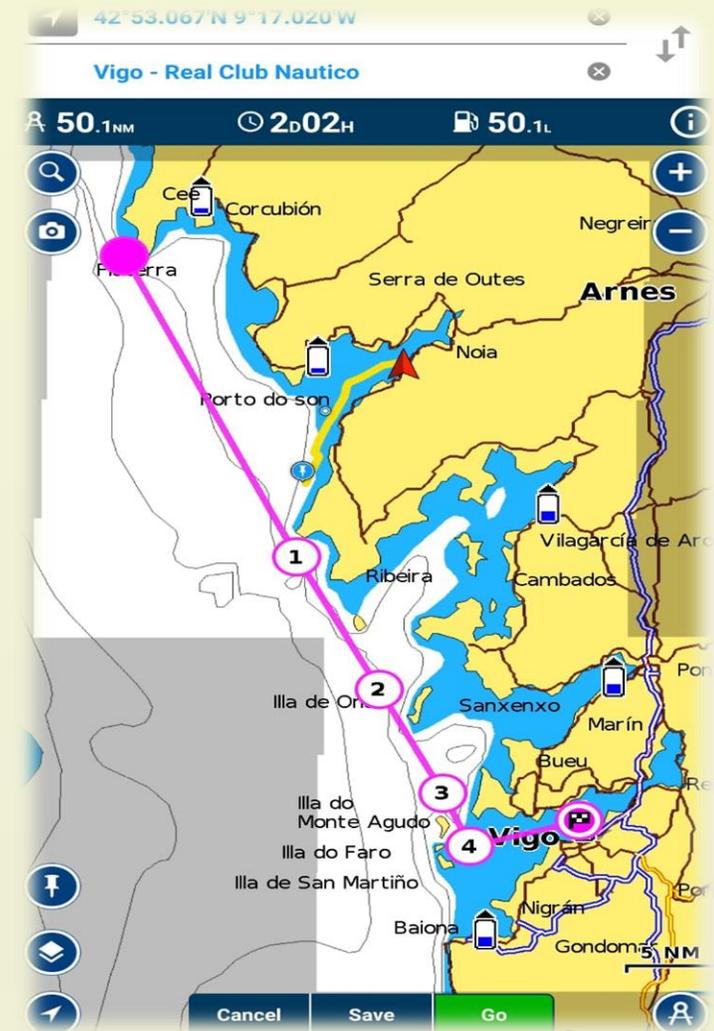
Reflections on the Camino de Santiago

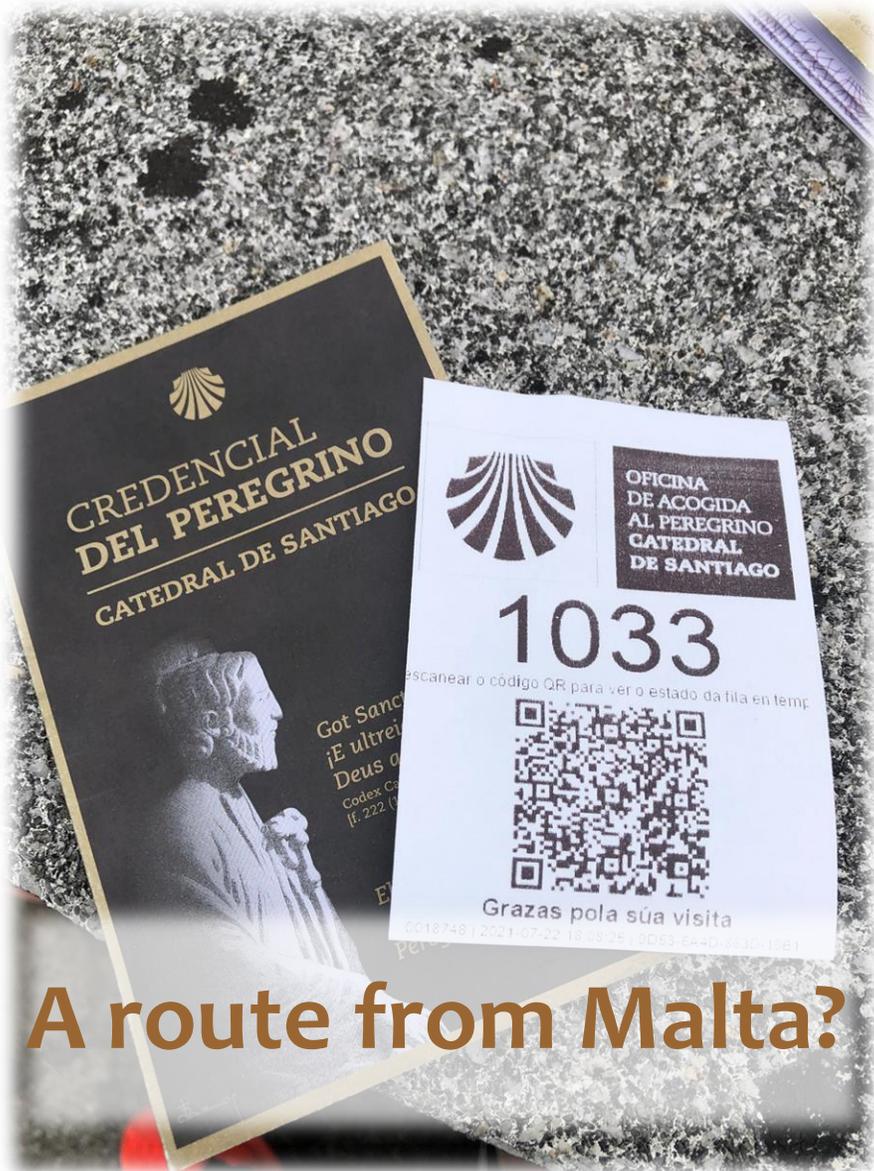
H.E. Daniel Azzopardi

- **A Personal Experience**
- **Discovering the Camino de Santiago de Compostela and its magic**



A Camino by land and sea





A route from Malta?



November 2021

Meeting Alberto Núñez Feijóo, the (then) President of the Government of Galicia together with Mr. Gabriel Baltar, Honorary Consul of Malta to Galicia.

