

Our quarters were a little cramped at Poggio Bustone so we decided that we would make an early start to the day. It proved very difficult to find our way out of the village as it is a maze of small streets with lots of small alleyways that connect the streets by steps. If the village was better maintained it would be a very charming village but it looks down on its heels. We finally found our way out to the Via with the help of a local who bustled out into the street in her nightie to show us the way.

The walk was through an oak and beech forest with the occasional linden tree thrown in. It was an enchanting walk as the valley was covered in mist and you felt as if you were walking above the clouds. This is an example of the view. It took until 10.30 in the morning for all the mist to

clear and reveal the green valley underneath. We walked through the village of Cantalice and took the opportunity to climb up and see the local church. These three gentlemen were having their morning meeting when we arrived. They immediately came over to us and

wanted to discuss how beautiful their church is and what a "Bella View" we had. One of them took hold of my arm and stroked my beard admiringly, we think he was comparing me to a biblical figure because of my beard which has gone even whiter over here and is a bit long. Perhaps I can get a role in the next cinematic production of the bible.

Saint Felice is the patron saint of the church and he is also the patron saint for beggars. Born in Cantalice he joined the local monastery and then spent the rest of his life begging for alms for the church. Apparently, he tried to join the monastery a considerable number of times, eventually wearing them down and being accepted. A good skill for a beggar would be the ability to not take no for an answer. On reflection, I can see some resemblance between St Felix and myself although

he does have more hair than me.

After leaving Cantalice we continued through the forest towards S. Maria della

Foresta, a place where San Francesco stayed to have his eyes treated. It was a very peaceful place so we decided it would make a nice lunch spot. This is obviously a place for stray dogs and cats because as we were having our lunch three cats and one dog wandered over to see if there was anything for them. Our lunch rations were a little sparse today so we didn't share and they wandered off to try their luck with two other walkers who had turned up. They obviously haven't been to the St Felix's begging school.

As we arrived in Rieti we noticed as in other larger towns the ubiquitous beggars outside the supermarkets. Just from personal observation the beggars have become more aggressive in their requests, perhaps they would have more success if they adopted the humbler techniques of San Felix or perhaps adopt the principle that they should never stand begging for what they have the power to earn.

