

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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For immediate distribution

### **Faith in your feet? Walk this way...**

#### ***'Take up your cross and follow me' - Pilgrims limber up for Student Cross, Britain's oldest annual pilgrimage***

EAGER pilgrims anticipate a week of joy, tears, laughter, blisters, friendships forged for life and prayer as never experienced before.

From April 16-24, more than 250 people of all ages will set out on their journeys from various parts of England in 10 groups (known as 'legs'). Six of the legs will walk around 120 miles during the course of the week. There are also two family legs and another two groups meeting later on, for people unable to walk the whole week.

Each leg will carry a life-sized wooden cross and will gather together in Walsingham, Norfolk, on Good Friday for a unique celebration of Easter over the weekend, concluding on Sunday afternoon.

Chantal Noppen, national director of Student Cross 2011, says: "Pilgrimage is an intense and rewarding experience. Sometimes we need to be reminded to take a step back and remember who we are and why we are. We all need to find a way to do this and for some, this is on Student Cross, sharing the road and the journey for a while.

"As our pace of life seems to get faster and faster, the opportunity to breathe freely and release the pressure is invaluable. We are a diverse group of people of all ages and backgrounds from toddlers to students, priests and teachers, teenagers and retired folk.

"Every single person who takes part brings something different and every Student Cross is full of its own blessings, challenges, joys and surprises. Whether we regard our faith as the lynchpin to life or a peripheral thing to wonder about, Student Cross brings us together and helps us reconnect with what is important.

"The importance and relevance of pilgrimage today is often too easily overlooked. It's time to think outside the box and walk this way for a while."

**ENDS**

**For more information please contact Chantal Noppen, national director, at [co-ordinator@studentcross.org.uk](mailto:co-ordinator@studentcross.org.uk) (up to April 14) or on 07734 809327.**

## Notes to editors

- Website [www.studentcross.org.uk](http://www.studentcross.org.uk)
- Student Cross on Facebook: search 'Student Cross'
- Student Cross on Twitter: [twitter.com/studentcross](https://twitter.com/studentcross)
- Student Cross is the longest running annual pilgrimage in Britain, beginning in 1948.
- Walsingham has been a destination of pilgrimage since the Middle Ages and, until the Reformation, was one of the biggest sites in the world.
- 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 of its Christian faith.
- Six of these groups, or 'legs', walk an average of 120 miles over Holy Week. A seventh group starts on the Wednesday (from Ely) 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 and are in no means all students. Many of them have walked Student Cross before but return again and again.
- Bursaries are available to help jobless or low waged pilgrims walk with Student Cross.
- If there are spaces, applications are often accepted until the week we set off so it might not be too late to join...