From Spain to Malta

- A > 1,000 years' tradition
- 16th century growth following the Reconquista
- Today sees > 0.35m pilgrims annually
- Camino Maltés: Concerted effort by the Ministry of Foreign & European Affairs & Trade, national heritage and tourism authorities, Mediterranean NGOs, Xunta de Galicia and the Asociaciones de Amigos del Camino de Santiago & Instituto Nacional Geografico.



Hon Ian Borg

Minister, Foreign and European Affairs and Trade



EMBASSY OF MALTA
SPAIN



XUNTA
DE GALICIA



EMBAJADA
DE ESPAÑA
EN MALTA

INSTITUTO
GEOGRÁFICO
NACIONAL



Hon Owen Bonnici

Minister, National Heritage, the Arts, and Local Government



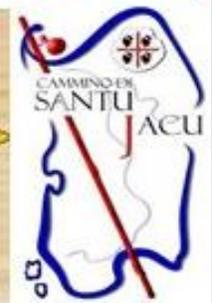
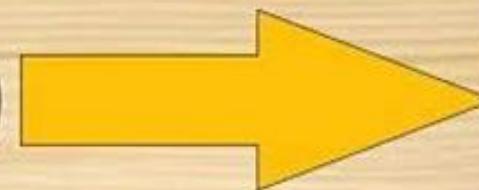
Heritage
Malta



Malta
Tourism Authority



Il cammino di San Giacomo





Camino Maltés de Santiago de Compostela

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The Heritage Malta Perspective

Russell Muscat
International Relations Manager





COLLABORATION



È. A. Alopius de Vignaco
frate Giovanni Veregano
l'andar a visitare Calcu
l. 6. Jacomo di galitia, e ma
Lascino al d. Puligioso
chiamatis in cera nigra
in lib. bull. 1602. fol. 24.







Fort St. Angelo
Storyed fort with historical exhibits

St. Anne Chapel

Nativity of the
Virgin Mary Chapel

Xatt II - Fom

Xatt II - Fom

Ludwig Lagerstedt
Apartment

Auberge d'Italie

St Angelo Marina Living
- Apartment Rental

S&D Yachts

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Malta Tourism Authority & Faith Tourism

Jean Pierre Fava | **Malta Tourism Authority**

**MORE
TO EXPLORE**



“The global market for religious tourism is one of the biggest tourism segments. In 2018, an estimated one third of 1.4 billion international tourist arrivals travelled for religious purposes. This means that approximately 450 million international trips were made for religious purposes.”

Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs - The European market potential for religious tourism (2020)

In times of crisis, tragedies and disasters, people seek meaning of life, solace and refuge – and what’s better than a journey to help us touch our spiritual dimension.



The Archipelago's potential

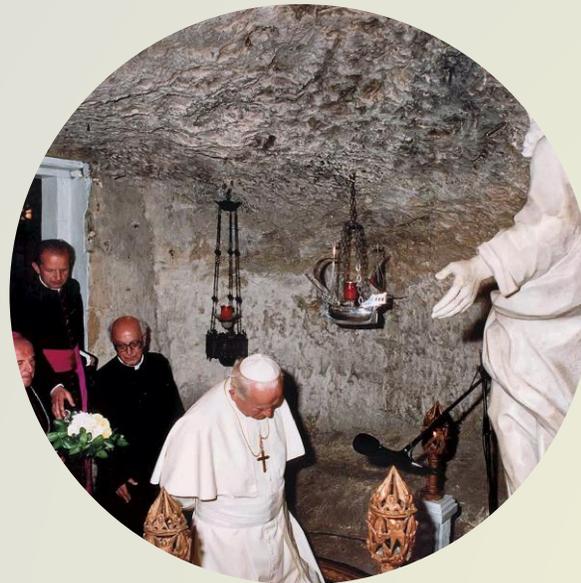
Many factors impart huge faith tourism potential to the Maltese Islands:

- Christianity from the time of Saint Paul's shipwreck A.D. 60
- Over 7000 years of temple history
- Structures and artefacts of early Christianity
- Strong devotion throughout the centuries (ex-votos, concentration of churches, ancient and medieval cammini, etc.)
- Marian devotion
- Other: ancient chapels, religious art etc.



Notwithstanding our multi-millennial Christian heritage, which imparts unlimited potential in faith tourism, it is only in the last few years that we started treating this sector as a specialized niche. While during these last few years, we have been striving a lot to catch up with the Archipelago's potential, it must be admitted that there is still so much more to be done.

That is why MTA supports, encourages and is directly involved in such initiatives and projects as the Camino Maltés.



MTA, the Ministry of Tourism and other entities have embarked on various initiatives which sustain, promote and ameliorate the infrastructure related to the faith tourism niche, example:

- Helping NGOs, religious orders, parishes (e.g., Collaboration with the Salesians of Don Bosco, XirCammini).
- Participating in specialized fairs and workshops.
- Assisting in the restoration of churches and religious art
- Hosting of media and influencers with bespoke programmes thematic to faith tourism.
- Spearheading international faith tourism promotion campaigns.
- Producing dedicated promotional material and publications.
- Organizational, restoration and conservation projects (Heritage Malta, Restoration Directorate and others)



The 13th century icon of Our Lady of Mellieha, representing the *Hodegitria* – She who shows the Way towards the Saviour. The icon was recently restored by Atelier del Restauro | Photo: Atelier del Restauro ©

Aleteia

Jean Pierre Fava - Malta Tourism Authority
Mary has used her birthday to twice give victory to this Island

Jean Pierre Fava - Malta Tourism Authority
The Queen of Heaven touches Maltese hearts

MTA - Malta Tourism Authority
The miraculous effigies of Jesus Christ in Malta and Gozo

MTA - Malta Tourism Authority
What the New Testament says about hospitality

MTA - Malta Tourism Authority
The cave churches of Malta: symbols of entombment and resurrection (Part II)

MTA - Malta Tourism Authority
The cave churches of Malta: symbols of entombment and resurrection (Part I)

Malta Archives - Aleteia

Explore the rich Catholic history of Malta

Walk where St. Paul walked, discover a rich Marian devotion, and take in the beauty of some of Christianity's most ancient homes

MyAleteia.com

VOICES & NEWS | LIFESTYLE | SPIRITUALITY | ISSUES & IMPLICATIONS | FOR HER | CHURCH | ART & CULTURE

4 Up to LOAN OFFERS in minutes!

Applying is FAST, EASY and FREE

TRAVEL

Malta, a land of special Marian graces.

