



Graduates of the International Theological Institute Leaders for the Church and Society



Absolventen der Hochschule Trumau
Führungskräfte für Kirche und Gesellschaft



International Theological Institute Catholic School of Theology

The International Theological Institute (ITI) is an Ecclesiastical Theological Faculty initiated by his Holiness Pope St. John Paul II in 1996. Since 2009, it has been housed in the twelfth century castle in Trumau near Vienna, Austria.

Young people from all over the world come here to study Catholic theology as a unified whole within which particular attention is devoted to the theme of marriage and the family. Through a seminar pedagogy at the ITI, students learn how to work with and reflect upon texts. They carefully read, question, and discuss *primary sources* written by great masters of the Western tradition.

The ITI Library provides world-renowned commentaries on Holy Scripture, works by the Church Fathers, and by saints, philosophers, and theologians from antiquity to the Middle Ages and to the present day.



The international character of the Institute grants our students a unique opportunity to experience the beauty of the Universal Church within Her Eastern and Western traditions. Daily participation in the Divine Liturgy or Holy Mass, and daily adoration of the Eucharistic Presence of Christ dispose towards heavenly grace, which complements the intellectual life by deeply enriching and transforming spiritually.

A rich community life of single people, married couples, families, priests and religious offers a valuable example of an authentic Catholic life to pursue. There is a great ambience in which to discern a life vocation.

Here we endeavor to ensure that students receive a formation of their whole person. ITI graduates step forth into their future with a solid theological education, alongside being strengthened with the example of lived virtues and solid principles by which to grow. They leave their *Alma Mater* with a mission to change the world for the better, to become what God wills them to be!

The International Theological Institute offers the following degrees granted by the authority of the Holy See:

- Master of Sacred Theology (*Sacrae Theologiae Magister, STM*) (also validated by the State of Austria)
- Licentiate in Sacred Theology (*Sacrae Theologiae Licentiatius, STL*)
- Doctorate in Sacred Theology (*Sacrae Theologiae Doctor, STD*)
- Master of Studies on Marriage and the Family (*Master in Studiis de Matrimonio et Familia, MMF*)

The International Theological Institute also offers a one-year *Studium Generale* Catholic liberal arts program for high school graduates.



INTERNATIONAL THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE |
CATHOLIC SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

“...for matters too great for human understanding have been shown you”

Sirach 3:23

Theology as “the queen of the sciences”



On June 14, 2014 **Johannes van Voorst tot Voorst** (STM 2013) was ordained a priest in the diocese of Haarlem-Amsterdam in the Netherlands. He is presently serving as a parochial vicar in three small parishes focusing on work with youth and children. Among 1000 priests from around the world, he was given special faculties of confession during the Holy Year of Mercy by Pope Francis. He is also involved in projects such as Charismatic Renewal, the KISI Kids (God's Singing Kids) around his country. He regularly

gives catechesis and lectures at youth groups and events. A short visit to the ITI in 2011 led him to leave the Seminary in the Netherlands and promptly join the ranks of the ITI students.

In all its humility the ITI has great strength

The ITI has been very dear to me. Breathing with both lungs of the Church, East and West; living, studying, praying together with a great intensity; studying the teachings of the Fathers, Councils, and Great Theologians; studying not to remember something but in order to get to know Christ; as a seminarian living on campus with priests, families, single students, religious; building very profound friendships; having dinner with professors, chaplain, fellow students and their families from all over the globe, but so strongly united in Christ - all of these things and so many more make the ITI what it is.

Life at the ITI helped me very much to deepen my priestly vocation in Christ! Having an example of several holy priests, living with fellow seminarians, and being close to families who wanted to support me in growing in my very own vocation contributed to its intensity.

The studies at the ITI have been a great blessing, as they challenged me

very much, and actually taught me how to think according to the faith, according to the Truth of Jesus Christ!

I remember vividly my classes on Christ's Incarnation, being several times in awe in the middle of the class while studying questions on the Eucharist according to St. Thomas' *Summa Theologiae*. What profound depths of truth! It still seems like I grasped only a fragment of it! In the studies itself, and in our common prayer, and also in a campus life where lively discussions are part of daily life, one thing was always at the center: the search for the Truth and nothing but the Truth itself, Christ Himself. One way how this found its expression in daily life was the abundant opportunity to adore the Lord in the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, to be in His Presence, to be transformed by Him.

Quite a few young people ask for spiritual direction or have questions about our faith. Thanks to my ITI formation, I am often able to help them think through a question and treat more basic questions behind the apparent one. It is thanks to the ITI, which has taught me how to think as theologian and Christian, I do not only know things about the faith, but I can help the youth a lot more constructively in finding their way to Christ in this confusing society. Thanks to a seminar method and reading the Church Fathers etc., I can often recognize a trend of thinking in a question and answer with arguments used by the Fathers or Church Councils! I am surprised by it every time!

Because of the solid formation I received, thanks be to God, I would like to keep sharing those riches with everyone who wants to grow in Christ. Very recently, I have actually started to brainstorm with others who have a similar desire to found a kind of an institute or platform for deeper formation in faith, the Catholic faith as rooted deeply in Scripture and Tradition. There are some small things here and there, but mostly a little shallow. This poverty is present mostly because there has been little or no catechesis for most Catholics here in the past 50 years... In many ways, the Netherlands is spiritually a desert country, where almost 50% of the population claims to belong to none of the religions. However, in this desert there are some oases, although they often do not know how to get to the real good water! Because I have received much, most of which from the ITI, I think the Lord will be asking me to give much. Only when we start building again on the solid Rock, will the Church be able to face a healthy future in fidelity to Christ. ✂

The studies at the ITI ... actually taught me how to think according to the faith, according to the Truth of Jesus Christ!





“Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men”

Matthew 4:19

Mentoring people to become Catholic

Jessica Harris (STM 2010) is a Director of Evangelization at St. John XXIII Catholic Church, which deals with campus ministry for Colorado State University, which is the second largest university in Colorado with over 30,000 students. She is actively involved in teaching several classes for the university students and for adults in the community, especially those looking to convert to Catholicism. She also designed the children’s education program for the parish.

I was born and raised in a “normal” American, Catholic family in northern California. From a very young age, I loved being Catholic and loved the teachings of the Church and I loved God. This set me apart from my peers, which meant that my experience of faith was always in the context of having to defend it. Being Catholic meant that you had to be counter-cultural, and this was difficult for me as a child and as a teenager. I loved the Church, but I also loved my friends – this dichotomy brought a lot of pain and suffering in my early years.

I was first exposed to the ITI through its exchange program at Ave Maria College in Michigan. The other students who came back from the program seemed changed, as if they had participated in something truly wonderful and life-altering at the ITI. I signed up to do a semester abroad in my junior year, but due to financial circumstances, I was unable to go.

As I approached my graduation from college, I thought I had my life planned out. I was going to go to law school, study international law, and become a prestigious lawyer. But as graduation got closer and closer, the door to that path started to close, leaving me confused and lost – I no longer saw God’s will for me in my life. During those brief months when my dreams started to unravel, a friend who had spent a semester at the ITI recommended that I give it another look, this time as a full time student getting my masters. I remember thinking to myself, “Theology? I love God, but there’s no practical use for it, there’s no profit in it.” I also remember thinking, “Well, I may as well

apply and if I get in, I'll think about it." From that moment, *everything* fell into place – application, job, finances, support from family... It was abundantly clear to me that God's will was to have me be in Austria studying theology. My family was always poor by American standards, but I knew that if God wanted me to do this, He would provide me with everything I needed.

I spent three of some of the best years of my life at the ITI, first doing a propaedeutic year, followed by two years in the STM program. I was finally in a place where I no longer had to defend my faith. I was given a respite by God so that my faith could not only grow, but flourish. I was surrounded by people from around the world that I grew so close to that they were like my family. I cherish all of them in my heart to this day. I was exposed to the Byzantine Rite, which I am still involved with today at my parish in Colorado. The best times were spent on the school pilgrimages, in the common rooms of the Kartause having a community meal, and studying with my classmates. After the move to Trumau, we spent the year that I was there redeveloping the social structure and grew even closer as a student body.

My education at the ITI truly prepared me for the academic and intellectual portion of my job today. I am so thankful that I received a solid and faithful education at the ITI, since so many people are able to benefit from it now.

Through my work, the other members of the ministry staff and I have been able to reach college students and adults in the community and give them the necessary tools to truly build a deep and meaningful relationship with



God and His Church. I have personally mentored over 80 people to help them become Catholic in the last three years. Other parishes in the community have reached out to me to have me give guest lectures, and I have been interviewed by the local newspaper and the regional Catholic newspaper because of the success of our parish as a whole in reaching people and evangelizing.

