

ESM Newsletter

The Bridge Between the Tabernacle and the Street

Gift of Love Outpoured

The past few months here in Rome has truly been a gift of love in so many senses. Our last newsletter went out for Christmas break, which took some of us to Paray-le-Monial for the first time, and others home to their families, to unwrap there the gifts of God's Grace.

We returned eager to jump back into mission preparation for 10 days of Parish Mission in Ireland. The graces of mission we received there have certainly informed much of our mental, fraternal, and spiritual growth over the past three months.

We have come to the point of the year where it's time to go deeper into the ocean of love God has available for us. And so we have been able to take the opportunity to ask, in a special way, for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit - the gifts and graces necessary for us to continue on this path to holiness, through the building up of our brothers and sisters, and through all those we minister to.

The gift of love comes also in a special way with the release of Benedict XVI's encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*, through which we discover more and more how to communicate love through compassion and sacrifice. In union with Christ - with Him in his passion - let us confirm our hearts this Lenten season to share with others this call to love.

Michelle and Matteo

ESM MISSION IN NEW BRIDGE, IRELAND: SHARING THE GOSPEL WHERE THE PEOPLE ARE!

Friday 13th of this past January (we are not superstitious), the Emmanuel School of Mission left Rome "to go do its job" by being missionaries in the world. We landed in Dublin, Ireland to start an adventure that lasted 10 days, centred at Saint Conleth's Parish Church, in Newbridge, County Kildare. Being only an hour and half away from Dublin, In the past 10 years the population has grown enormously, especially with young couples commuting to and from Dublin, only 90 minutes away. We were taking part in a parish mission, which was organized by the local church, together with the Emmanuel Community, since summer 2005. These 10 days made visible the efforts of the local Catholic community, together with their pastors. For us, these people would become our friends and companions as this journey progressed.

The aim of these days was primarily to reach out to the youth and young couples wherever they were, in houses, schools, the streets and pubs, and bring them closer to a community ready to welcome them and give them a sense of belonging to the place where they live. I already knew that Ireland was famous for the ability of its people to welcome new guests, but what we experienced certainly exceeded our expectations. Whether we were on the street or in houses, visiting schools or pubs, we would always receive a warm

welcome, a smile and often (judging from the expanding size of my waistline) other tangible forms of Irish hospitality, in generous proportions. Our program was packed, and I don't think we could not have made it if it wasn't for our host families who supported us with all that we needed. The usual day of mission started with a second breakfast (the first breakfast was usually taken care of by the families), in the lounge of the convent we used as our logistic base, located next to the church. The day would continue with praise and mass, and only then would we break into action. The main part of our ministry, mornings and afternoons, consisted of giving our testimonies to the students from the different schools of Newbridge. We joined them in their classes, sharing our faith and answering their questions. And we sang and danced with them during the "Battle of the Bands" song contest. There were also missionaries who walked around the residential parts of the city, going door to door, informing people about the mission and sharing their faith. As the sun went to sleep, more houses opened up to receive the missionaries for the evening, and those who wanted to spend time in each other's houses discussing a specific topic, or sharing testimony. At the same time, the pubs of Newbridge became places of evangelisation, and through concerts, music, and countless conversations, we were able to meet new people and share our love for Jesus. In these ten days, we came to Ireland as evangelisers, but we ended up being evangelised. So intense was the love that we received that I was touched by the kind of reaction—the pure and simple testimony that the Gospels can move into people. I came out of this mission with the firm conviction that my vocation as a Christian is to evangelise not just for this year, but for my whole life.

Matteo



Editors:

Matteo Cehovin & Michelle Kafel

esm@emmanuel.info

www.esm-rome.com

Emmanuel School of Mission • Domus Aurelia

Via Aurelia 218 • 00165 Roma, ITALIA

Tel: +39 06 39 36 59 50 • Fax: +39 06 39 37 64 80



Discovering Paray-le-Monial

By Michelle Kafel

The winter youth session in Paray-le-Monial, from February 16th-19th, witnessed the gathering of all four of the schools of mission organised by the Emmanuel Community and the young men in priestly discernment at St. Joseph House, Belgium. This was a rare opportunity for the schools from Vienna, Altotting, Paray-le-Monial and Rome to meet, share, and evangelize altogether, a first time all together in the city of the Heart of Jesus.

First, were two days of praise, prayer, fellowship and pilgrimage that helped us grow in our faith, by reinforcing our commitment to Christ, through the support of our peers. We were able to share about the mission experiences encountered in the previous months, and about the joys (and struggles!) of community life. In addition, the personal encounters, testimonies, and encouragement experienced, helped us find new ways to live out this radical call to serve Christ that we have all received.

It was then an extra blessing and gift to continue the spirit of mission together, as we served 700 young people come for the weekend retreat, through welcoming, animating the liturgies, serving food, and prayer.

Perhaps this year's experience will be only the first of many such Schools of Mission pilgrimages!