The riches of our Faith, all on one site.

Daily prayer

- And today we celebrate...
- Prayer for this morning
- Daily meditation
- Prayer for this evening

Entrust your prayer intentions to our network of monasteries

Aleteia

Friday 19 May - Feast of the Day of St. Francis Monastery de Laredo

NEWS | INSPIRING STORIES | VOICES & VIEWS | LIFESTYLE | SPIRITUALITY | ISSUES & IMPLICATIONS | FOR HER | CHURCH | ART & CULTURE | TRAVEL

medirect Start with this.

CHURCH

The moving prayer of Pope Francis from the Grotto of Saint Paul

Help Aleteia inspire more Catholics through a gift today.

Donate Now

Daily prayer

- And today we celebrate...
- Prayer for this morning
- Daily meditation
- Prayer for this evening

Entrust your prayer intentions to our network of monasteries

Aleteia - published on 04/04/22

Pope Francis invited during his visit to the Grotto of St. Paul in

We are also focusing our efforts to promote the Maltese Islands as a Faith Tourism hub – a Top-of-Mind destination for Christians / Catholics, and faith tourists and pilgrims in general.

In 2021, MTA entered into a strategic partnership with Aleteia (English, Spanish and Italian editions) and Our Sunday Visitor (OSV).

Aleteia is the largest Catholic network on the internet, reaching nearly 14 million loyal and engaged readers through its eight language edition websites. While OSV is the leading publisher of Catholic periodicals all over North America, both for clergy and laity. It is interesting to note that on various occasions our online articles hit the top 10 classification

Apart from these campaigns, a series of articles on Marian devotion in Malta is also being published.

Last December we concluded the second campaign, and presently we are planning a third campaign for 2023. The first two campaigns showcased the Islands' religious devotions and heritage, while the third will focus on cammini, planned itineraries, etc. This decision was based on the specific viewership's rates of the publisher. This also applied to an article on planned itineraries we published in the initial phase of the second campaign – It was one of the articles which hit the Top 10. (The Planned itinerary was developed and is managed by Salesians as part of the Youth Faith Tourism Programme)



It was clear that we had to collaborate with XirCammini for the next campaign.

XirCammini's revival projects had the right elements that faith tourists and pilgrims seek...they offer the right spiritual, historical and dynamic elements.

As a general rule, pilgrims and faith tourists are not interested in static visits, but they want to engage and participate spiritually and religiously in local celebrations, religious events, prayer, contemplation, retreats etc.

Camino (and similar activities) offer a way to actively participate on religious, spiritual and historical levels...a way to do soul-searching, also sharing such experiences with other pilgrims, on the footsteps of spiritual travelers from past generations.

Another characteristic of faith tourists is that they are left with the proverbial “bitter taste” if they observe, or in any way perceive, antagonism between sacred sites, shrines, devotions etc. On the contrary, what they seek is unity and complementarity between sacred sites.

So, a project such as the Camino Maltés – which actively fuses religious and historical caminos throughout different regions and countries into one common objective - holds all the right elements to fulfill the pilgrims’ needs.





Ruta Marítima Maltesa (Malta)

Etapa: 01b Birgivaletta-Catania [info](#)
Camino: M150a Ruta Marítima de Malta
Birgivaletta-Pozzallo-Catania [info](#)

Long. etapa: 204 km
Long. camino: 305 km

[Descargar camino](#) [Reservar](#) [Historia de](#)
[Ver todos los caminos de Malta](#)

[Zoom in](#) [Ver perfil](#)

Camino Maltés de Santiago de Compostela

Maltese Way: 34.58km in Malta | 3,600km to Santiago de Compostela incorporating Il Cammino di San Giacomo in Sicilia, Il Cammino di Santu Jacu in Sardinia and the Camino Catalan in Spain.

