

ESM ROMA 2018

Newsletter #1



ESM Presentation

We are 12 students, from 7 different countries.

(France, Australia, Belgium, Slovakia, Croatia, Germany, Congo).

We arrived in Rome at the start of September and began our 10-month experience with Italian lessons. After our week in Assisi, we entered more deeply into the year by beginning formation classes and missions.



JEANNE (FRANCE, Dijon)

« I graduated as a special educator this year. Working with addicts made me realize that it's not always easy to talk about my faith. Even so, I was able to share my faith with them. I've realized that there is a place for Christ in everyone's life, even when one reaches rock bottom. I'm doing ESM Roma because I want to learn about my faith and how to share the joy of God wherever I go. »



Jonas (GERMANY, Munich)

« After my studies, I discovered that something important was missing: I desire to build a firm foundation for my life by directing it towards God, that's why I decided to do the ESM. I think living in fraternity and being formed in faith, in the heart of the church, is the best way to leave a mark on my own life and those around me. »



Fraternity life, meaning we spend our days with brothers and sisters whom we didn't choose. It's not as horrible as it seems!



Academic Formation, 400 hours of formation in theology, philosophy and art. Let's hope we'll remember some of this by the end of the year!



Mission, we evangelize on the street, welcome people into the church, spend time with the poor, bringing joy to them.



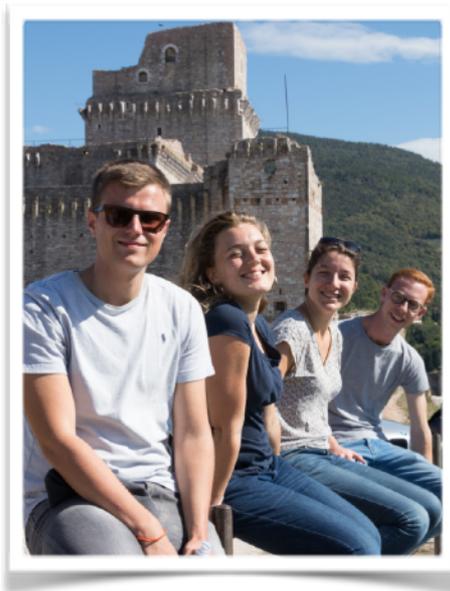
Spiritual life, daily adoration, praise and mass!

Pilgrimage to Assisi: 1st- 5th October (4th Feast Day of St. Francis)

After one month of gruelling Italian courses we launched the official beginning of the ESM year with a pilgrimage to Assisi. It was a beautiful time spent together (staff and students) where we could grow in fraternity and unity, discovering more about ourselves and the others. During these days of walking we shared many great conversations, enjoyed picnics in nature, prayed, praised and had times of silence. Leaving the busy streets of Rome to walk together in the peace and beauty of His spectacular nature allowed us to contemplate God in His creation and our place amongst it... a fantastic start to the year!

We felt particularly blessed to be in Assisi for the Feast day of St. Francis, and very joyful to have the opportunity to celebrate mass in his Basilica (co-celebrated by our one and only ESM Chaplain, Father François – a very special day for him!). Whilst in Assisi we visited the key places in the life of Saint Francis; Eremo delle Carceri, the Basilica of St. Francis, the Basilica of St. Clare, the Church San Damiano, Chiesa Nova, Santa Maria degli Angeli e degli Martiri.

We took this pilgrimage as a special opportunity to bring to the Lord in prayer, the intentions of our hearts; our families, friends and donors. Encouraged by St. Francis' humble message of praise and simplicity we discovered a new energy and desire for holiness... Grazie Assisi!



“Lord make me an instrument of your peace, where there is hatred, let me sow love”
- St Francis of Assisi -

SYNODE

On Saturday, October 6th, we attended a Youth Synod Meeting, our first encounter with the Pope! Along with Pope Francis, 150 cardinals and bishops, we listened to inspiring testimonies, music and artistic performances of young people from all around the world.

In the Pope's address to the young people, he insisted on the need for a greater proximity between the Church and the people and emphasized the importance of living the Beatitudes in daily life. He also called us to actively live out our faith and stressed how leadership is rooted in service.

Just as youth need the Church, we are convinced that the Church needs youth. We are a committed generation that is searching for truth and profound joy in Christ. We would like to see a Church that understands the reality of today's youth, empowers young people and gives clear instructions to follow Jesus in our everyday lives. To conclude, our main expectation of this Synod would be the reinforcement of the living, open and universal charism of the Church.



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