I am so grateful for the time I spent at the ITI, especially for the time that God allowed me to grow and flourish in my faith. I am grateful for the professors and their wisdom and their example of striving for holiness. I am hopeful for ITI's future – the future students and the future professors that will grace its halls. I am grateful for the sense of community and the common faith that was *lived* authentically by each person there. ✂️

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Ukrainians **Halyna Deva** and **Roman Kuzytskyy** (both MMF 2013) volunteer at the L'Arche Community in Winnipeg, Canada. L'Arche ("The Ark" in French) is an international federation of communities dedicated to the service of people with developmental disabilities. It was founded by Jean Vanier in 1964 in Trosly, a French village about an hour north of Paris. While studying at the ITI, Halyna and Roman attended

monthly meetings of the *Faith and Light* community in Klosterneuburg near Vienna.

It is so interesting how God leads us in our lives. Before coming to the ITI, Roman used to work at workshops at the Ukrainian L'Arche. Later, one of our MMF courses at the ITI started with a story of Jean Vanier. We learned how he had welcomed two persons with disabilities to live with him in a small house. Soon their home grew to a community of several houses and workshops in the same village. Some of those living in Trosly left to begin similar communities in other parts of the world, at the same time maintaining strong connections of friendship and support with one another. We were inspired by this story and the course. We wanted to get an experience of living with people who have disabilities.

Now I live with community members with developmental disabilities (MWDD) in one of the L'Arche houses (there are six of them in Winnipeg). We eat, pray, celebrate different events together. The L'Arche style of life is so unique! We celebrate every day with joy, peace and valuing everybody's gift of life and talents.

Roman is volunteering at the L'Arche Tova Café. He assists the MWDD in serving the meals. L'Arche is a place to be and to become!!!

We want to thank the ITI for spiritual formation, our intellectual growth and a very warm homely atmosphere. We are so glad we had such a great opportunity to be a part of the ITI community. ✂



“As the family goes, so goes the nation and so goes the whole world in which we live”

Pope St. John Paul II

Promoting the beauty of marital life and parenthood in light of the Catholic faith

Andrea Mikolášicová (STL 2013) primarily takes care of her family - two little children and one big husband, daily pondering upon the words of a Carthusian monk: “If our life is like a pure altar-bread (*hostia*), then no matter what we do, every little act has an immense value.” She is also a chief-editor of a webpage for Christian families www.zastolom.sk in Slovakia. She launched it with her husband and a couple of friends in 2014. A mission of this website is to accompany families on their path of faith. Currently they publish four articles per week and have up to 20,000 original visitors per month.



The ITI is special because of its strong community life. It is like a little church. Fundamental for this little church is celebrating the Holy Mysteries in a community seeking the knowledge of God. Whoever becomes a part of this church can learn how to live a true life. He can then leave and carry within him this deep and precious knowledge. Wherever he goes, he will be able to found such a small church (whether a family or any kind of community) and invite others to become part of it.

During my licentiate studies at the ITI, I focused on the theology of marriage and the family. Gaining knowledge in this area was deepened by silently observing families living at the ITI student campus. For the first time in my life I saw parents who really took seriously their task to be the primary educators of their children. I saw women who joyfully decided to give the best of themselves not to a paid position (where they could be perfectly substituted) but to their family (where no one can substitute them). I saw parents coming every day to the chapel together with their children.

All of that was life-changing. It has blown away my previous image of the family life I wanted to lead and showed me in a vivid way the beauty and utmost importance of the role of parents, and especially of my role as the mother in my family.

After 21 years of studies towards finishing my licentiate at the ITI, I was looking forward to finally give, offer, and share what I have learned. I was looking forward to teach, lead seminars, and organize spiritual retreats. Truly, I started to do all of that, but something felt wrong. I was getting very tired, things got complicated all the time, I was losing peace and most importantly, my family did not benefit from my service. The opposite was true. Slowly, I let God show me that those years of studies led to my little monastery, which is my family. Here He teaches me more intimately - like in a desert - the truths I studied in books. He shows me the depths of a marital vocation and He shows me the dignity of a parental vocation.

I am not sure where God will lead me in the future. I have a deep passion for teaching and for 'sprevádzanie' accompanying people on their path to God. I will be happy, when the time comes and children grow older, when I could teach theology at a university or develop and organize formation programs for spouses and parents. I know that whatever I do in an intimate connection with Jesus will be of an immense value.

The ITI is special because of its strong community life.... Fundamental for this little church is celebrating the Holy Mysteries in a community seeking the knowledge of God.

Family is a little domestic church

My most important current service in the Church consists in taking good care for the well-being of my family by building together with my husband our little domestic church, seeking harmony between the four of us, providing a nurturing ambience where each member can grow in virtues and holiness. The ITI gave me the very basic framework of how this service may look and it gave me the zeal to work for it.

The ITI prepared me also for my current editorial work. My licentiate studies focused on theology of marriage and family, which gave me a deep and wide vision of the field of marriage and the family. It helps me to prepare a publishing plan with confidence.

My vision is to contribute to a deepening of stability of Christian marriages in Slovakia. I desire that Christian spouses truly live their marriages in a mystical way as the sacrament of love of Christ and the Church. And that as such they turn their homes into little domestic churches. ✂



“...who has given a gift to Him that He might be repaid?”

Romans 11:35

Self-denial and complete surrender to the Most High

Meixia Julia Zhang (STM 2015) is a young woman from China whose strong desire to know and love God brought her to Europe to study theology. During her years of studies, she spent most of her school holidays at the house of a monastic family of Bethlehem. The religious sisters are located near Salzburg, Austria. Their house is a place of silence and prayer. In June 2015, she received the habit of this community.



The best of sweet things

The graduating class of 2015 elected Meixia to be a class speaker at the commencement ceremony. She spoke the following:

“I want to say a word about our littleness. A bee is the smallest among flying creatures, but her product is the best of sweet things. Yes, this little bee, the ITI, had fed many souls with sweet things. I pray that this little bee would remain what she is and keep producing the best of sweet things, knowing that what she can produce is not produced anywhere else in this land, although it might have a small market for profits, as a few may appreciate the sweetness. Therefore, the little bee may be poor and remain poor. The moment when I decided to study theology, in a way insidiously I chose to be jobless; well, knowing that God always provides as St. Paul says: “In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel.” 1 Cor. 9:14.

Now on behalf of all the graduates I say thank you to our dear professors, who have been good midwives that presented good children to their mother. Dear fellow graduates, as you may have realized, the baby-swallows have grown up and are flying away. Now it is also your turn to fly and proclaim the good news, strive even to death for the truth and the Lord will fight for you. Yes, this means your life may be short lived, but with faith there is resurrection, “for from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory for ever. Amen.” Rom. 11:36 ✂

On November 1, 2015 **Andrej Makovnik** (MMF 2014), a Slovak, made the profession of his first vows at the religious institute *The Disciples of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary* in Spain. The mission of the Discipleship is expressed in three words: contemplation, communion, and service.



Drinking from the source

Andrej addressed ITI Faculty and students at the graduation ceremony 2014:

“The ITI is represented among the other things by the song we just heard: “As a deer longs for flowing streams, so longs my soul for you, o God.” Ps.42:1. These words are also depicted on this beautiful (ITI) crest. A deer is drinking from the source of water. It symbolizes the fact that we, students and professors, do our studies directly from the sources by reading great masters of theology and philosophy. Having all of these before us, let us reflect on these characteristics of the ITI, this idea of the source.

What is a source? A source is an origin, a beginning. Each thing that is in the world is here only because of its source. The thing owes its existence to the source. And everything that exists has the source, the origin. All we who are present here have been formed by many such sources.... Today you, Your Eminence, dear Rector, and the entire Faculty are added to this number.

It is quite an honor to know that we have been formed by such good Christians - you, our professors, men and women of many virtues. Let us, fellow students, therefore, be full of gratitude towards the sources, the people that formed us.

Today something else is happening as well. Today, we ourselves are called to become sources. We graduate today and go out into the world so that others can find in us the waters of theological and philosophical wisdom. This change in our lives brings not only a great deal of responsibility, but also certain emotions. Although we express joy for an accomplishment we have achieved, many of us are sad at the same time. Some of us worry that we will never see each other again. We do not know what will happen in our lives, what exactly has God prepared for us.

Let us see this sense of nostalgia not only today but always, as a remainder of heaven, the source of our hope. We are now sad because we also do not like what we have, but there in heaven. The Heavenly King will make sure we never lack anything again. To Him, the ultimate source, and the final end of everything, glory be for ever.” ✠

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“...but my words will not pass away”

Mark 13:31

Remaining faithful to the magisterial teaching of the Church in academic life

In 2014, a small group of Latin and Byzantine Catholics, comprised of both clergy and laity, including several graduates of the ITI, set up the Dialogos Institute. <http://dialogos-institute.org/>. It exists for the promotion of scholasticism by means of conferences, publications and courses of study. Its inaugural event was a colloquium marking the 50th anniversary of Vatican II's Declaration on Religious Liberty, 'Dignitatis Humanae'. The colloquium took place in Norcia, Italy, Oct. 30 - Nov. 1 2015, at the monastery of the Benedictine nuns, and was honored by the presence of Cardinal Raymond Burke.