The Historical Context of Mediterranean Caminos

Flavio Vandoni, President Association of the Cammino di Santu Jacu, Sardegna





THE MEDITERRANEAN WAY OF THE APOSTLE SAINT JAMES

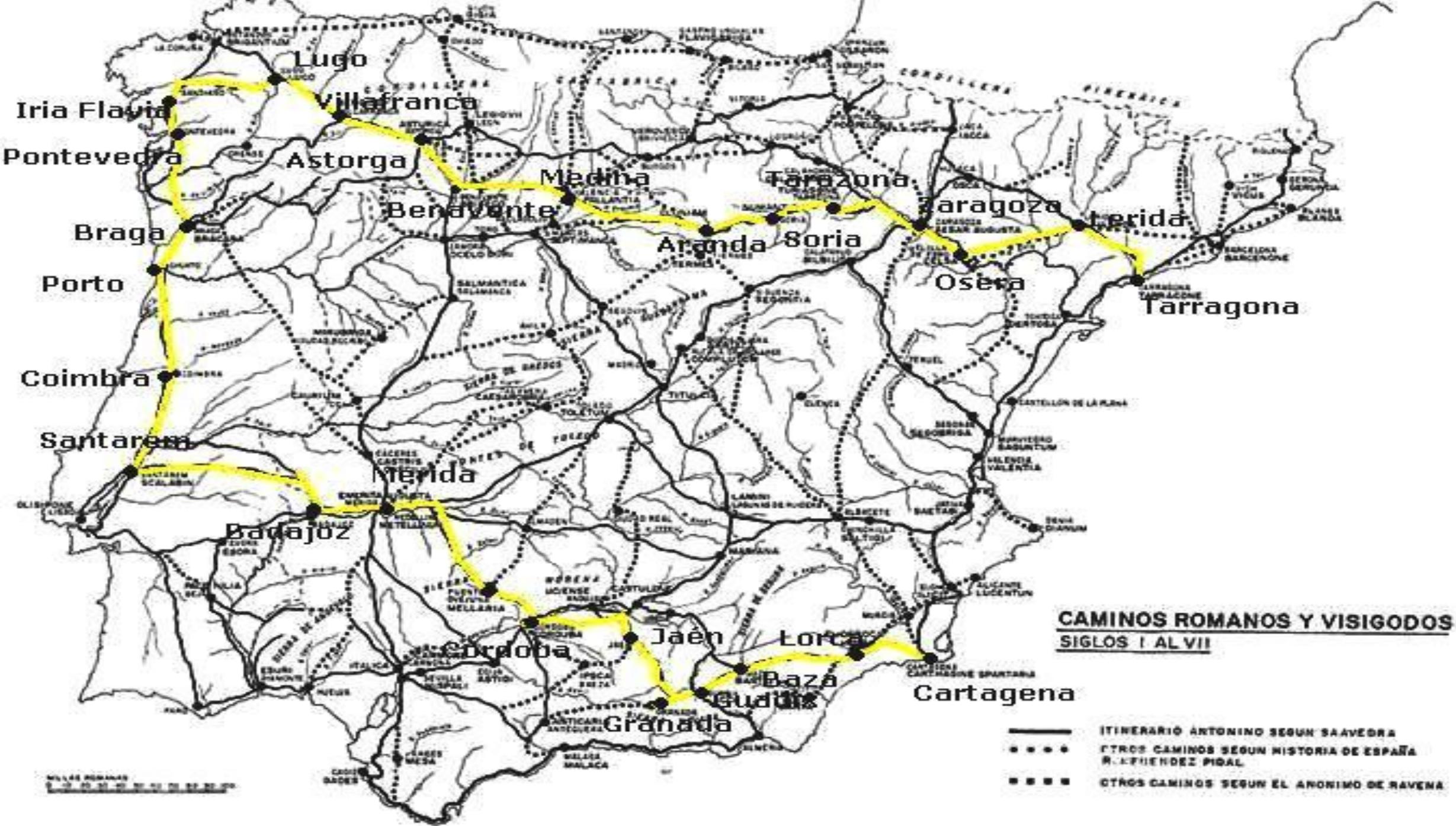
The ancient journey of the apostle Saint James in 36 A.C. from Jafa to Galicia and the return to Jerusalem.

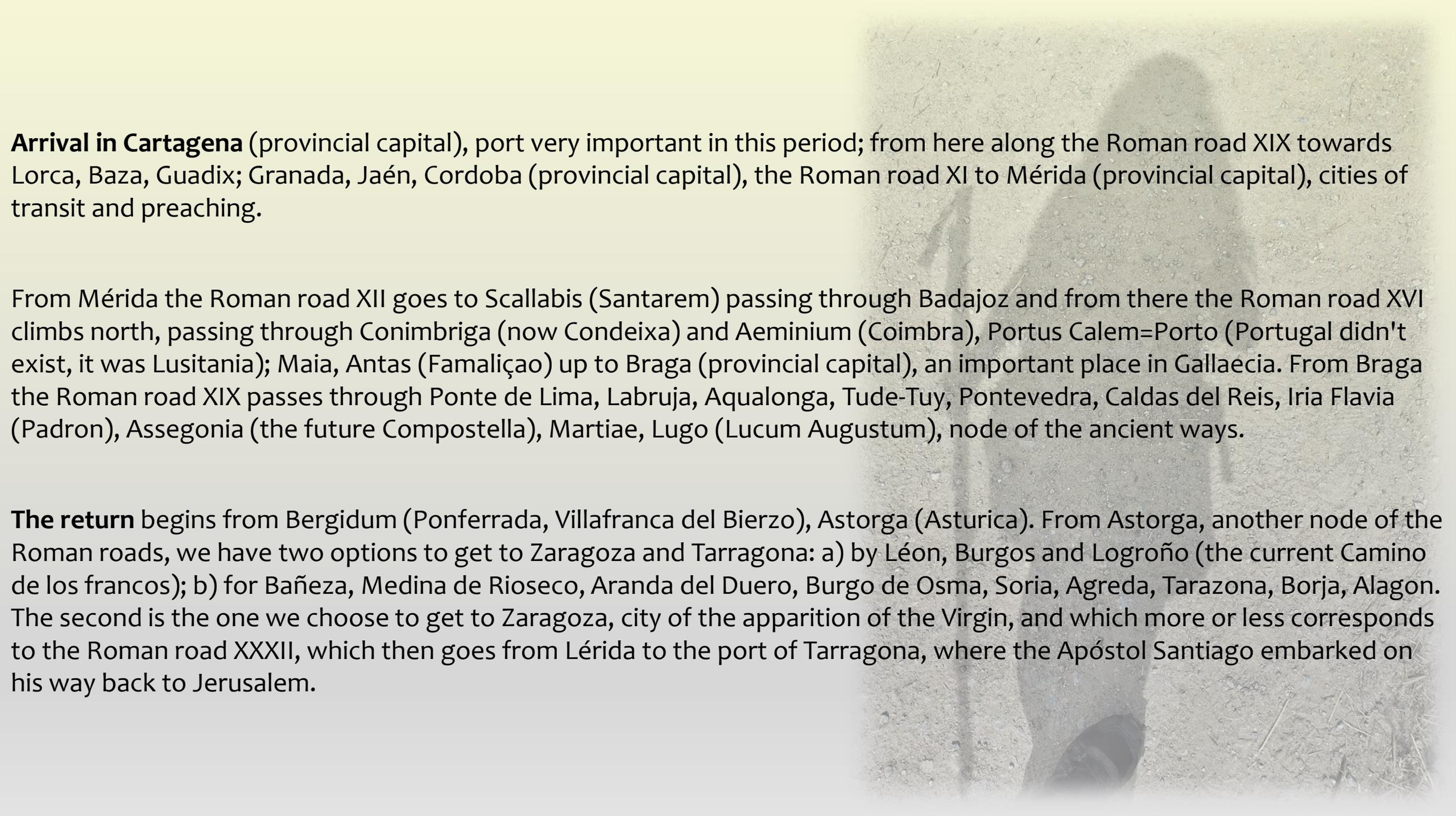
“The Apostle Saint James sailed from the Port of Jaffa, came to the Island of Sardinia and from there to Spain, where he landed in Cartagena. From there he sailed to Granada where he preached and one of his disciples was martyred. From there he went to Jaén, then to Córdoba and Mérida, Porto (Portus Cale) and Braga. He stayed in Galicia where he preached and remained for a long time, until the Virgin Mary appeared to him, calling him to Jerusalem. Arriving in Zaragoza, the Virgin appeared to him once more and told him to found a church there and dedicate it to her. From there, he went to Tarragona, where he embarked with his disciples, nine of whom had converted in Spain”.

