

SAINT FRANCIS UNIVERSITY



Meeting Our Brothers and Sisters Around the Globe

CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION AND OUTREACH NEWSLETTER

FALL 2008

STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

France

www.francis.edu/France.htm

Honduras

www.francis.edu/Honduras.aspx

Ireland*

www.francis.edu/CCSAHome.htm

Italy

www.francis.edu/SpringtimeInItaly.htm

London

www.francis.edu/London.htm

Mexico

www.francis.edu/SpanishInMexico.htm

Scotland*

www.francis.edu/CCSAHome.htm

*the Ireland and Scotland programs, taught by SFU professors, are offered through the Cooperative Center for Study Abroad. Additional offerings through this program may be found at www.ccsa.cc

DAY OF REFLECTION PRESENTATION

A presentation of our study abroad programs, *Meeting Our Brothers and Sisters Around the Globe*, will take place on the Day of Reflection, October 28th at 1:15 p.m. in Padua 111 (CES credit).

STUDENT BLOGS

Don't forget to check out the blogs of the students currently in France. The students have lots of pictures and stories to share. You will find the blogs on <http://www.francis.edu/Blogs.aspx>.

STUDY ABROAD REUNION

The first annual Study Abroad Reunion was held September 29th on the front patio of the JFK Student Center. The weather provided the perfect setting for dining "al Fresco." Students who traveled abroad as well as those interested in doing so gathered to celebrate their experiences. Jim Donovan and the SFU Drum Ensemble entertained as did Chuck Olson and several students on guitars. The event was a huge success with about 80 people joining us for the food and fun!



GOING BACK TO OUR IRISH ROOTS

With the celebration of Founders' Day just behind us, you might consider traveling to Ireland to retrace the footsteps of those who founded Saint Francis University. Study abroad opportunities are not just for traditional students. As with many of our study abroad programs, you may participate in Dr. Kirk Weixel's *Travel Writing in Ireland* program for credit, or non-credit (if you are 26 years of age or older). The program takes place May 18th – June 2nd and is sure to be an experience of a lifetime. For more information, contact Dr. Weixel at kweixel@francis.edu or x3194.



*Students who study abroad return exhilarated by their experiences.
They are more confident and bring fresh perspectives back to the classroom.*

REFLECTION OF THE SPRINGTIME IN ITALY PROGRAM

by Rebecca Wojtaszek, Italy 2008

The month I spent abroad as part of the Parma Program was definitely the opportunity of a lifetime. Traveling to Italy is something that I have always wanted to do, and I am so glad to have experienced the country as a student in Parma. One of the best aspects of Parma is that, although it is the home of such renowned things as Parmesan cheese and prosciutto (yum!), it surprisingly has a low tourist population. Because of this, we students were able to experience Italy in its truest form. We were surrounded by native Italians who spoke very little English, ate authentic Italian dishes, and learned how to live in the heart of gorgeous and historic Italy. In fact, after weekends spent visiting bustling cities of tourist attractions, English-speaking foreign travelers, and souvenir stands, it was a great comfort to return "home" to Parma and enjoy the true, laid back Italian atmosphere.

Unlike traditional trips abroad, the Parma program allowed me to truly create the experience that I wanted to have. Rather than having every minute of every day planned to the minute, the program allowed me flexibility to decide how I wanted to spend my free weekends. In the end, I was able to visit more sites in which I was interested than I might have on a planned tour. While traveling with my close friends to such sites as St. Peter's Basilica and the Vatican Museums, Rome's Colosseum, the tombs of St. Francis and St. Clare, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, Cinque Terre, Florence, Milan, and Venice I actually felt as if I were an adult traveling the country with my friends, not a child on a school field trip.

Much more than an opportunity to see all of the sites that Italy has to offer, Parma Program offered courses that truly encapsulated everything that a study abroad experience should be. Not only were we students learning courses *in* Italy, but through the coursework, we were able to learn much *about* Italy as well, taking full advantage of our surroundings and learning in a truly unique fashion. The Italian course, for example, went far beyond one that might have been offered in an American classroom, for the material presented was essential to our ability to survive confidently in a foreign nation for a month. My Art History course, too, came to life, because I did much more than merely look at images in a book or on the Internet; I was able to interact with these famous works on a daily basis, experiences that far surpassed the viewing of reproduced facsimiles. Photography with Los Angeles photographer, Scott Miller, too, opened doors for its students, teaching them how to capture the culture and experiences around them, gaining skills that they will be able to use for the rest of their lives. Being able to study guitar and develop a friendship with Rob James, The Clarks' phenomenally talented guitarist, was an opportunity that can never be matched or surpassed. Jim Donovan's Hand Drumming students were also afforded truly unique opportunities to learn how to play a musical instrument and perform in once-in-a-lifetime venues, an international stage and at an Italian music school. I can say with all sincerity, that I actually looked forward to attending these classes. In a short period, both in and out of the classroom, I gained a lifetime of knowledge and experiences that I will not soon forget.



