

Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem

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Delegation of the European St. James Way visits St. James Cat

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Saturday morning March 10, a delegation of the Fédération Européenne du Saint-Jacques de Compostelle visited the Armenian Convent of S. Their visit was well prepared by correspondence as well as a previous visit of M. Gérard Beaume, the general coordinator of the Fédération. The delegation consisted of about 25 people of the organisation, led by the president Mr. Simone Pettirossi of the city of Assisi.



The pilgrimage to St. James of Compostella, or the Saint James Way, is the main pilgrimage route in Europe, and has two permanent represe According to Christian tradition the Apostle St. James preached the Gospel till in Spain, and returned for some time to the Holy Land. The boc "killed James the brother of John with the sword" (Acts 12:2). The head of St. James was buried in Jerusalem, and his body in Spain. The loc: dral) is known since then; the exact burial place of St. James's body in Spain however remained unknown until the 9th century. In the beginning of the 9th century, the hermit Pelagos who lived in Spain, saw lights or stars blinking above a certain place- where a marble c The name "Compostella" according to popular etymology, comes from the Latin Campus Stellae, field of stars- referring to the stars the monk





— relics of St. James in Santiago de Compostela, Spain

The Spanish king Alphonso II travelled to that location, and had a church built on the site. King Alphonso II is seen as the first pilgrim to Santiago. The modest sanctuary in Santiago drew many pilgrims, but the church was too small for the enormous numbers of pilgrims from Europe. The church was embellished. The city of Santiago also benefited from becoming one of the most important pilgrimage sites in Europe, and grew to a center of



The famous symbol of the scallop shell, (*Coquille St. Jacques*, *Jakobsmuschel*) is native to the coast of Galicia in Spain, and was therefore a symbol of Santiago de Compostela.

Also in our days, the Way of St. James remains the most popular pilgrimage within Europe, with various routes from all over Europe leading to



Since early times pilgrims to Santiago also visited the Armenian Cathedral of St. James in Jerusalem. The visit of Fédération Européenne du Saint-James Way intends to renew and revive the ancient relations between the two St. James pilgrimage sites.

The delegation of the Saint James Way visited the Armenian St. James Cathedral and the Monastery of Saint James.



Deacon Rafael Ghazarian told the delegates about the manuscript collection in St. Toros Library. After that His Eminence Archbishop Sevan (Patriarchate in Jerusalem), met with the delegates. The members of the Saint James Way brought gifts with them for His Eminence. His Eminence expressed his good hope for continuation of the contacts and cooperation, which was confirmed by the delegation.



Pictures in Jerusalem: Dr. Claudia Venhorst

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