(Breviario del 1054 del Patriarca Armeno di Gerusalemme)

This is the hypothesis on which our association is working, studying and searching for ancient documents about maritime and terrestrial itineraries in the Roman Era for the 1st century AD.

We have some fixed points in the Mediterranean Sea: Jaffa (Tel Haviv); Cyprus, Rhodes, Crete, Sicily, Malta; support points in the Roman era for long sailing: Sardinia; Baleares.





Arrival in Cartagena (provincial capital), port very important in this period; from here along the Roman road XIX towards Lorca, Baza, Guadix; Granada, Jaén, Cordoba (provincial capital), the Roman road XI to Mérida (provincial capital), cities of transit and preaching.

From Mérida the Roman road XII goes to Scallabis (Santarem) passing through Badajoz and from there the Roman road XVI climbs north, passing through Conimbriga (now Condeixa) and Aeminium (Coimbra), Portus Calem=Porto (Portugal didn't exist, it was Lusitania); Maia, Antas (Famaliçao) up to Braga (provincial capital), an important place in Gallaecia. From Braga the Roman road XIX passes through Ponte de Lima, Labruja, Aqualonga, Tude-Tuy, Pontevedra, Caldas del Reis, Iria Flavia (Padron), Assegonia (the future Compostella), Martiae, Lugo (Lucum Augustum), node of the ancient ways.

The return begins from Bergidum (Ponferrada, Villafranca del Bierzo), Astorga (Asturica). From Astorga, another node of the Roman roads, we have two options to get to Zaragoza and Tarragona: a) by León, Burgos and Logroño (the current Camino de los francos); b) for Bañeza, Medina de Rioseco, Aranda del Duero, Burgo de Osma, Soria, Agreda, Tarazona, Borja, Alagon. The second is the one we choose to get to Zaragoza, city of the apparition of the Virgin, and which more or less corresponds to the Roman road XXXII, which then goes from Lérida to the port of Tarragona, where the Apóstol Santiago embarked on his way back to Jerusalem.

This project includes already existing routes or those which will be defined with the local associations of St James Ways:

- 1) from Lake Tiberias to Jerusalem to Jaffa, local way
- 2) the island of Cyprus: E4
- 3) the island of Rhodes:
- 4) path of the island of Crete: E4
- 5) path of the island of Malta
- 6) the island of Sicily: Il Cammino di San Giacomo - "the Way of Saint James"
- 7) the island of Sardinia: il Cammino di santu Jacu - "the Way of santu Jacu-Santiago"
- 8) the Balearic Islands
- 9) walk from Cartagena to Granada (300km)
- 10) via Mozarabe from Granada to Jaén and Cordoba (210 km)
- 11) via Mozarabe de la Plata from Cordoba to Mérida (220 km)
- 12) walk from Mérida-Badajoz to Santarem (250 km)
- 13) Camino Portugues from Santarem to Coimbra-Porto-Braga-Ponte de Lima-Tuy-Pontevedra-Caldas del Reis-Iria Flavia (Padron)-Assegonia (Compostela) (460 km)
- RETURN- 14) Camino Primitivo from Santiago to Lugo (60km)
- 15) Camino Francés from Lugo to Astorga (170 km)
- 16) via della Plata from Astorga to Benavente (60km)
- 17) walk from Benavente to la Bañeza, Medina de Rioseco, Roa, Aranda del Duero, el Burgo de Osma, Soria (300 km)
- 18) road from Sória to Zaragoza (160 km)
- 19) Camino Catalano from Zaragoza to Lérida and Tarragona (230 km).

SUMMARY OF THE PREVIOUS AND CURRENT ACTIVITY OF OUR ASSOCIATION

The "friends of the Camino di Santu Jacu (AdCSJ)" association was founded in 2010 by a group of pilgrims, from different origins, nationalities and experiences, who, having noted the absence of a Camino de Santiago in Sardinia, despite the existing tradition of pilgrimages and places of worship to St. James the Greater, they set about studying, elaborating and verifying the feasibility of a cultural, touristic, religious and physical activity itinerary in Sardinia that can be covered on foot, on a bicycle and even by "differently abled" people.

CAMINO DI SANTU JACU



THE MODERN WAY FROM MALTA TO COMPOSTELA

Nowadays, many routes have changed.

For example, now pilgrims need to travel by sea from Malta to Pozzallo or Syracuse, Palermo to Cagliari, then from Porto Torres to Barcelona to finish the Camino Maltés in Santiago on foot.

We talked together and discussed the itinerary followed by the modern pilgrims and the future is open...

Thanks for your attention.

Flavio Vandoni

President and Founder of the Association "Amici del Cammino di santu Jacu" (AdCSJ)





Find place or stage

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The Sicilian Connection

Salvatore Trumino, Association Borgo San
Giacomo, Piazza Armerina, Sicilia



AUREA JACOPEA

L'Arciprete del Santuario Diocesano, Vetusta e Venerabile Chiesa Capitina, Custode del Sacello delle Reliquie e dell'Altare di San Giacomo Mg. Apostolo, per tutti i fedeli e pellegrini che quivi giungono da qualsiasi luogo dell'orbe terraqueo con attitudine devozionale o per causa di un voto o di una promessa fino ai Piedi della Miracolosa Immagine dell'Apostolo SAN GIACOMO, e della sua Reliquia, nostro amato Protettore dell'Aurea e Fedelissima Città di Capizzi, rende noto a tutti coloro che esaminano questo documento che:

JAMES PORTIČČI

*ha visitato devotamente questo Santissimo Tempio con sentimento cristiano.
In fede di ciò, io gli rilascio la presente scrittura munito del sigillo di questo Santissimo Santuario.*

N. Prot. 279

Dato in Capizzi il 18/12/24



L'Arciprete
Don Antonio Cipriano

Cammino di San Giacomo in Sicilia

The Cammino starts in Caltagirone - Citta Jacopea, in the province of Catania famous also for le Scale di San Giacomo – from the Basilica of St James containing the Saint's holy relics.

