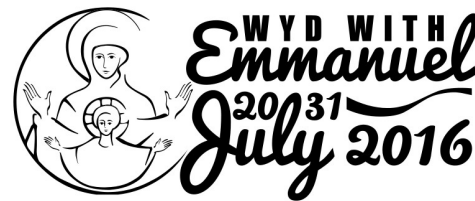


Mercy Team

Volunteers for Emmanuel WYD 2016!



Mercy Team is a special project inside Bro&Sis programme which has been started by the Emmanuel Community with the aim to connect young people from different countries, cultures, languages and beliefs and get prepared for being a volunteer during the upcoming WYD 2016 in Kraków, Poland. The idea of Bro&Sis is simple: to join together in a brotherhood and sisterhood and live our lives doing good. The name of the project for volunteers hasn't been chosen by chance. As the Team coordinators explained 'we are called Mercy Team, because this year we want to

live in the mercy of God in a special way, showing His mercy among each other and for others. We have been also inspired by the motto of the WYD 2016 'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.'

All Bros and Sis are invited to take part in 4 training sessions where they can get useful practical skills in the fields like project management, conflict resolution, public speaking, promotion or leadership. Moreover, the participants will be introduced to the spiritual aspect of preparations for the World Youth Days. Integration with other volunteers will also be a significant part of the meeting.

The first meeting which took place from July 31st to August 2nd in Częstochowa, Poland after the annual Emmanuel Youth Forum gathered around 50 young people from 9 different countries. The topic of that session was Community, the perfect example and the source of which is the Holy Trinity. From the teaching given by fr. Arkadiusz Czempik the participants could learn that since we have been created in the image and likeness of God we are all called to live this community as one human family, building bridges between each other and the whole nations.

Bro&Sis – the first bridge has been built!

Photo: volunteers in Częstochowa



The second meeting was happening since October 30th until November 1st in a beautiful city of Vienna, Austria and it welcomed more than 70 participants from 13 countries. The family is growing!



The teaching about 'diakonia' by fr. Martin Sinnhuber.

This weekend was centered around the idea of 'diakonia' - Christian theological term which derives from Greek and encompasses the call to serve the poor and oppressed. The volunteers not only received a profound teaching on it but also had an opportunity to put the theory into practice helping in the house of the Missionaries of Charity, in the soup kitchen and in the refugee shelter at the main railway station Wien Hauptbahnhof, which became a home away from home for hundreds of desperate people who had fled away from war-torn Syria and Iraq. For a few hours Mercy Team joined the army of volunteers who generously donate their time to welcome our fellow human beings, trying to provide them not only with daily bread but also with support and consolation. Together with the Austrians from all walks of life Bro&Sis helped in the kitchens, tea&coffee stations and cloths distribution centers. There was also a meeting with Cecily Corti from VinziRast foundation about projects for homeless people, which are the opportunity among others for students to help those, who are in need. This experience of doing little things with great love has been truly enriching for all the young people and it also can be considered as a direct and concrete respond to the words of our Papa Francesco who stated 'To love God and neighbor is not something abstract, but profoundly concrete: it means seeing in every person and face of the Lord to be served, to serve him concretely. And you are, dear brothers and sisters, in the face of Jesus.



At the main railway station Wien Hauptbahnhof.





Meeting with Cecily Corti.



Helping in the house of the Missionaries of Charity.

Next day Mercy Team had a guest speaker Dr Gattus Hösl who came to give a lecture on Conflict management. How to communicate effectively? How to avoid misunderstandings? How important is it to stay calm and show empathy while trying to resolve a conflict? These and many other questions were brought up and answered by Dr. Hösl who has a great expertise and knowledge in the sphere of communications and conflict solving. The lecture was full of real life examples and humor and provided lots of food for further reflections.



Dr Gattus Hösl

Like in the book of Ecclesiastes which affirms that 'There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens' (Eccl 3;1) there was also time for everything during the Bro&Sis weekend: the time for lectures and teachings, the time for the Holy Mass and Adoration, the time for praise and worship, the time for visiting the city and of course the time for creativity and fun.