Two for the price of One

*Two Retreats
One Triduum*

Emmanuel Community
Easter Retreat 2006

**Wednesday, April 12—
Monday, April 17**

**Chrism and Easter Mass
with the Pope!**

**Women: Padri Teatini,
Roma
Men: French Seminary,
Roma**

To register, or for more information:
e-mail: easter2006@emmanuel.info
Phone: +39 06 39 36 59 50

A weekend with the Heart of Jesus: The Emmanuel Winter Retreat

By Matteo Cehovin

The international winter retreat, that took place from Saturday the 18th to Sunday the 19th of February in Paray-le-Monial, became an opportunity for hundreds of young men and women to pray, think, and share each other's faith and experience of God's love. It was quite amazing to see what God could do in just a day and a half, if the person was willing to let himself be touched and changed by His action:

"During the Saturday evening in Paray, the worship and the blessing of the priest shook me as if Jesus had me cured of a very deep wound. I wept with joy after this encounter of the love of Jesus".

For me, this experience shows how deep we can go in our relationship with the Lord, even in just a brief moment, and at the same time how powerful the grace of Paray is. When you arrive in this place of pilgrimage to the Heart of Jesus, you experience something, or somebody, calling you to be silent and use your senses to listen to something special. If you wake up early in the morning and you take a walk through the narrow streets of this little French town you can sense the gentle breeze that touches the buildings, brushes through the trees and floats on the river, and your mind is taken back to the story of Isaiah in the cave, where, in the slight murmuring sound, he hears God. In Paray, the story of the prophet comes alive and you can almost feel Jesus' love seizing St Margaret Mary and St. Claude la Colombière's hearts, and filling all who pass by with the light of His fire and hope.

"I woke up during the night (between 2 and 4 am) to adore in St John's Chapel. It was fantastic! The Lord helped me to resolve a very heavy fight in my soul: "I am alone when I suffer, where is God? Why is He silent when I call Him?" But I understood that God was not outside of me (we are always tempted to see a outer sign of him). But he is in me".

Looking from the window of my bus, as we were getting ready to leave, I stopped the flow of memories in my mind and I thanked God because in his goodness He embraced all of us with his love. His mercy gives us an opportunity to get closer and closer to the mystery of his infinite heart.

Safeguarding Our Future

By Michelle Kafel

Recently the ESM had the chance to visit the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, of which Archbishop Levada, of San Francisco, is the newly appointed prefect. We previously met Archbishop Levada at Centro San Lorenzo when he has said Mass. In this encounter, we learned more about the department he is responsible for. His secretary, Fr. Stephen, gave us an introduction to the responsibilities of the Congregation, and told us about its origins. Pope Paul III originally founded it in the 16th century in response to the Protestant Reformation. At that time it was called the Congregation of the Holy Roman Inquisition, but did not get its current name until the 20th century, by Pope Paul VI. It has held the responsibility of promoting and safeguarding the faith since its beginnings.

An interesting topic of discussion arose concerning the congregation's contact with the media. We discussed with Archbishop Levada the media's current attention to covering "the news from Rome", especially since the death of Pope John Paul II.

Despite the media's sometimes-sour representation of the church, Archbishop Levada affirmed that the increased media attention to the life of the Church in Rome since April 2005 gives an opportunity, even the duty, to reveal the truth of the Church's message. So with questions from TIME magazine, for instance, with whom Archbishop Levada had an interview immediately after our meeting with him. When TIME's questions directed attention toward authority in the Church and the like, he would be able to answer in a way that simply and truthfully presents the gospel message. Archbishop Levada continued saying that for us as missionaries, and for all Christians participating in the Faith, it is the same thing that we attempt to do each time we are engaged in evangelisation. Get to the heart of the question, and witness to the gospel—the Truth.

This encounter with Archbishop – soon to be made Cardinal - Levada was another way in which we were encouraged and compelled to continue proclaiming the gospel, and bridge the gap between the tabernacle and the streets.

Conquering New Ground

By Michelle Kafel

Steubenville, Ohio, USA, Seeking to expand the call for future ESM students on new terrain, Fr. Thierry Quelquejay, ventured into the uncharted territory of Franciscan University of Steubenville (Ohio, USA), this past February. Franciscan University is the *Alma mater* of at least three ESM students: Anne Dickieson ('04-'05), Michelle Kafel ('05-'06), and Mike Kent ('02-03).

Fr. Thierry was present as the Emmanuel Community representative at the two-day Vocations Fair, held on campus each semester, alongside another 60 religious and spiritual communities proposing a discovery of the priesthood and consecrated life. This is the first time the Emmanuel Community has taken part.

Franciscan University has a strong missionary spirit, with nearly 1/3 of its student body leading, or participating in, various missions during the school year. Many of the students wish to continue these experiences through formation programs similar to the ESM, and so are intrigued to find out more about schools of mission.

Another goal of Fr. Thierry's presence at the vocations fair was to introduce the Emmanuel Community to the growing population of passionate, faith-filled, youth on the Franciscan University campus. Characteristically a charismatic community in itself, the university is well established as a breeding ground for the future life of the church in America. Many graduates have gone on to become leaders of local church communities, as well as priests, professors, and theologians for the Universal church.

