

Belief and Life - Abbot Georg Wilfinger on the Austrian St. Jacob's Road

The Meaning of Life

The second Waldzell Meeting took place at Melk Abbey over the weekend. The goal was to jointly come up with "Blueprints for a Future with Meaning." Important thinkers and visionaries, including Paulo Coelho, met with European decision-makers from business, science and media for a "dialog of the best minds", as it is called by the organizers of the Waldzell Institute. In addition, 18 young adults from all over the world, who had already achieved extraordinary things in their life, were invited as "Architects of the Future."

The search for meaning preoccupies us again and again. And so on Monday this week, in the spirit of this search for meaning, the now completed Austrian Road to Santiago, Göttweig-Melk route, was opened at the entry or exit point of the world cultural heritage Wachau. Both abbeys are 50 km apart (two easy day marches) and were named as 2 important stations of the Austrian Road to Santiago by Paulo Coelho, who opened the road together with provincial head Erwin Pröll. The Road to Santiago, a pilgrimage to the Spanish Santiago de Compostela. It belongs to the greatest pilgrimages of occidental Christianity since the early Middle Ages. Millions of people traveled this stretch in the past centuries under the sign of the St. Jacob's clam in order to bid forgiveness and mercy at the tombstone of St. Jacob. It is about 3200 km from Vienna to Santiago de Compostela. The signposts on our abbey's parking lot inform about the pilgrimage. We are all on the pilgrimage road of life, in order to get to the bottom of the perpetual questions "where do we come from and where are we going?" Step by step, we should traverse the path of life and let activity and calm reign. We should be constantly on the go, so as not to lose sight of the goal, to look for home and come home, that is the goal. These thoughts may recur often, and perhaps you too will one day travel the Göttweig- Melk path of the Road to Santiago.