The principal organizer of the conference, Rev. Dr. **Thomas Crean OP** (STD 2015) from England, had the pleasure of organizing it along with other ITI graduates, Dr. **Alan Fimister** (STM 2002 & STL 2014) and Miss **Diane Montagna** (STM 2002 & STL 2004). **Christopher Owens** (STM 2015) and Br. **Evagrius Hayden** (STM 2015) also participated in the colloquium. In many ways it was an ITI Alumni event.



Dignitatis Humanae is one of the most interesting and probably the most controversial of the documents of the Second Vatican Council. Ever since it was promulgated, a lively debate has continued about its precise meaning and its compatibility with other magisterial teachings about the relation of Church and state. The Dialogos Institute brought together experts from across the Catholic world to debate these questions. The colloquium took place over three days. Each speaker gave a paper on the meaning of *Dignitatis Humanae* and its relation to the Church's tradition, and each paper was followed by extensive and often lively discussion. On the third morning the two chairmen, Fr. Thomas Crean OP and Dr. Alan Fimister led a general debate about the main questions that had come to light.

The general view of all the speakers and of the participants was that the colloquium had been extremely interesting and had led to a genuine debate, something that is not always the case with academic conferences.

The Dialogos Institute hopes to organize similar colloquia on disputed theological questions, using the same format of extensive debate and discussion in 2016. ✂

Dr. **Stephan Kampowski** (STL 2000) is full professor of philosophical anthropology at the Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family in Rome. He is one of the coordinators of the Master in Bioethics and Formation organized by the John Paul II Institute and the Bioethics Institute of the University of the Sacred Heart, Rome.

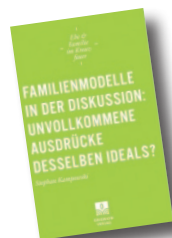


In his last book, *„Familienmodelle in der Diskussion: Unvollkommene Ausdrücke desselben Ideals?“* (“*A Plurality of Family Models: Imperfect Expressions of the Same Ideal?*” 2015) Dr. Kampowski addresses theological arguments on pastoral approaches to marriage and family, especially as these questions were raised during last year’s Synod of Bishops. The underlying principles on which these diverse “family models” are based are for the most part directly contrary to what the Christian family is all about.

Defending the Christian model of marriage, he believes “that it is possible to love unconditionally: the community of believers made up of those presently alive and those who have gone before us. We have a tremendous grace at our disposal, given that ‘God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us’ (Rom 5:5). We live in a broken world, we are sinful and fragile people, and yet, all this notwithstanding, we are able to love because of God’s healing grace.”

Love is unconditional

He continues: “loving someone does not mean to live in perfect harmony and never experience conflicts. To love according to Jesus Christ is to be struck and not to strike back, to pray for those who persecute us, to have hope even for our enemies, who may well be the members of our own household (cf. Mt 10:36)—that is, to hope for them that they may still convert and one day become our friends again. This is optimistic, all right, but it is not ideological, detached from reality. It is rather a belief in the reality of the power of God, who indeed performs His miracles. As Christians we believe that God raised Jesus from the dead. We even believe that He turns a piece of bread into Christ’s own body. How come we find it so difficult to believe He can also heal a broken relationship? He may or may not do it—and He always leaves room for human freedom—but He certainly *can* do it.” ✂



“The Lord is my strength and my shield”

Psalms 28:7

Standing with soldiers in the battles they go through

Rev. Dr. **Ervin Alácsi** (MTS 1998 & STL 2002) is a man of many talents and duties. Whenever his busy schedule allows, he pays occasional visits to the ITI in order to see his old friends (some of them are here doing different jobs) or to do some research in the library. In summer-fall 2015, he was involved in military operations on the Hungarian border in connection with the difficult migrant situation in Europe.



I was one of the very first students to join the ITI - well before its official recognition by the Holy See. It began like a true adventure in the course of which I could experience not only what the Church can do for me, but also what I can do for the Church - to quote the very words of Dr. Feugerousse, director of our program at the time.

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During the long years of my academic endeavors, professors and administrators have come and gone, but one thing never changed at the ITI: the commitment of the students to the earnest study of eternal truths in loyalty to the Magisterium and with due respect to Catholic Tradition.

After receiving my Licentiate in Sacred Theology in 2002, I joined the Our Lady of Guadalupe Seminary in Denton, Nebraska. Following an apostolic visitation of the seminary, I was sent to Rome in order to pursue doctoral studies at the Pontifical Gregorian University. Due to a disagreement with my superiors regarding my further formation and future relocation to Hungary, I left the Fraternity of St. Peter after five years and finished my dissertation on my own. I defended my thesis, entitled: “The Christological Thought of St. Robert Bellarmine - A Selective Study in Light of the Sixteenth Century Christological Controversies” with great success in 2008.

The same year, I joined the Hungarian Military Ordinariate, got ordained to the diaconate on the 6th of December and to the priesthood on

the 18th of April, 2009. On October 1, 2009, I was appointed military chaplain to the 5th Mechanised Infantry Brigade, Hódmezővásárhely Garrison. Since then, I have had two 6-month deployments first to Sarajevo, Bosnia, then to Pristina, Kosovo. As I am writing these lines, I am about to commence my training for my third foreign mission to Erbil, Iraq (Kurdistan).

Given my manifold duties as an officer of the Hungarian Armed Forces, I have very little time and energy to pursue academic work. Nevertheless, I am involved in several projects, e.g. to publish in critical editions all the available mediaeval Hungarian liturgical sources (*Monumenta Ritualia Hungarica* Series) and to create a digital library and

database for the study of Latin liturgical history in the Middle Ages and early Modern Period (www.usuarium.elte.hu). I also give lectures on theological, liturgical and pastoral topics, and translate books from Latin and English. ✂



Blessed John Henry Cardinal Newman Library at the ITI

“There is nothing on this earth more to be prized than true friendship”

St. Thomas Aquinas

Working for the good of marriage and the family; also in cooperation with other ITI graduates



Marija Magdič (STM 2008) was questioning herself why within her local Church there is so little spoken about a vocation to marital and family life. Is marriage a vocation at all? Is it a path to holiness? If not, then why would God want it? Since nobody gave her sufficient answers, she was convinced that the ITI could do so. Now she works as a program coordinator of the first Catholic Family Center in the diocese of Murska Sobota, Slovenia.

Meanwhile, she is completing her doctoral studies at the John Paul II Institute in Rome.

I believe that once you enter an international community you cannot be the same person anymore. It is simply impossible to remain unaffected when you study, eat and pray with a Benedictine monk, father of four, seminarian, person in search, newlyweds, students from East and West, or when you see a married priest with a family, participate in a Divine Liturgy for the first time and try borscht, palinka, baklava, khachapuri, Indian chicken curry, brownies and peanut butter – of course, not all at the same time. I felt that in this tiny Austrian village, an entire world came together and that I should just appreciate each and everyone who crossed my life. Many of my classmates became my friends for life. My roommate, Iris from Germany, became my sister. Today, I do not even want to think how empty my life would be without them. My friends are my greatest treasure.

The ITI principally showed me how theology and philosophy are important in today's world. Although many people find that being a theologian is “useless,” I can only say that this study opened my horizons, especially on the matters concerning the person, marriage and the family. After five years of studies, I got answers that I was looking for. I can say that I found my calling: to work for the good of marriage and the family.

When I returned to Slovenia from Rome, my bishop, Msgr. Dr. Peter Štumpf, created the first Catholic Family Center in the diocese of Murska Sobota. We, as a local Church, are ready to follow the universal Church in promoting the beauty of marriage and the family, creating occasions for true encounters between individuals and families, the young and the old, consecrated and married and helping families in need. In this way, throughout a year we offer various programs that help children, men and women, husbands and wives, mothers and fathers to recognize God's love and His plan in their lives. The center thus organizes *workshops* for teenagers (10-12 and 13-14) and young adults (18+) on affectivity, theology of the body and the beginning of life. We have just begun organizing *gatherings for women* to support them in their motherhood and femininity. Every month we organize *worship* for young families, i.e., parents with small children sing and pray before the Blessed Sacrament; afterwards while children play, an experienced couple or a priest gives a testimony of their life. Soon we are starting with a *group for men and fathers* to encourage them to be faithful to their calling. Besides those activities mentioned above, the Center offers other programs, such as *individual and family counseling* and *legal counseling for families* with a low income.



ITI helped me in discerning my vocation, in deepening my theological and philosophical knowledge, in giving me a huge network of friends and in introducing me to where I currently am.