REFLECTION OF THE MEXICAN ORPHANAGE EXPERIENCE

by Jenna Carland, Mexico 2008

Orphanage is defined as an institution devoted to the care of children whose parents are deceased or otherwise unable to care for them. I found that an orphanage offers so much more. When a child is born into the world, he has nothing but his mother. The children living in the orphanage lost what, to me, is the most basic gift in life. They do not have a family. That is, until the orphans were adopted by the orphanage.

The institution in Mexico provides the basic life necessities to each child, of course, but it also gives all the children the family that they lost. At Nuestros Hermonos Pequenos, the children live in a small community. Interestingly, the children are not open for adoption, representing a strong family. Everyone, including the children, works together to keep their family strong and resilient.

Visiting the orphanages inspired me, as well as intrigued me. This was the first time I realized what I take for granted. The children at the small orphanage were ecstatic at the sight of toilet paper and other common supplies. The children here cared less about our toys, and even our clothing. They were starved for love and affection.

I am thankful for each of my experiences in Mexico, but the orphanages proved to have the most lasting impression. Children come from broken homes, from garbage dumps, and from families lost to death. They demonstrate a seemingly innate strength that is simply incredible, both the orphans and the caretakers. They inspired me to put my whole heart into my education, something that many of them will never experience. The children also reinforced my desire to become a teacher.

I have seen the struggles and the pain that people suffer through every day, pain the children should never have to endure. Now, setbacks in my life take a lighter hold, and I am encouraged to continue no matter what may be thrown at me in life.



Perhaps travel cannot prevent bigotry, but
by demonstrating that all peoples cry,
laugh, eat, worry, and die, it can
introduce the idea that if we try to
understand each other, we may even
become friends.

SAINT FRANCIS STUDENTS IN THE FRENCH NEWSPAPERS AGAIN...

Article translated by Dr. Vincent L. Remillard from *La Dépêche du Mid, Albi*, August 27, 2008

EDUCATION. At the Ambialet priory students from the American university in Pennsylvania have arrived.

FRENCH CULTURAL IMMERSION FOR LINDSAY, TED AND JIM

As planned, they arrived in France last Friday. Four students from Saint Francis University in Loretto, PA, moved into their fall semester residence at the Ambialet priory. They will stay in France until mid-December, time for them to deepen their knowledge of the French language, to discover various culinary specialties, to pursue studies of medieval history and of religious pilgrimages, for three of them to continue their studies in accounting and in history for the fourth person. "These courses are not taught in a traditional manner," according to Gérald Honigsblum, "but rather as an immersion, a socio-economic outlook of France and Europe." Consequently, visits to large French firms are part of the program: Airbus, EADS and aeronautics in general. But there are also visits to small and medium-sized businesses - right up to the small producers of goat cheese, according to the Director at Ambialet, Tim Perkins.

AN EXPERIENCE OF A LIFETIME

But why did two 19 year olds, Lindsay and Jim, 18 year old Ted and 20 year old John, choose to do studies at this picturesque site of the Tarn Valley? In still halting French (they didn't study it in the USA), they sought adventure, opportunity and an experience of a lifetime, as reasons for coming to France. And after four days their immersion seems to be having a positive effect: discovering the surroundings, biking, tennis, canoeing and enjoying refreshments on the shaded terrace of the Presqu'île café.

To be completely immersed in French culture, the language is learned in the context of French cuisine. "From the preparation of meals to the cleaning up afterwards, it's an excellent way to come to terms with the language," explains Gérald Honigsblum, "You have to read the labels, count, weigh, measure, know the names of fruits, vegetables, meats and other ingredients." And then to finish by savoring all this with delight, it speaks for itself...



TWO STAYS IN PARIS

From now until their return to the USA in mid October, the four American students will make two trips to Paris. A visit to the capital is a must for their first trip to France, as their professors emphasized.

This kind of first-rate education is not affordable to all American students. "In the USA higher education is very costly, much more than in France, even for students receiving financial aid, according to the Ambialet Director. Tuition comes to almost 13,700 euros and add to that another 7,000 euros for food and lodging. But to discover France from the Ambialet priory is priceless.

GET TO KNOW OUR CAMPUS IN FRANCE



The Spring 2008 Semester in France Alumni are doing a presentation on their experiences during their four months in Europe. Mr. Tim Perkins, resident director will also be available for the presentation. This event, complete with French snacks and beverages, will take place on Tuesday, October 21st at 7 p.m. in Torvian. All are welcome.

Photo to the left: back view of SFU's Campus in France