

## **NEWS RELEASE**

22 March 2010

For immediate distribution

### **Walking 120 miles on pilgrimage with a wooden cross – more relevant than it's ever been**

#### ***Pilgrims limber up for Student Cross, Britain's oldest annual pilgrimage***

Eager pilgrims are anticipating a week of joy, blisters, friendships forged for life and liturgy as never experienced before.

From 27 March to 2 April, more than 250 people of all ages will set out from various parts of England in 10 groups (known as 'Legs'). They will walk around 120 miles during the course of the week carrying a life-sized wooden cross and will gather together in at the national shrine of Our Lady in Walsingham, Norfolk, on Good Friday for a unique Easter celebration.

Dave Stanley, Student Cross national director for 2010, said: "Pilgrimage is an intense and rewarding experience. It is more relevant today than it has ever been for those prepared to face its challenges. Modern life can be complex and uncertain. It's easy to become overwhelmed by its pressures and burdened by worry. Going on pilgrimage is a fantastic way to strip back to the basics, examine the fundamental questions in life and consider what is really important.

"Student Cross enables people to think deeply about the direction they are taking, how they can see their role in the world and how God can play a part in their lives. It also offers a unique way to celebrate Easter – both a chance to recharge your spiritual batteries and a crash course in community living.

"We are an immensely varied group of people. From the very young to the very experienced. From people who feel secure in their faith as Christians, to people who have simply found that walking with friends restores them in some way. We are students, parents, teenagers and children, people with jobs and people without. Fit and unfit, wildly enthusiastic and apparently reluctant. What we have in common is that we find this pilgrimage an invaluable way of connecting with what is most important in our lives."

**ENDS**

**For more information please contact Dave Stanley, national director, at [co-ordinator@studentcross.org.uk](mailto:co-ordinator@studentcross.org.uk) (up to 27 March) or on 07870 524120.**

## Notes to editors

- Website [www.studentcross.org.uk](http://www.studentcross.org.uk)
- Student Cross on Facebook: search 'Student Cross'
- Student Cross is the longest running annual pilgrimage in Britain.
- Walsingham itself was one of the biggest pilgrimage sites in the world during the Middle Ages until the Reformation.
- The pilgrimage is made up of ten groups or 'Legs' who walk to Walsingham to meet and celebrate the Easter weekend. Each leg carries a large wooden cross as a visible witness to their Christian faith.
- Six of these groups, or 'Legs', walk an average of 120 miles over Holy Week. A seventh group starts on the Wednesday and there are also two Legs for families, which meet for a week of activities and short walks in Norfolk.
- There is also a Leg, for those who can't manage a whole week, which walks from North Elmham to Walsingham on Good Friday morning.
- Christians of all denominations walk Student Cross, as well as people who would not call themselves Christian but who are also searching for spiritual meaning in their lives. Most Legs have a majority of Roman Catholic walkers. Despite the name, Student Cross attracts people from all walks of life. Many of them have walked Student Cross before but return again and again.
- Bursaries are available to help needy pilgrims walk with Student Cross.