It has also helped me by giving me great examples in my former classmates, who in different places courageously work for families. One of the key moments in my life was meeting **Gudrun Kugler** (MTS 1999), a former ITI student, who during a Thursday night lecture at the ITI presented to us an initiative *Europe for Christ*. We started collaborating with Gudrun in 2006/2007 together with another Slovenian ITI student, **Natalija Tič** (STM 2007) and brought the initiative to Slovenia. Three years later, in 2009, our ties strengthened. My husband Kristijan and I took over the Slovenian version of Gudrun's project *www.kathtreff.org*. Nine years ago, I did not know that such a brief "hello and thank you for the great lecture" would make such a change in our lives.

My dreams are that the Center will help as many families as possible to build a Christian home. I also pray that we will have the wisdom and knowledge to know how to transmit the beauty, role and dignity of the family in language that is fresh, understandable and simple. Regarding the Christian dating site, Kristijan and I hope to offer some formation programs or events for single Catholics in Slovenia. Our great desire is, of course, to one day meet the children of those couples who met through *www.katStik.si*. ✂

The ITI principally showed me how theology and philosophy are important in today's world.

Bringing Christian values into politics and business

Creating a solid ground for the well-being of a society

Dr. **Gudrun Kugler** (MTS 1999) is convinced that it is an absolute must for Christians to engage in politics. Pope Paul VI said: "Politics is a high form of charity. As a Church we all have a strong responsibility to sow the seeds of hope, with acts of solidarity and to try to work with the public institutions within our respective fields of expertise."



Gudrun did not respond to such a call with a "Pontius Pilate-like attitude" but got involved in this field of challenging but vitally important work. November 24, 2015 she started her work as member of the Vienna Regional Parliament after a successful election campaign that resulted in an impressive tally of preferential votes. In the Vienna parliament, her portfolio includes human rights and integration affairs. Gudrun will continue her role as a visiting professor at the International Theological Institute with a course on Marriage and Family in Society. <http://gudrunkugler.at/> ✂



Soon after his graduation from the ITI, **Mindaugas Kubilius** (STM 2001) started AD FONTES, a project designed for the studies of the Tradition of the Church and Gregorian chant. In thirteen years, this project has made a significant mark on the Church in Lithuania, encouraging bishops and priests to embrace the Tradition and beauty of the Roman liturgy, including that of the extraordinary form.

Because of his skill in organizing value-based projects, he was invited to organize a social project for business. This encouraged him to create an enterprise called Cezaris Consulting <http://www.cezaris.lt/>. The first social project for business was that of "Family University," which was essentially Catholic. A big telecommunication company hired them to enact a project

for families. They proposed a concept based on the IFFD method, elaborated by the Opus Dei community. It was a great success.

The enterprise has been also involved in communication projects. Later, as they gained a reputation for having solid values and skills to develop values for organization, they started being hired to create values for companies. In the same venue, as values bring companies to a right understanding of their mission and vision, they started creating visions and missions for companies. It brought them to a specialization in strategic thinking. They consult with businesses in strategy creation. Now they elaborate a strategy-creating tool based on classical/Catholic anthropology.

Alongside these activities, Mindaugas created and taught a very successful course on Classical Ethics and Modern Leadership at the Vilnius University and the ISM business school in both English and Lithuanian. He is a Faculty Member of the Department of Philosophy at the Vilnius University. ✂

James Rizza (STL 2010), after having graduated from the ITI, worked three years as the Director of Campus Ministry for Assumption College in Worcester, MA. A big project there was building and moving into the \$4.1 million Tinsley Campus Ministry Center. Another highlight for him at the college was leading two World Youth Day trips: to Madrid, Spain in 2011 and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 2013.



Later, he worked at the Diocese of Reno as the Associate Director of Faith Formation. The ministry involved overseeing the youth and young adult ministry programs for the diocese. Some activities included building a Diocesan Youth Council; preparing for the next World Youth Day in Krakow, Poland; and serving on the Synod Preparatory Committee for the diocesan synod.

His licentiate thesis at the ITI focused on morality in the financial marketplace, which remains an important advocacy of the Church. Now he is employed by Country Financial to help people insure and invest their wealth. One of the most important things he learned about Catholic Social Teaching was the importance of families being able to provide for future generations. In the United States, there has been a shift from relying too heavily on social services for retirement in favor of more commercial options. While having more options is meant to empower, most people can use extra guidance in planning the best use of their resources. He is looking forward now to being someone that can help them do that! ✂

“Take, eat: this is my body”

Matthew 26:26

Administering the Sacraments of the Church

Fr. Ioan Iulian Hotico

(STL 2006) is a third generation byzantine priest. He was ordained in December 2007 in Oradea, Romania. In 2008, he was enrolled in the doctoral program at the University of Vienna, Faculty of Sociology. That same year, he began his mission as a parish vicar in a Roman-Catholic parish in Vienna. In 2011, he was designated to help in a Romanian Greek-Catholic parish in Vienna. He is married and has two sons.



The years of studies were my best years. Because of the ITI and professors of the institute, I decided that the call to the priesthood was real. A special thank you to Dr. Larry Hogan who guided me on my way and supported me in difficult times.

Secret ingredients of successful life

What makes the ITI different is first the spirit of belonging to a commu-

How many Catholic colleges in the world would give a scholarship not only to a student, but to the whole family? I do not know of any besides the ITI!

nity and the presence of families. This is a gift from God! How many Catholic colleges in the world would give a scholarship not only to a student, but to the whole family? I do not know of any besides the ITI! Also, the quality of studies, the intellectual ability of professors, the life of prayer - all these are the secret ingredients of the success of students and seminarians at the ITI.



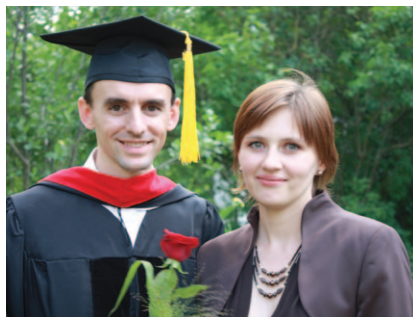
My life is guided by the motto: “*Ora et labora.*” I really try from all my heart to help people in need, not only with prayers, but also with my supplications. I know that everything that I do is not enough to ease the suffering of those people. ✂

A Ukrainian, Rev. Dr. **Eduard Shestak** (STD 2011), after completing his licentiate degree at the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome, came to the ITI to pursue his doctoral degree in Canon Law with specialization in marriage. Now he is a priest of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic in the State of Pennsylvania. He also works at the Church Tribunal of the Diocese of Scranton as a defender of the Bond. His task is to supervise that during the annulment proceedings, the sacramental marriage is safeguarded, and the decision of a judge is to be based only on the firm evidence.



Our experience at the ITI was exceptionally positive. My wife Oksana and I discovered that the life at the ITI was not only about studying theology, which was important, but first of all about being a theologian. The theologian, as the Fathers of the Church say, is not the one who knows about God but the one who knows God. Everything at the ITI is directed toward this goal – to know God.

In addition to the courses of theology, which extensively draw from the treasury of the Fathers of the Church, I experienced the richness of liturgical life in both Eastern and Western traditions. These allowed us, the students from different countries and different rites of the Catholic Church, to practice our Catholic faith in the richness of the Universal Church. As a priest of the Eastern liturgical tradition, I was able to con-celebrate Masses of the Latin rite which enriched my knowledge of the Catholic tradition, but also to celebrate the Byzantine liturgy in different languages with the students from Romania, Ukraine and the United States. Each of us was able to pray in our native language and in the language of each other.



What we discovered at the ITI was the importance of the family. We felt as a part of a bigger family to which every student belonged and was part of. We felt support, help, and understanding in many different situations.

This extremely positive experience helped us to become now a part of another family, our parish family, where we try to implement experiences which we got at the ITI. ✂

“Preach the word”

2 Timothy 4:2

Being a mouthpiece for the Church

Toma Bružaitė (MTS 2009) coordinates an initiative called “Catholic Voices” in Lithuania. Its goal is to represent the Catholic voice in public. She is one of the founders and board members of the “Free Society Institute,” an organization that was founded to promote and support political agenda, which does not contradict but implements Christian values in society. She is involved in a project of translating and promoting Pope St. John Paul II’s teaching on the Theology of the Body.



It was a time when I was ready and open for some changes in my life. I wanted to change the field of my studies from the social area to something new. I was not determined to go to study in Austria, but I applied to the ITI with an open heart, telling God: “I will do everything what is needed from my side and you do with my life anything you want.” I left my home for two years in peace and great joy, having a feeling, deep in my heart, that the time in Austria will be a life-changing experience.

Studying theology as well as our society gave me a broader perspective on what can be done in a particular situation, so that the message of the Church can be heard.

What made this school so special for me is the vision that it has. It includes everything: the Church, God’s plan for us, the society we live in, education of the person, community life and many other things. This school unites students, professors, staff members and many other different people who share that vision and are willing to live their lives following it. At the core of that vision, I saw a humble, praying, studying person, who develops his intellectual potential, grows in virtue and shares his life and himself with others, his family and friends, this school, the Church and our society.

