

Lens letter from the Via

Date 11/07/17

Location	Mouthier-Haute-Pierre	KM's to Rome	1,278	Steps Today	25,973
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Met Leigh in the village last night for a catch up on his past five weeks. He managed to spend some time in Italy with Nick and his family so he has a good position to answer the perennial question what country is better France or Italy? After a good breakfast, we set off on the first day's walking with Leigh.



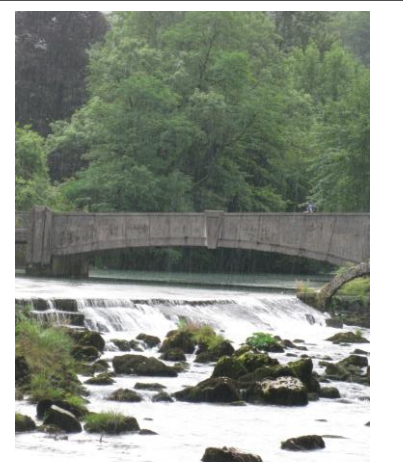
Do these two look ready for a 23 kilometre walk?

The walk started on a bicycle track out along the river and was a beautiful setting in a wide valley. We were actually about 500 metres behind a group of Kindergarteners carrying their day packs (and mobile phones) on a day's escape from the classroom. Over the next two kilometres we gained no distance on this group, quite discouraging really. I guess the ability to walk fast over your life is like a bell curve. The five-year old's are

at one extreme and us 60 year old's are at the other extreme. That's what I am putting it down to, as far as I am concerned bell curves really should only be stored in Bell Jars.

We eventually passed the youngsters as their attention was diverted by cow pats and other sundry dead things that young children are always interested in. It wasn't long however before the other members of the expedition were squabbling over who was going to carry what in their backpacks.

We continued to be impressed by the beauty of the buildings and infrastructure generally in these small villages. They all mostly have the Marie as the primary public building and various other structures such as bridges or in the case of



Lods where the river has been used to create a mill, a fish pond and swimming pool for the locals as well as providing a means to actually get across the river. We had been looking for a lunch spot by the river but suddenly the heavens opened and we sat in a bus stop to eat our lunch. While we were there eating a charming couple of locals who had just enjoyed a warm meal in the Hotel opposite enquired where we were going. When I told him Rome he looked me up and down and solemnly announced that I wasn't capable of walking to Rome. I got his name and address and I am going to send him a photo of me arriving at the Vatican