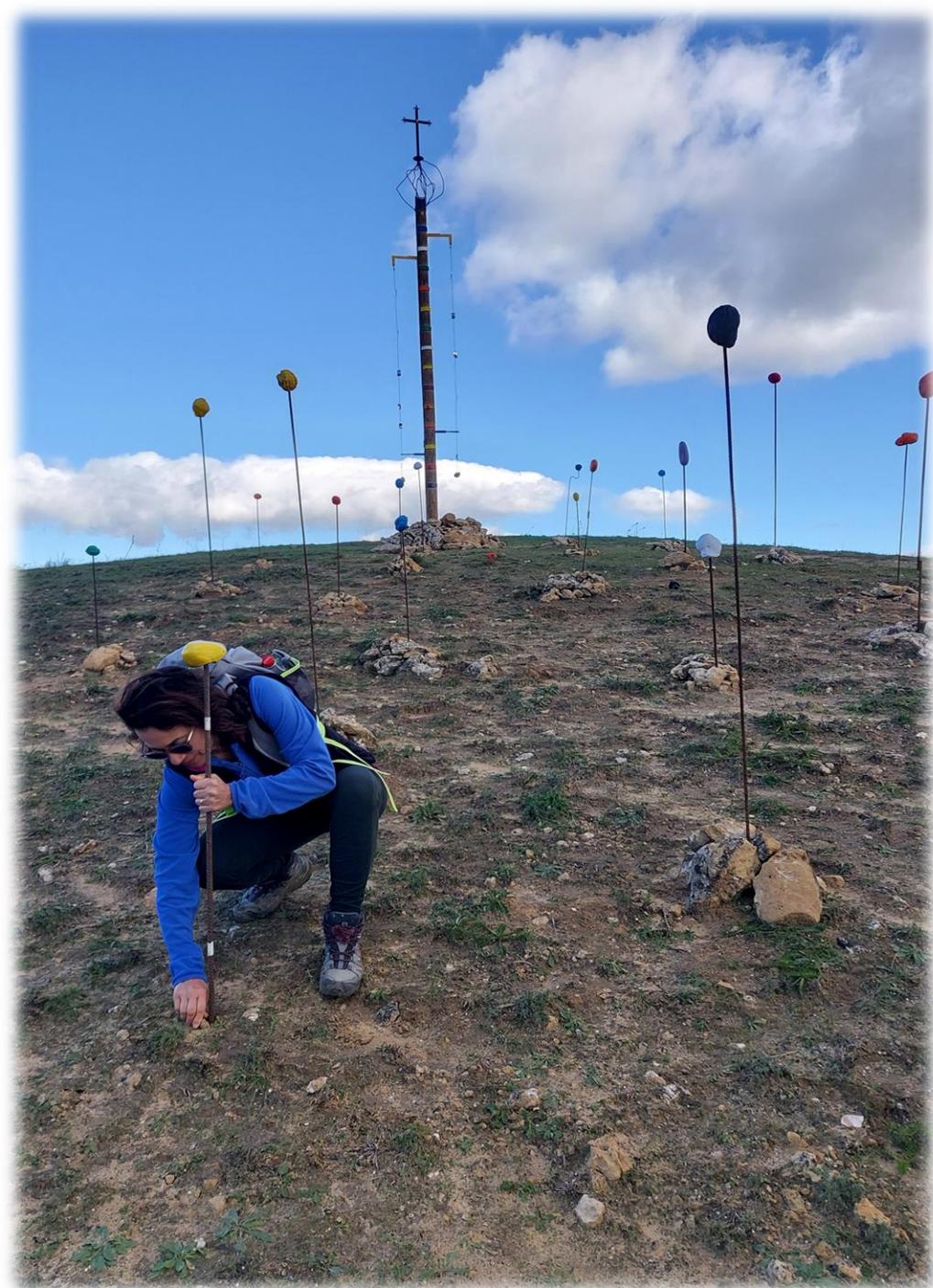
It continues through Mirabella Mbaccari, Piazza Armerina, Assoro, Valquarnera and Nirosia to Capizzi , a 130km cammino.

The Sanctuary of St James in Capizzi - a Norman Cathedral- is the oldest pilgrimage shrine in Sicily attributed to the Alemerici Frankish feudal family that first settled in Capizzi in the 9th century.