My time at the ITI was like a two-year retreat where I learned, prayed, developed friendships, lived in a community, had fun, enjoyed nature, culture and life in general. It was a safe place to experience life from the very positive side, although, of course, there were many challenges, but that is a part of learning and living.

I left the school more mature as a person, Christian, and member of society. Because of the studies and connections that I had after my studies, I

was more equipped and I had more courage to initiate and take responsibility for different projects.

Studying theology as well as our society gave me a broader perspective on what can be done in a particular situation, so that the message of the Church can be heard. In this school, I learned what it means to work, study, and search for the truth together with others. Most importantly, the ITI helped me to discover the beauty of the Catholic Church, her teaching, liturgical and community life. That discovery is a foundation and the greatest motivation of my work and service in the Church, because it is a beauty that I want to share with others.

I will continue working in the Church, because I believe our society desperately needs that hope and wisdom that the Church has. Very often the voice of the Church or Catholics that work in different areas is not heard, because we do not know anymore how to talk with a modern society. My dream is to serve the Church by helping Her to find ways to show those, who live in this contemporary culture, the beauty of a Christian life. ✂



ITI Pilgrimage to Stift Heiligenkreuz

“And the gospel must first be preached to all nations”

Mark 13:10

Teaching Christian ethics in a Buddhist country

Arina Iavorschi (MMF 2014) graduated from the State University of Moldova with a specialty in International Relations. She completed her master and doctoral degrees in Social Sciences at the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas, Angelicum in Rome. Since August 2014, she has been teaching Ethics at the Assumption University (AU) in Thailand. She is also a staff member of the John Paul II Center for Catholic and Social Thought. Its mission is to do research in Catholic Social Thought and dialogue with other religions.



Studying and being a part of the ITI community, I learned a lot about many possible ways to serve the Church and society. The small number of students in classes strengthened relationships among us. The unique and special thing about the ITI is to be able to experience all its four pillars. I was able to study about marriage and family as part of Catholic theology, and at the same time learn more about Catholicism. It did not influence my Orthodoxy- by the way, I was the only Orthodox-Christian on the campus. On the contrary, it only enriched my religious belief.

I liked very much the idea of going directly to the sources studying Scripture as the source of all teachings, reading Doctors and Fathers of the Church. It all enlightened my faith, knowledge, and love to all and for all, as love is never ending.

Living in the international community of the ITI, the vision of Pope John Paul II was accomplished. The scholars and students came from different corners of the world and met in a small town, Trumau, a bridge functioning between East and West. I dearly remember the small and big activities we had on campus: praying together on feasts and ordinary days, organizing common lunches, enjoying good meals, and leading fruitful conversations. What I learned, studied, and experienced at the ITI is very important for my daily work in teaching and outside of teaching. ✂

Ksenia Smirnova (MMF 2014) grew up on a remote island in Russia with no churches in sight; however, it never stopped her from yearning to know more about God. Now, she also, like her friend Arina, is teaching Ethics at the Assumption University in Thailand. Soon she hopes to open a Russian Language department at the Assumption University.



The ITI is truly a melting pot where the East meets the West. Being exposed to so many cultures all at once makes you not only appreciate your own, but also understand it more. Each of us was able to bring something unique into this pot.

Small classes gave everyone an opportunity to share their opinion, enriched class and deepen our understanding of Scripture.

This is something else I am grateful to the ITI for: Friends. Being such a small community really helps to build closer friendships and, obviously, stronger bonds. Another great aspect of the ITI is a strong alliance of professors, who truly strive to help you become a better person and use your potential to the fullest.

Whether it is through classes that helped me fully embrace a passion for teaching or countless hours of talking to one of the professors, I made three very successful missionary trips to Russia. So far, twelve American students have been able to spend their summers working for parishes in Vladivostok, Khabarovsk and Nahodka all in Far-Far-Far East Russia.

It is because of classes I took at the ITI that I am able to do my job, and do it well. There are 400 students in my classes, most of whom are Buddhist, Muslims and atheists from at least 7 different countries. As you can imagine, having a Catholic curriculum and trying to bring them closer to Jesus sometimes makes a classroom a battlefield. While being at the ITI, I was blessed with the opportunity to participate in Marches for Life in various countries, and for some reason it was pro-choice protesters that I considered to be the scariest thing that could happen to me. I was wrong! Try speaking about marriage as a bond between a man and woman, and man and woman only, to hundreds of students some of whom are openly gay or/and going through gender surgery. I must admit that my whole life flashed before my eyes quite a few times during that lecture.

Teaching at a university as big as Assumption, obviously, makes me miss the coziness of my Alma Mater. I must say it is not only theological knowledge that I appreciate the most at the ITI, but also the opportunity to live out the virtues in the company of future leaders of the Church. ✂

“Education cannot be neutral... either it enriches or it impoverishes”

Pope Francis

Creating new study programs of Catholic religion



Prof. Dr. Habil. **Eugenijus Danilevičius** (MTS 2000) is the Head of the Department of Religion Studies at the Faculty of Catholic Theology of the Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas. In 2015, they administered two study programs: a bachelor program of Religious Pedagogy (qualifies teachers of Catholic faith) and a master program of Religious Education (qualifies adult religious educators). Both programs were evaluated by an international

team of experts and accredited for six years. A lay journal of Lithuanian Ratings nominated these two programs as the best in the field of religious studies in Lithuania.

The ITI emphasizes the beauty of a Christian family and community life, and not only on a theoretical level, but also in a practical way. The ITI creates conditions for students to live together with their families during their time here. As students, we could see examples of the good family life of our married professors. I have never forgotten a great initiative of the President Dr. Michael Waldstein to invite each student of the ITI to his house for a Sunday dinner together with his family.

Professors at the ITI are very friendly with students; this creates a warm atmosphere that is conducive to dialogue. There also reigns a special feeling of community life. I was pleasantly surprised, when I was invited to participate in a meeting of the ITI graduates, how warmly my wife and I were accepted by the ITI community, my colleagues, and other ITI graduates. These facts make the ITI to be unique and very different from other schools.

The studies at the ITI made a tremendous impact on my life. I saw the beauty and richness of the teaching of the Catholic Church, especially in the field of marriage and family. I built up my doctoral studies on the ground of knowledge I received at the ITI. I also do the same with regard to my personal life. The knowledge I received at the ITI helps me to create and build

the beautiful family I have.

As a professor, I am using the knowledge I received at the ITI in my teaching subject: Matrimonial Education, Upbringing in Christian Family, Christian Pedagogical Anthropology, etc. I am happy that now I feel myself to be the right person in the right place. I was especially happy when I was conferred “A decoration on the honor plaque of Kaunas archdiocese – Šiluvos Mother of God medal” in 2005 and “A decoration on medal of 400 years jubilee of Manifestation of Blessed Virgin Mary in Šiluva” in 2008.

For all this I thank God and pray for the benefactors that opened a possibility for me to develop my vocation through the study at the ITI. Dear benefactors of the ITI, I thank You for the possibility to study at the ITI, where I learned that through the Catholic Church, the Holy Spirit offers the best way to live in a family. I am happy that now I can transmit this gift, which I received in the ITI, to my students. ✂

I learned
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ITI Community Life – Common Lunches

“The family is the first essential cell of human society”

Pope St. John XXIII

Providing a Christian platform for the stability of marital unions

Felix Forzeh Formanyi (MMF 2014) became the CEO at the Global Institute for Family Integrity (GIFI) in Cameroon <https://www.facebook.com/gifinow/>. He is also an adjunct lecturer at the Catholic University Institute of Buea, CUIB; motivational speaker, facilitator, and lecturer in other higher institutions. He follows the GIFI philosophy: to save humanity, we must save the family. To save the family, we must save marriages. Strong marriages produce strong families, and thus a stable society is born.



My coming to the ITI was an act of providence. It seems my choice to study in the ITI was under divine guidance. The ITI is unique with its quality of formation. Formators and facilities at our disposal make it an excellent environment for studies. I experienced a change of mind and heart. I am confident that I was nourished in a holistic way that keeps my passion driven in my engagement.

My coming to the ITI was an act of providence. It seems my choice to study in the ITI was under divine guidance.

It has built my confidence and set pace to hold firm for my beliefs so as to live it with conviction. I am optimistic for my course “Family Integrity.” It is ideal in a world that is broken down by sectarianism, violent extremism and cultural imperialism.

