

Without knowing that my life was about to completely change, I took a plane to Vienna the last 11th of July, 2007.

“A DREAM COME TRUE”

Have you ever imagined a summer in which you can meet people from all the World? It sounds great, right? Well, Phoenix Institute Summer Program its even more! I had the chance to met very special people this July. They are amazingly intelligent and come from 10 different countries.

We are young people trying to make a difference. Looking for answers to what our incredible Western History has lead. We know we are here to change the world and thanks to this Program we know we are not alone anymore; we are members of a family: The Phoenix Institute family!

We studied about diverse and important topics which came from Literature to Politics, Philosophy to Engineering; from History to prospective.

We tried to find answers to what is concerning the world today. Why do human beings are suffering so much when the universe is full of possibilities to be happy?

We solved that languages allow one person to explain himself in the very deep meaning of it. It is not if we speak Spanish, English, Russian, Polish, Italian, Hebrew, Portuguese, French or any other; but that we are capable of touching other people's hearts.

Dante Alighieri showed us this importance in The Divine Comedy just by choosing a poet to be his company and guide through Hell, Purgatory and the way to Heaven.

About Politics, we could discuss about many points of view, for example in the idea of Constitutionalism. We discover that what may be true and real for someone may be also absolutely different for others. And no matter this fact we did not end thinking on relativism as an answer but exactly in the opposite! We have to ask ourselves for the truth and defend it with our life, if it is necessary, to change the World!

It is sad to admit that as the years had passed by the human vision even about elementary things such as our essence, the right of living and community arrangements has been badly changed. But again, thanks to the spirit of the Phoenix Institute, I feel I am a very lucky young woman, because I am absolutely sure that it is possible to reach what would make us happy.

After two summer courses with this incredible Institute, now I know why happiness is so important. We are here just for that and the way to reach this goal is inside every single thing. We are not going to change the World outside of it! We really have to get to know it to propose something. So the question is “how?” It is simple, by living the virtues. This reminds me of my first summer in this “once in a lifetime” experience.

It is through courage, prudence, justice and temperance that we can truly live our life. They allow us to grow personally and as Earth inhabitants. Once again, in Vienna, I saw this reality in our group. Every single eye was a wide-open window to discover this internal and external effort. By talking to my teachers I found very interesting points of view about so many things that it would be impossible to write them all down.

Just as an example I am going to tell you about one of those incredible moments...

I remember myself asking professor Bernhard Dolna about a building when we went on a wonderful tour around The First Ring in Vienna. He was so excited to tell me every detail of the architecture plus the story that took place there, that it was impossible for me not to feel part of the Western Culture. He really touched my soul just because of his love and desire to explain what I was interested in.

We learned the tremendous job that education has in our days, and indeed since ever. From our director to every activity, we were surrounded by blessings. Of course, our mostly daily and voluntary Mass helped a lot to find these blessings.

And my classmates? They are not only that now. They have become excellent friends! Talking to them has made me think of the huge story that is behind every single person. This, of course, claims for another important thing: tolerance.

With the blessing of being young I have learned that this virtue means to respect above every personal interest, which is far away from relativism (which is almost used as a synonym today). Tolerance is fortitude to search the truth and humility to recognize that others can be right while we are not, or to give the reasons why we are right, knowing that it is very difficult to change our minds.

Last, but not least, is the city. Vienna is an amazing city full of history and culture. It is definitely one of the most beautiful cities I have gone to. The whole environment of the Summer Program invited us to make some reflection about life and to put on some practice to start changing what we know needs help.

I can assure that living in a museum (like Vienna) let me rediscover the very important role that history has. I am sure we realize that most of the things we thought that came from the past few years come indeed from centuries and centuries ago.

As young people we also discovered what it is absolutely necessary to make a difference: learn from others and learn about ourselves. It is well known that who does not study about history will certainly repeat the same mistakes from the past. I am sure that my friends and I do not want to do so! Now we have a huge task: get to really know ourselves, always listening to what our valuable people have to say, and then be strong enough to face whatever the Lord has for us.

I will always be thankful with the Phoenix Europe for giving me this year the opportunity to be truly responsible with the World and for teaching me the importance of studying who we are: what we have done as human race and what would be the best to do in the future!

My life changed, I promise. I have a different vision now and have the courage to fight for a dream: leave a mark in the World!

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