Caltagirone

Citta' Jacopea



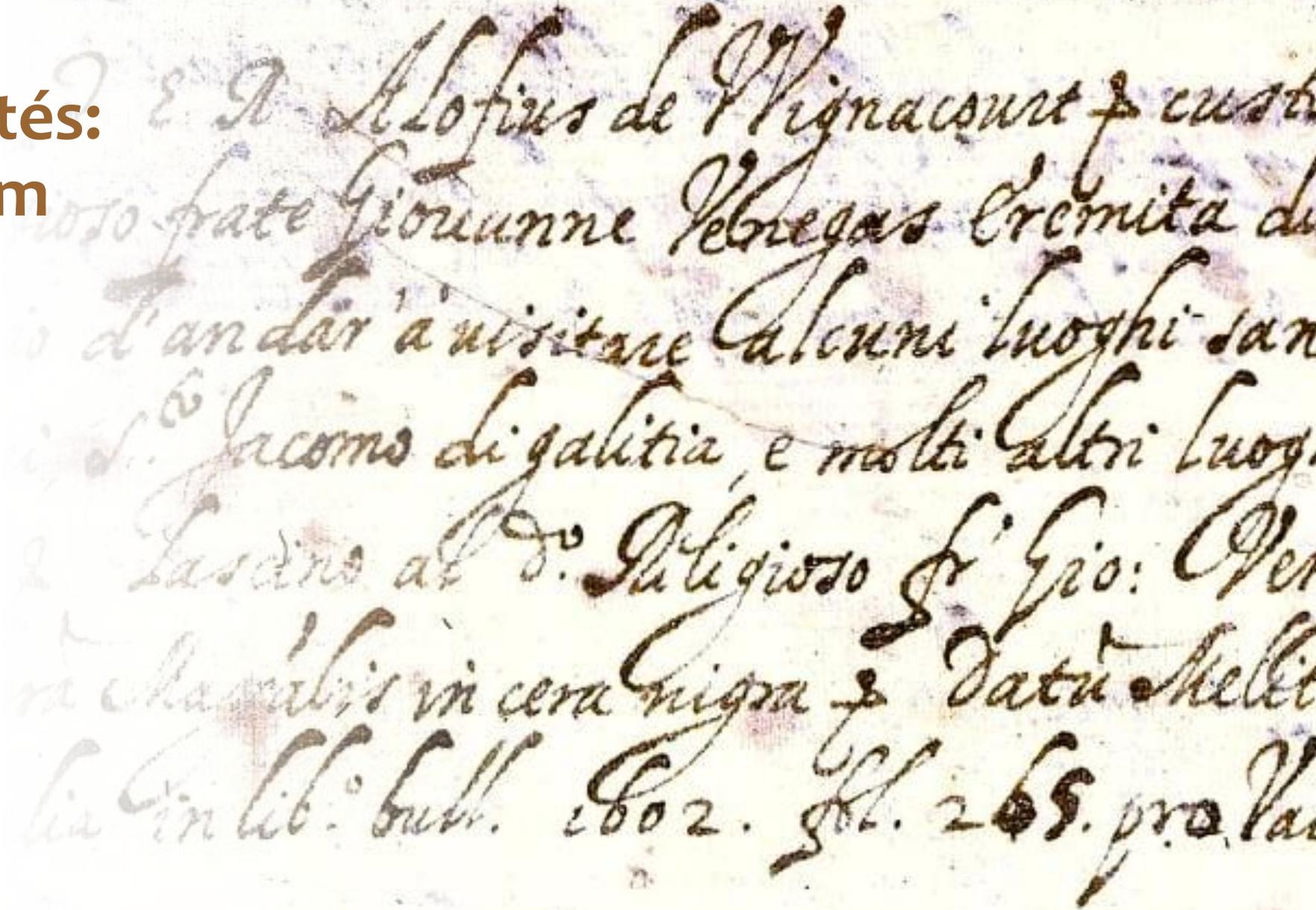
Capizzi – Sanctuary of St James



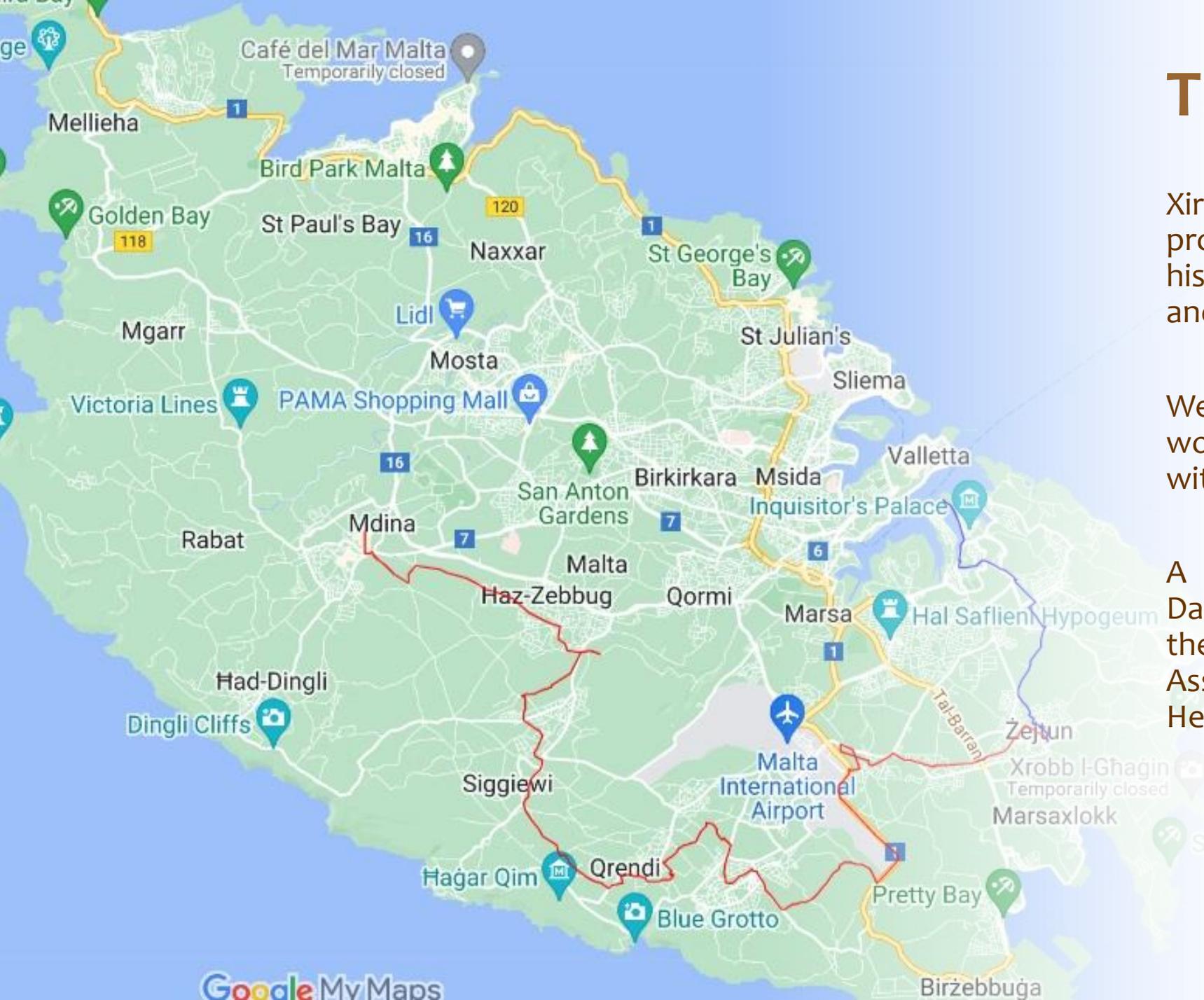
El Camino Maltés: It all starts from Malta