Our mission (GIFI) is to offer professional and counseling services to society and building a vibrant social system through family stability and empowerment. We develop mechanisms to analyze the impact of all laws, policies and programs on family stability and autonomy. We provide cross-sectorial and socially inclusive services to the community, ensure social safety for broken families and communities, enhance the role of the family towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals/ SDGS, enable youths to cultivate responsible relationships, and citizen-mindedness so as to ensure a stable marital unions. ✂

“If family education regains its prominence, many things will change for the better”

Pope Francis

Giving parents guidelines in educating their children

During her studies at the ITI, **Dalia Dvareckytė** (MMF 2015) together with one of the ITI Professors Dr. med. **Gintautas Vaitoška** (STL 2003) developed a common project of creating DVDs for parents on how to talk about responsible and mature love with their children. She also works as a psychologist in one of the schools in Vilnius, Lithuania. She is a part of the Dominican community and a volunteer at the helpline www.befriends.org that provides emotional support to prevent suicides.



Studying at the ITI helped me to build a more solid background for my faith. I realized that it has a logical and rational foundation, that it is not only my feelings, my experiences, but also something very natural, based upon natural experience.

The teaching faculty of the ITI was always ready to help, if I had questions. I really felt so much care from professors. One of the most exciting things was the article that Dr. Newton wrote inspired by my questions – “Letter to the daughter of an atheist.”

A very big gift that I got at the ITI was being with wonderful Catholic families, taking care of their children, learning how to teach children about faith. For the first time, I learned about home schooling, and it made a very good impression on me.

My studies at the ITI helped me to have a better understanding of how Christianity can help us with our psychological problems. Of course, I cannot force anybody to believe in order to heal from some psychological difficulties, but I can share how certain things as forgiveness or being thankful can help another person in his daily psychological well-being. Being stronger in my faith helps other people trust me, because they see that I have good and strong values and then they can rely on me. Even though the ethics of psychology does not allow me to talk openly about my belief, it still pervades everything that I do or say and the others can feel it. Therefore, it speaks without words. ✂

Studying at the ITI helped me to build a more solid background for my faith. I realized that it has some logical foundation, that it is not only my feelings...

“Every single man, woman, child is the child of God, created in the image of God”

St. Teresa of Calcutta

In defense of human dignity and life

Bryan Gonzalez (STM 2010) is the Director of Development for InnerVisions HealthCare in West Des Moines, Iowa. He is a board member for a local Catholic homeschooling support group, he is active on the Pastoral Council at his parish, and a co-founder of a men's book club called “The Well-Read Gentleman.” Together with his wife Kilty, they help prepare engaged couples for marriage at their parish.



Iwould like to emphasize four characteristics, which set the ITI apart:

The rich community life where students, both married and single, lay and religious, gather frequently together for dinners, prayer meetings, and conversation. These informal gatherings promote comradery and life-long friendship of the good, true, and beautiful.

Reading the original texts. The primary texts are Aristotle for philosophy and St. Thomas for theology. With that background, other scholars, teachers, and writers are studied and read, but they are our masters under our one Master, Jesus Christ.

Studying theology on one's knees. While it is important to read Scripture, study the Church Fathers, and write papers, the ITI students do these things while before the Blessed Sacrament, or just after Holy Mass, or they place their studies on hold to pray Akathist or the Rosary with their roommates. Realizing that the object of their study is not just a degree, but the *Logos* – the Word of God – is a way of describing the pedagogical approach of the ITI.

Breathing with both lungs. The international character of the ITI welcomes students from both the East and the West, those of the Latin Rite, as well as those from Eastern Rites. To this day, I am forever indebted to my

wonderful roommate during my first two years, a Byzantine seminarian at the time, who is now a married priest in Slovakia. Aside from teaching me how to serve the Divine Liturgy and sharing some wonderful Byzantine and Slovakian traditions, he taught me patience, how to articulate myself clearly, and how to be more caring towards others. My worldview changed for the better having known Peter. Ďakujem, Petco!

I now work for the InnerVisions HealthCare. It is an unplanned pregnancy and STD medical clinic that serves men and women who find themselves in vulnerable and desperate situations. We offer truthful, non-judgmental, and compassionate medical care – pregnancy tests, STD tests, and counseling – and do our best to eliminate the need for an abortion. Additionally, the clinic gives sexual integrity education to the men and women who visit the clinic, with the hope that our abstinence-only philosophy will give them the education they need to make informed choices the next time they are faced with a difficult decision. Since all the services are free, we rely on the generosity of our friends and supporters to help defray program costs and medical services.

Occasionally, I get to give some talks on theology of the body, helping young people realize that God has a plan for their sexuality. Also, I taught religious education for two years, helping prepare high school students for confirmation. My wife Kilty and I help prepare engaged couples for marriage, using the theoretical and practical parts of our studies, not to mention the positive interactions and testimonies which the wonderful families at the ITI shared with us non-married students. ✂

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Byzantine Chapel at the ITI

„Geht hinaus in die ganze Welt, und verkündet das Evangelium allen Geschöpfen!“

Markus 16:15

Sommermission in Haiti

Schwester **Christina Maria Schwarz** (STM 2014) setzt ihr Studium im Lizentiats-Programm am ITI fort. Gleichzeitig arbeitet sie als Assistentin des Generalvikars für die Gläubigen des byzantinischen Ritus in Österreich. Im Sommer 2015 hatte sie die Gelegenheit, in der Pfarre St. Joseph in L'Asile in der Diözese Nip-pes in Haiti zu helfen.



Haiti ist eines der ärmsten Länder der westlichen Hemisphäre. Trinkwasser muss normalerweise gekauft werden. Für viele Menschen ist es keineswegs selbstverständlich, jeden Tag eine ordentliche Mahlzeit zu sich zu nehmen und nur jene, die sich Sonnenkollektoren leisten können (das heißt, auf dem Land nur ein Bruchteil der Bevölkerung), verfügen über Elektrizität. Die Straßen bzw. Wege sind bis auf einige größere Verbindungen sehr schlecht, Fortbewegungsmittel sind neben den Motorrädern (die auch oft als Taxi verwendet werden) noch sehr oft Esel und Maultiere.

Die Pfarre St. Joseph in L'Asile zählt ca. 30 000 - 40 000 Personen. Abgesehen von der großen Pfarrkirche direkt in der Ortschaft, gibt es 11 teilweise sehr desolate und entlegene Kapellen. Der Franzose P. David Fontaine betreut die Gemeinde. Seit sechs Jahren wirkt er in Haiti und seit zwei Jahren steht er seinem Bischof Mgr. Dumas als Generalvikar zur Seite. P. David wird als Pfarrer ständig um materielle Unterstützung gebeten, die er auch nach Kräften gewährt. Unabhängig von der materiellen Armut gilt seine große Sorge aber vor allem der geistigen Armut und der Oberflächlichkeit des Glaubens.

Die Mehrheit der Einwohner bezeichnet sich zwar als katholisch, ist jedoch weder in der Lehre noch in der Praxis des Glaubens wirklich verwurzelt. Die Menschen lassen sich daher leicht von evangelikalen Gruppen und Freikirchen begeistern oder sind in den Voodoo-Kult und den damit einhergehenden Aberglauben verstrickt. Es fehlen gut ausgebildete Katecheten, die den Gläubigen helfen, eine persönliche Beziehung zu Christus

aufzubauen.

Zu den großen Schätzen der Hochschule ITI zählt, dass die Studenten – sowohl durch das Studium als auch durch das Gebetsleben – genau zu dieser persönlichen Beziehung mit Christus hingeführt werden.

Man lernt und erlebt, dass es wichtig und notwendig ist, die Theologie im eigenen Herzen sozusagen lebendig werden zu lassen. Deshalb war es eines der zentralen Anliegen dieser „Sommermission“, den Gläubigen die stille Anbetung als Quelle und Herz des persönlichen Gebets näher zu bringen.

Ein zweiter Schwerpunkt war die Katechese für Kinder und Jugendliche. Das Schulsystem in Haiti orientiert sich am „Auswendiglernen“. Die Mentalität „Autorität hat immer recht“ sitzt tief in den Menschen dieser ehemaligen Diktatur; selbständiges Denken, Hinterfragen und eine aufrichtige Suche nach der Wahrheit – so wesentlich für die Persönlichkeitsbildung – werden nicht oder nur sehr selten gefördert.

Dank meiner Ausbildung am ITI konnte ich nicht nur mein Wissen weitergeben, sondern den Kindern und Jugendlichen auch vermitteln, dass es gut und wichtig ist, Fragen zu stellen und nach der Wahrheit zu suchen.

So blicke ich am Ende dieses Sommers einmal mehr mit Dankbarkeit auf meine Erfahrungen am ITI zurück. Dieser Ort mit seinen Studenten aus verschiedenen Ländern und mit verschiedenen Riten hat meine Freude am gemeinsamen Glauben entfacht, in einzigartiger Weise meinen Horizont erweitert und mich ermutigt, auf andere zuzugehen und zuzuhören.

Das gemeinsame Studium der Quellen empfinde ich nicht (nur) als eine Aneignung von Wissen, sondern vor allem als Nahrung für meinen Glauben und als Ansporn, immer mehr nach der Wahrheit, nach dem Wesentlichen zu suchen.