Those who sing – pray twice!

Fr. Martin from Priest Band



Creativity evening.



Dance in your joy! Dance before the God!



Praise God, all my being praise the Lord!



God is speaking to His people...



Sharing meals is also a way to build bridges :)



Cleaning can be fun when you do it together :)



Sightseeing in Vienna.



Group photo :)

The weekend has finished with the celebration of the Holy Mass singing together the hymn of the WYD Krakow.

And here are the stories of some of the volunteers. We asked them to share how they found out about the project, why they decided to join it and what they liked most about the weekend.

This is joyful **Jitka** from the Czech Republic:



I came to the Youth Forum in Częstochowa as a just graduate ESM student and I learnt about the Bro&Sis from my schoolmates who invited me to come there.

As I was already in Częstochowa, I decided to participate, as it would have been a pity not to. Indeed there was no reason not to and I already knew I wanted to participate as a volunteer at WYD. So it was an easy choice :) Although not planned :)

What did I like most about this weekend?

Only after this weekend meeting in Vienna I realized, how important it is to get to know each other. And that is what I liked about it the most. The fact that I got to know the people much better, which made me more connected, more involved, I felt like I am a valid member of this amazing event, which was started by my beloved St. John Paul II.



Another participant found out about the project just passing by...Now **Krzysztof** is one of the coordinators of the team inside Mercy Team. Indeed God's works are amazing! But let us give him a word:

My name's Krzysztof, I'm 25 years old. I come from Częstochowa but now I am living and studying in Cracow. This year Forum was special for me. It was a time of hardships and immense spiritual struggles for me. I was at a dead end and had nobody to turn to for help. You know it was like in that psalm 'In my distress I called to the Lord; I cried to my God for help.' But He seemed to keep silence. One day just after my daily prayer I was passing through Biegańskiego Square and saw some tents. That's how I found out that the Emmanuel Community Forum began. Deeply in my heart I heard the Voice telling me 'This is my answer'. Immediately I called my boss and told him that I would take a week off and joined the Forum. And finally I felt like I found my place, I experienced a great joy and the love of God through the people I met there, I did feel like I was surrounded by my brothers and sisters. So when I heard about the Bro&Sis project I didn't doubt even for a second! I experienced so much joy that I couldn't and didn't want to hold it back, I wanted to share it with other people! I wanted to be their brother!

For **Krzysztof** the highlight of the weekend is 'the atmosphere of love and mutual support we live in which makes me feel like home.'

Some of the volunteers made all the way from far away countries to join us!



Hi! I am Sally Magdy from Egypt. I am a mechatronics engineer and I worked as a sales executive in a petroleum service company in Egypt.

The person responsible for the Emmanuel community in Egypt sent me the link. I checked the website and contacted the coordinators on Facebook. Vey soon father Arek contacted me back.

I joined the project because I would like to be God's volunteer and serve Him. I already had an experience of being a volunteer with the Emmanuel community. Last year I helped during the Forum in Alttoting, Germany and I really enjoyed it.

I liked being between my brothers and sisters in community, knowing them, sharing 3 days together, live praising God, have passion through compassion...sharing life.

Do YOU want to engage in something meaningful? Develop your skills? Meet people that are passionate about what they do?

Become a volunteer for the World Youth Days!

Join the Mercy Team!

Next meeting will take place in January 15-17th 2016 in Katowice, Poland. Even if you can't attend WYD, you are welcome to be a part of this international youth weekend of friendship, service and joy!

Registration for the weekend – till 20th December!

*Join us! Send your application and the CV: **bro-sis-wyd2016@emmanuel.eu***

Here you can find video with impressions from weekend in Vienna: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b0DgBcJd55w>

At the Bro&Sis facebook fanpage there is more photos: <https://www.facebook.com/www.broandsis/?fref=ts>

Photos: Archive of the Emmanuel Community