James Portelli

President, XirCammini



... e. d. Aloisius de Wignacourt & custod
... so. frate Giovanni Veregias Eremita de
... d'andar a visitare alcuni luoghi san
... Jacomo di galitia, e molti altri luoghi
... Tascano al d. Religioso fr. Gio: Per
... cha. ubi in cera nigra & Datu. Melit
... in lib. bull. 1602. fol. 265. pro la



The Chronology

XirCammini has been working on this project since 2018 in terms of the historical connection with Aragon, Spain and the Camino.

We had also independently been working on other faith tourism projects with the MTA.

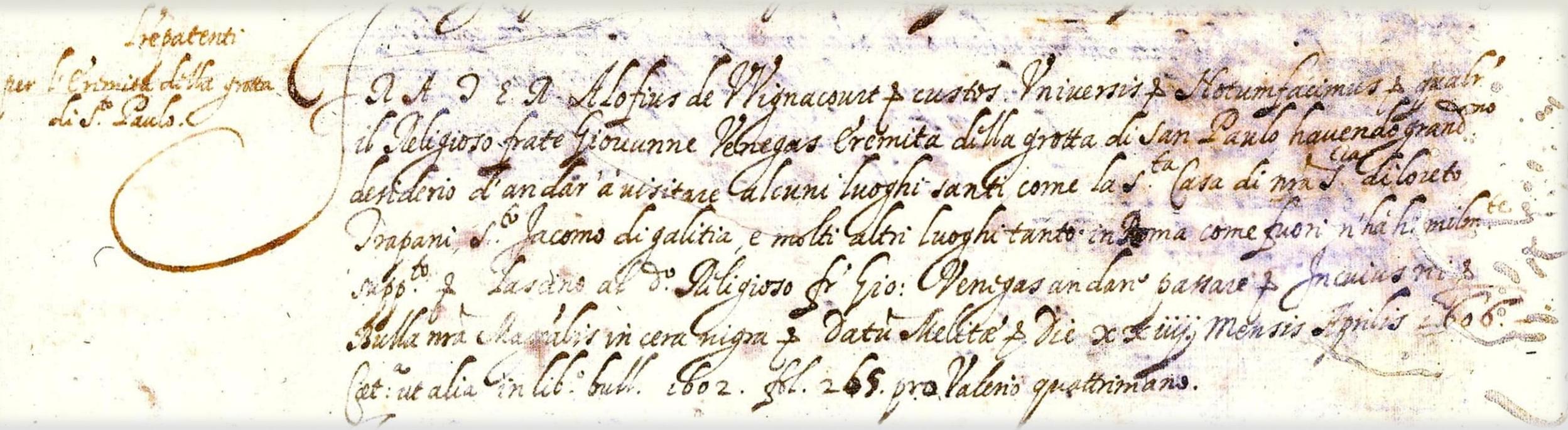
A call in summer of 2022 from H.E. Daniel Azzopardi, and him connecting all the dots, to the Xunta de Galicia, to the Asociaciones del Amigos and to Heritage Malta, proved providential.

The Justification

There is evidence of property belonging to the order of St. James (Altopascio) in Malta dating back to 1373 (King Frederick of Sicily)

Devotion to St James was strong in Malta since the Aragonese (and later Spanish) and knights' rule. For example, an older church of St James existed in le terre di Sta Caterina (where St Gregory's Church is) and Zabbar was the vice-parish of St James, forming part of the Zejtun parish.

The Knights of St John increased this devotion to St. James. Below is an extract from the Liber Bullarum (A. Wignacourt) granting permission/ certificate of safe passage to Juan Benegas, from Rabat, to visit sacred places including Santiago de Compostela in Galicia.



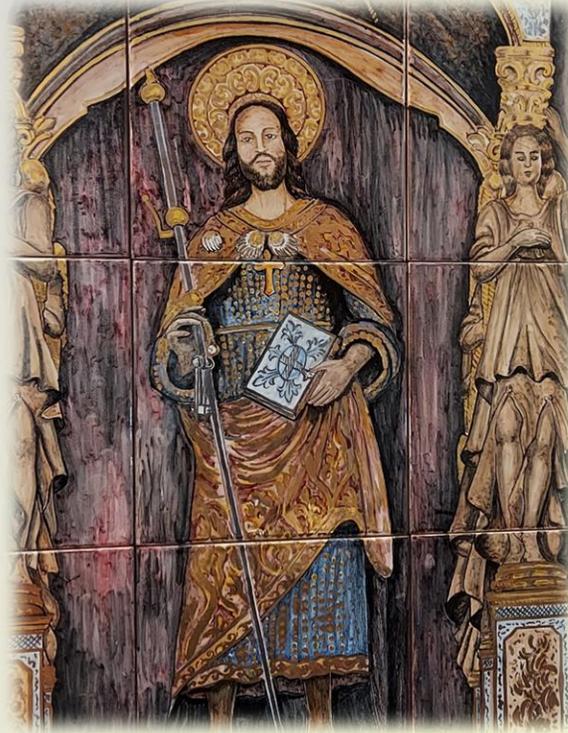
The Route

Historical evidence suggests that Malta was closely linked by sea to Licata, Syracuse, Messina and Palermo and by commerce to both Sicily and Sardegna.

The Aragonese (and later Spanish) controlled sea route between Malta, Sicily and Sardegna to either Barcelona, Tarragona or Valencia made this a less risky sea-faring route.

This gave us a basis on which to re-trace this route taking into account current realities of sea-travel.





The Result

Working closely with our counter-parts in Sicily, Sardegna and Spain we have merged 4 caminos into one, a 3,600km Camino Maltés.

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El Camino Maltés: Connecting Malta to the Camino de Santiago de Compostela

Guest Speaker