Mit diesem am ITI empfangenen Fundament hoffe ich, anderen helfen zu können, sich auf die Suche nach der Wahrheit zu be-

geben. Menschen mit der Freude an unserem katholischen Glauben anzustecken, mit der Freude an Christus, der sich uns in den Sakramenten gibt. Ich möchte die Freude an der Freiheit weitergeben, die uns die Lehre der Kirche schenkt, wenn wir versuchen, sie von Grund auf zu verstehen und zu leben. Der vergangene Sommer in Haiti war eine wunderbare Gelegenheit, das am ITI Empfangene mit anderen zu teilen. ✂

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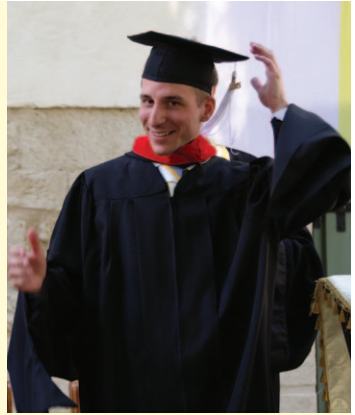


„...denn sie sollen eins sein, wie wir eins sind“

Johannes 17:22

Im Dienst der Versöhnung und Einheit der Christen

Nach dem Studium am ITI übersiedelte **Florian Vorisek** (STM 2015), ein echter Wiener, nach Jerusalem, um seine theologischen und sprachlichen Studien fortzusetzen. Er inskribierte am *Institut Albert Decourtray* Vorlesungen zur jüdischen Tradition, Geschichte und Theologie sowie hebräische Literatur. Besonders am Herzen liegt ihm ein theologisch vertiefter jüdisch-christlicher Dialog sowie die Einheit der Christen, insbesondere die Ökumene zwischen Ost- und Westkirche. Außerdem möchte er, so es sich ergibt, den Pilgern die heiligen Orte erschließen, an denen die Worte der Offenbarung in einzigartiger Weise Gestalt und Leben annehmen und die auch inmitten von Leid und Hass wahrhafte Quellen des Heils und der Hoffnung darstellen. Besonders wichtig sind ihm das Fürbittende-Gebet für verfolgte Christen im Nahen Osten, die Kinder- (KISI Kids) und Jugendpastoral sowie der Dienst an Armen und Kranken.



Die Grundpfeiler des Theologiestudiums am ITI waren genau das, wozu ich mich als Theologiestudent schon lange gesehnt hatte: Theologie in ihrer Einheit und Ganzheit zu studieren und als primäres Ziel Gott in Jesus Christus besser kennen zu lernen. Ich darf nun, nach Jahren intensiven Studiums und Lebens am ITI, mit großer Dankbarkeit auf eine der wohl prägendsten Abschnitte meines bisherigen Lebens zurückblicken. Das Theologiestudium am ITI war gekennzeichnet durch ein intensives Suchen und auch Ringen um ein tieferes Erkennen und Verstehen der Wahrheit, der ganzen Wirklichkeit, die uns durch die beiden „Bücher“ *der Schöpfung und der Offenbarung* und mithilfe des kirchlichen Lehramts zugänglich ist. Mein erstes Jahr am ITI war besonders herausfordernd, da sich das Eintauchen in die Sprache und das Denken der alten Meister, wie des Hl. Thomas von Aquin, schwieriger darstellte, als ich erwartet hatte. In meinem Ringen wurde ich jedoch von meinen Professoren wie von meinen Mitstudenten oft

ermutigt, nicht aufzugeben, wofür ich ihnen sehr dankbar bin.

Zusammenfassend war das ITI für mich eine Schule der Wahrheitssuche und der Unterscheidung der Geister, eine Schule der Freundschaft und Gemeinschaft sowie eine Schule der Schönheit und des Gebets.

Was das Theologiestudium und meinen Glaubensweg betrifft, so habe ich gelernt oder besser gesagt, zu lernen begonnen, dass die Suche nach der Wahrheit ein Weg geduldigen Suchens ist, der Ausdauer und Demut erfordert, im Wissen und im Vertrauen darauf, dass die Wahrheit, die ganze Wirklichkeit der Person Jesu Christi mich noch viel mehr sucht und umarmen möchte, als es mir je möglich sein wird, diese zu erfassen.

Besonders vom Hl. Thomas von Aquin habe ich gelernt, überall die Wahrheit zu suchen, auch da, wo ich sie am wenigsten vermute. Ich hoffe, dass er mich und alle, die wir gemeinsam auf dem Weg der Wahrheitssuche sind, weiterhin durch seine Offenheit inspiriert, auf andere zuzugehen, aufmerksam zuzuhören und sorgfältig zu unterscheiden; durch seinen Mut, über den eigenen Tellerrand zu blicken und die „Anderen“ oder anders Denkende nicht zu verurteilen; durch seine leidenschaftliche Liebe zum Herrn, seinen unruhigen Geist, der sich nicht mit einfachen Antworten zufrieden gibt, durch sein Herz und seinen Verstand, die ganze Wirklichkeit und das Wesen Gottes immer tiefer zu erkennen und zu lieben sowie durch seine Demut vor dem letztlich unaussprechlichen Geheimnis Gottes und seine Liebe und Treue zur Kirche.

Last but not least sei noch das beeindruckende Zeugnis der Familien mit ihren vielen Kindern erwähnt, die hier am Campus leben und zum Teil auch studieren – ein Zeugnis authentisch katholisch gelebter Ehe und Familie, das gerade in der heutigen Zeit für mich als heranwachsenden jungen Mann eine große Ermutigung darstellt. Ebenso ermutigend war das Zeugnis der Priester und anderer Geistlicher, die am ITI leben und dienen, die sich zu so gut wie jeder Tages- und Nachtzeit für eine Beichte oder ein einfaches Seelsorgegespräch Zeit nehmen.

Das lebendige, authentische Zeugnis von Christen aller Lebensstände, die zusammen mit dem Herrn unterwegs sind und ihm in den *Ups and Downs* des täglichen Lebens nachfolgen, zähle ich zu den kostbarsten Erfahrungen am ITI! Dafür bin ich Gott und allen, die die große Familie des ITI bilden, Faculty und Staff, meinen Lehrern und meinen Mitstudenten, Familien und Geistlichen zu großem Dank verpflichtet! ✂

Zusammenfassend war das ITI für mich eine Schule der Wahrheitssuche und der Unterscheidung der Geister, eine Schule der Freundschaft und Gemeinschaft sowie eine Schule der Schönheit und des Gebets.



Segnung der Kinder



„Ich bin die Mutter der schönen Liebe“

Sirach 24:18

Die schöne Liebe rund um
die Welt verbreiten

Elisabeth Sunario (STL 2015) ist das Thema der „Schönen Liebe“ wichtig. Sie hat eine Homepage www.mutterderschoenenliebe.at kreiert und auch eine Novene zur „Mutter der Schönen Liebe“ verfasst (Mediatrix-Verlag). Mit dieser Andacht bittet sie die Gottesmutter um die Gabe der demütigen Liebe. Sie unterrichtet Deutsch für ausländische Studierende an der Hochschule Benedikt XVI. in Heiligenkreuz und für Priester am IKAP Institut der Erzdiözese Wien.

Am ITI habe ich drei unglaublich schöne Jahre verbracht und so nette Menschen kennen gelernt, wie ich mir das nie erträumt hätte. Es waren drei Jahre der Herzlichkeit, der Freundlichkeit und der Geistlichkeit.

Ich erzähle vielen Menschen, dass man am ITI das Leben kennenlernt, wie es „sein sollte“: ein wirklich christliches Leben mit jungen, innerlich und äußerlich schönen Menschen! Ich habe hier zusammen mit internationalem Flair ein Stück „gutes altes Österreich“ erfahren, unterschiedliche Sprachen und Kulturen. Außerdem konnte ich mein Englisch vertiefen.

Das ITI hat mich gelehrt, worauf es im Zusammenleben, im Unterricht, im Studium ankommt: auf ein Leben aus dem Gebet – daraus erwachsen gute Früchte für alles Weitere, so wie es in der Bibel steht: „*Suchet zuerst das Reich Gottes, und alles wird euch dazugegeben werden!*“ Ich habe trotz „christlicher Entschiedenheit“ viel Toleranz erlebt, viel Lachen und Humor, viel karitatives und soziales Engagement.

Das ITI ist fast eine Art „*Paralleluniversum zu unserer heutigen Zeit*“, ein Hauch von Ewigkeit. In den Jahren, in denen ich in Wien als Deutsch- und Religionslehrerin sowie als Pastorsekretärin arbeitete, wurde ich mit Depression, innerer Verelendung, Verwundungen und Kirchenfeindlichkeit konfrontiert. Ich sah die inneren Kämpfe inmitten einer „verwundeten Gesellschaft“. Meine Arbeit war damals sehr anstrengend und ich suchte einen Ausgleich. Ich wollte etwas Schöneres, Besseres sehen.