The response to the Community's presence was positive, and Fr. Thierry has come back with a wealth of contacts for future generations of ESM missionaries, as well as a few jars of peanut butter, Oreo® cookies, and a bottle of 'Ranch' salad dressing for the American contingent in Rome this year!!

Where Are They Now?

Sometimes we wonder what happens to the students once they leave Roma! How many have been ordained, consecrated, married, or are continuing the spirit of evangelisation in other fields? To keep us all informed about the variety of lifestyles after the ESM we asked some former students a few simple questions. These are the some of the results...

Kelvin Kizito Kyingi
Uganda, E. Africa, ESM 2003-2004

"The year in Rome prepared me for discipleship, especially through devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. I became 'addicted' to it. To me Jesus Christ is really present in the Blessed Sacrament, and my favourite times were spent in the adoration chapel in St. Peter's Basilica, and alone in the chapel at school. I also discovered more about one of my favourite saints, Padre Pio, and was blessed to have some amazing experiences through his intercession. Currently I am a communications specialist & administrative assistant for Fr. Anthony Musaala, I am also involved in many activities within the church."

Riccardo Silva
Lisbon, Portugal, ESM 2002-2003

"At the school we have one hour per day to be just in front of the Lord in adoration, and our relationship with Him is deepened as time goes by. After a certain point, we can simply be with God. For me, the ESM was a year in which God made me discover and experience his mercy. This was very difficult for me, to accept his love, His gratuitous love. I have experienced that God loves me without any conditions. Even if it was for me difficult to get back to "normal" life and its crazy rhythms, where making enough time to pray is a huge struggle, I have been changed for the rest of my life: I believe I will never again doubt Jesus' love, even if sometimes I may be discouraged or confused about something."

We are always looking for testimonies from former students. If there is anything you would like to share about your year at the ESM and life afterwards, please contact us. It will help us continue to be "the bridge between the tabernacle and the streets".

More than just a cook...a loving presence in a our lives

Interview by Matteo Cehovin, with Rosa Uarna, official cook of the Emmanuel School of Mission

Rosa can you tell us a little about you and your past?

My name is Rosa Uarna, I was born in Calabria, but I emigrated to the United States of America at the age of 11. I lived there for 20 years and I came back to Italy 18 years ago. I have a daughter, Anna Maria, who is working and a son, Pasquale, who is just about to graduate from college.

How long have you been working at ESM?

This is my 4th year.



Working at the school is not exactly like working in a restaurant, right?

It's nice. It's nice! I like the contact with people...working with the students makes it even better cause it gives me the chance to speak English which, you know, its like a mother tongue to me, and being around people from different parts of the world its also one of the things I am used to. I like it, its part of me. Actually, it is not easy to find a place like this. It's a really nice environment for a person who wants to work seriously. The students become my kids, my brothers and sisters, my family!

Growing up, how was your relationship with God?

I was born and raised in the Catholic Church. You go to church, you believe, you perform good deeds but I never felt part of a particular community, nor did I ever make any particular efforts to come to a better understanding of God and my faith. But I have to tell you that now I am doing it. At one point in your life, you hear something inside of you saying: "I have everything, why not deepen my faith"? This is what I am doing right now: I am following the Neo-Catechumenate Community, I started last autumn and it's a good thing. I feel more complete. Now I am walking higher (*she points at the sky*). I'm also doing something for the Lord.

Is your relationship with God somehow different since you began working at the school?

Here I can see other persons trying to strengthen their faith. I can see other people that are purposely working for this. It's something that perhaps I wasn't doing before. Living here, I understood that there are people that don't do anything, and people who deserve more because they are making a real kind of effort.

...the beautiful thing about community life in the school is that we are confronted with this daily issue: What can we do more?

Sometimes I think: "Once the school is over how many of you are going to maintain this fire"? Out there, life is going to be different. It has to be maintained, because if nothing remains, nothing can be brought to others, and then we really offend our Lord. In what you guys do there is a little bit of everything and you have to take with you all these experiences.

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By the way, the school will remain a very good memory also for the meals... it's what makes it fancy. Without it, I believe, the school would have been a little harder.

...you are right! When you talk with the former students, there is always a living memory of Rosa.

You know, I really feel this... I am at peace because in a way I am not just working as a cook. You know, this school for me is been a gift from God... Did it have to happen to me? I consider it as a gift because otherwise I would not be here...with my experiences, like the fact that I lived abroad and my English. Yes I could be looking for another job. I could gain more money, trying to look for other things... but what's in this school I don't think I could find in any other place.

Rosa, lets make your famous "Melanzane alla Parmigiana" (Eggplant parmesan)?.

Wash the eggplants and cut them in 1-2 cm slices. Put them in a box with salt and leave them there for a good 2 hours or more. Then you cover them with flower and you fry them.

Once they are fried you lay them in an oven pan and layer on top of them tomato sauce, ham, mozzarella cheese and parmesan cheese. Cook them in the oven for 30 minutes, and they are ready to go. Oh, I forgot, you need one last ingredient...**The Magic touch!!**