

PILGRIM ROUTINE

Like walking with Gandhi
on the 24-day Salt March,
or Padre Miguel D'Escoto
on a 14-day Stations of the Cross

for peace in Nicaragua,
or Cree youth on a 1600-kilometer
trek for Indigenous rights
from Whapmagoostui to Ottawa

or like monks in a hermitage
or nuns in a cloister—
each day greets us with discipline
of deepening routine:

rise to the first glint of day,
pull on same clothes,
gather up belongings—
caminar, caminar, caminar

move at meditation's pace:
climb, rest, descend
exert, rest, reflect—
caminar, caminar, caminar

arrive at the abbey, the convent,
an encampment, a benevolent village:
to wash, wring and hang the day's clothes,
rest, coddle feet, eat, drink, sleep

another daybreak, wake
begin, all over again—
caminar, caminar, caminar
our souls imperceptibly altered.

— Suzanne Doerge
from *Footfalls: Poems of the Camino*

