

The Phoenix Institute's Europe summer seminar Vienna 2007.

A report.

I am glad that I could take part in the summer seminar in Vienna, it will not be possible without the financial support, which I received. I am really thankful for that!

I am also happy about the report I have to write because it helps me to organize my thoughts and experiences direct after the course. I have many ideas and notions about the time in Vienna but some of them I am more or less aware of and this paper gives me a unique chance to name and describe them all right now.

First of all I was astonished with the people I got to know there. I would like to start with the professors and people who run the course in the name of The Phoenix Institute. All of them are practising Christians who deeply believe in what they say on the other hand they are professionals in their job. The lectures or talks we had together were well prepared, represented high level and were intelligible as well. I admire people who are experts themselves and can inspire non-experts (yet) to develop an interest or a passion for the theme. That was the case during the seminar in Vienna! I have to confess that reading Dante was a little bit scary for me. I tried it during my secondary school but found it too abstract and too sophisticated. Before coming to Vienna I tried again and found myself not prepared to apprehend its depth and metaphorical meaning. The third attempt however was an unexpected but firm success. The way we were led by prof. dr. Dolna towards understanding of the text and finally individual way of dealing with it was astonishing and catchy.

Such people are not so common in our modern societies, at the universities, in church and therefore they have to be really appreciated.

Participants of the summer course were meticulously chosen and it was easy to notice that nobody came there by accident. Those people know what they want in their lives, they have their principles according to which they try to act. The variety of the people was for me very important, it gave me an impression that there is a chance for good ventures in the world since

as different as we are, we have a real possibility to join our energy, to improve our ideas and to strengthen our hands in order to create something together. First of all to set a common, clear aim and then find the way to reach it. I had a great opportunity to take part in many deep and enriching talks and discussions not only with co-participants but also with professors and leaders of the course. All of them I would try to summarise and conclude shortly: Many young adult people today are aware of the reality around us. We are keen to get to know more about it, find out details, reasons, quandaries, we search for truth and we strongly believe it is to be found, we are not hopeless! We are maybe few but a few enough to raise our voices for 'the good' and against 'the evil' and deal with the decision and with consequences of it in an open, prudent and carrying way. It is for me a very important observation that I made during the time in Vienna.

We had a great luck to live under the same roof with Jesus because there was a chapel in the house. That was a great blessing to me and the possibility to attend holy mass almost every day let us set in proper order all that we have learnt during the particular day. I think it is worth to mention that those masses in Figil House were always with a seremon and it was really astounding that it fitted always excellent to the day and the issue we dealt with! That could not be an accident.

Maybe it would sound obvious but nowadays moral principles, christian values and beliefs are constantly impaired, laughed down or openly attacked and it is difficult to refer to them or to support them verbally in public. However this kind of defence is not enough, today people need, as it was during the time of infant church, real witnesses, who live the way they preach, even if it is stiff, bulky or risky.

But they need tools, they need strength, they need leaders and support and that is what the Phoenix Institute provides us with. One may say that it is too short period (2,5 week) a year! I dare to say that it is enough. The summer course in Vienna recharged our batteries till maximum but it provided us with various kinds of recharge engines as well, that will keep us going. For example we received advice how to keep active all that what we have learnt, we created a group of people who think similarly those whom you may ask for support.

I know that my report is rather general than detailed but after two weeks of engaged and particular work in both seminaries and then together with other participants I felt it is important for me to draw some conclusions and look for fruit of the time. In the opening

seminar Christiaan Alting von Geusau got us involved into the Mission Statement of the Institute There were many points that were made but three of them were mostly stressed; the Truth, Beauty and Courage. During the whole course those three were really present. We were in the middle of Vienna and have the opportunity to admire beautiful places, buildings, see beautiful pictures, hear beautiful concerts. We found the beauty of 'The divine comedy' which was written in Middle Ages but is still current today. The Truth, which we looked for during every lecture, meeting, excursion and conversation, led our whole course. We talk about Courage during the course on constitution not only finding glorious examples of our ancestors but also hearing the up-to-date experiences of other participants. Those later made the whole idea present, real and somehow possible to follow. It encouraged me to undertake an action, to stand out even despite the opposition.

That are generally speaking main points I wanted to make in my report: **There is the Truth which reveals itself in the world through Beauty, those who have discover it are internally driven and have the Courage to announce it.**