Das ITI als Ort der „*Schönheit, der Schönen Liebe, der Quelle der Theologie, der Anbetung*“ hat sich unauslöschlich in mein Herz eingeprägt und ist ein wesentlicher Bestandteil meines Lebens geworden.

Es ist mein größter Wunsch, dass das ITI erhalten bleibt und als Hochschule möglichst vielen Menschen näher gebracht werden kann. Gerade in unserer heutigen Zeit, in der es so viele Ehescheidungen gibt, wäre es wichtig, viele gut ausgebildete Theologen in die Welt, in die Schulen und in die Pfarren zu schicken, um Priester und Lehrer in ihrer Ehe- und Familienpastoral, Jugend- und Firmapastoral zu unterstützen.

Gemeinsam sind die Christen stark!

Es wäre auch wichtig, gesellschaftspolitisch wirksam und sichtbar zu werden. Möglichst viele Christen sollten sich zusammenschließen, um eine Stimme in der Gesellschaft zu erheben, in den Medien, in der Politik, im Bildungswesen. Gemeinsam sind die Christen stark!

In Anlehnung an die Familiensynode (Oktober 2015) hat das ITI viel zu bieten: die Theologie des Leibes sowie die Lehrgänge für Ehe und Familie sind zentral.

Ich möchte mich auch gerne für das ITI engagieren und all das in meine Lebenswelten einbringen, was ich hier an Geistlichem, Sozialem und Theologischem lernen durfte. Ich kann nur jedem empfehlen, am ITI zu studieren, denn das Studium „ad fontes“ ist das Wesentliche. Es ist wunderbar, die primären Quellen zu studieren und in Kleingruppen auszutauschen. Es ist eine unvergessliche Erfahrung! ✂



Graduierungsfeier im Schlosshof

„Sag nicht: Ich bin noch so jung“

Jeremia 1:7

Jugendliche für Jesus und den Glauben begeistern, ihnen das Handwerkszeug mitgeben, aktive Christen zu sein



Dorothea Ludwig (MMF 2013) ist Jugendreferentin im Bischöflichen Jugendamt in Augsburg. Im Rahmen dieser Tätigkeit plant sie Großveranstaltungen wie die Teilnahme an den Weltjugendtagen. Sie ist Ansprechpartnerin für *Jugend 2000* in Augsburg, eine der neuen geistigen Gemeinschaften. Außerdem ist sie für die Öffentlichkeitsarbeit im Internet zuständig.

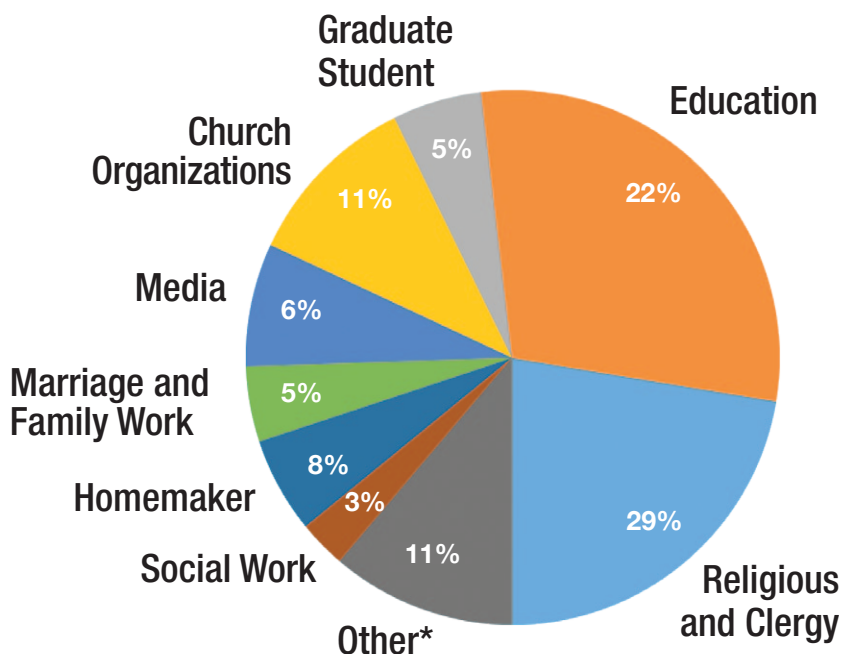
Wie das Studium mein Leben verändert hat, ist schwer zu sagen. Da gibt es so vieles! Vor allem natürlich das Wissen, das mir vermittelt wurde. Gerade jetzt, da auch in der Kirche in Deutschland heftigst über Ehe und Familie diskutiert wird, bin ich oft im direkten Gespräch in der Lage, den Leuten zu erklären, was die Lehre der Kirche eigentlich ausmacht. Ich habe am ITI gelernt, wie man in einer Diskussion ein Argument richtig aufbaut. Das würde ich ohne mein Studium am ITI nicht können. Aber auch mein aktives Glaubensleben wurde durch das ITI sehr stark geprägt – sei es die tägliche Messe (die im Berufsalltag gar nicht so einfach unterzubringen ist) oder die Anbetung.

Ich habe am ITI gelernt, wie man in einer Diskussion ein Argument richtig aufbaut.

Durch das Studium sind mir viele Dinge bewusst geworden

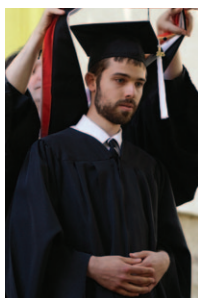
Es fängt mal damit an, dass ich meine Stelle gar nicht bekommen hätte, wäre ich nicht am ITI gewesen. Seit einem Jahr gibt es in Augsburg ein Orientierungsjahr für junge Erwachsene. Ich konnte meine Erfahrungen, die ich am ITI gemacht habe, gut in dieses Projekt einbringen. Jugend 2000 leistet hervorragende Arbeit im Bistum, immer mehr Jugendliche finden zum Glauben und möchten diesen auch aktiv leben. ✨

ITI Graduate's Primary Professions



Data from ITI, Easter 2016 241 surveyed graduates

* Other professions include: politics, medicine, insurance, information technology, carpentry, accounting, business consulting, and advertising







Studium Generale Program

The ITI also offers a one-year certificate program *Studium Generale* (SG) for young men and women, who, after graduating from their high-school, search for the answer to the question of life formation. Who am I as a human person and as a unique personality? What is the goal of my life? What is my life's vocation? How can I live out my vocation—which characteristics and virtues do I possess? Which ones do I need to develop to be a fulfilled human person? How do I master the art of learning for the sake of fostering the formation of my life as a well-educated and informed person? Whom should I serve in my life and how? Where is my place in society and in the Church?



The program assists students to discern their life's vocation. Whether students go on to pursue further studies or not, the formation they receive during their *Studium Generale* year helps them to develop their potential to thrive in whatever walk of life God calls them.

Here are some testimonies of the students:

Ein Jahr, das das eigene Leben wirklich zum Besseren verändern kann

Leopold Prüller (SG 2013) stand in seinem letzten Schuljahr vor einem bekannten Problem. Er hatte überhaupt keine Vorstellung, was er mit seinem Leben anfangen sollte. Begeistert vom *Studium Generale* kam er an das ITI. Heute studiert er Alte Geschichte und Orientalistik in Wien.



Das Eigenartigste an meinem Jahr am ITI war, dass ich, obwohl ich mich noch immer in meiner Heimat Österreich befand, oft das Gefühl hatte, in einem völlig anderen Land zu sein. Am ITI waren viele Osteuropäer, Amerikaner und sogar Studenten aus Russland, China und Australien. Das hat nicht nur meinen kulturellen Horizont erweitert (ich hatte noch nie zuvor an einem Thanksgiving-Dinner teilgenommen), sondern verbesserte auch mein Englisch. Vor Trumau wäre ich sicherlich nicht fähig gewesen, die Werke von Thomas von Aquin im Englischen zu lesen.

Eines hatten aber alle Studenten gemeinsam – sie waren sehr sympathisch und besaßen einen fundierten Glauben an Gott.

Das Studium selbst hat mich begeistert. Studenten und Professoren hießen einen gleichermaßen willkommen. Unsere Lehrer waren offenherzig und höchst intelligent. Außerdem hatten sie die Fähigkeit, Fragen sofort zu verstehen und fast immer befriedigend zu beantworten. Aber das Wichtigste war, dass sie einen tiefen Glauben an Gott zeigten, der für das Studium der Theologie wirklich notwendig ist.

Das Jahr am ITI hat meinen Glauben gestärkt (wöchentliche Anbetung und tägliche Messe helfen sehr!), aber auch mein Denken und mein Wissen über Menschen und ihre Kulturen bereichert. Ich habe eine feste Grundlage in Theologie erhalten, die in der täglichen Konversation über den eigenen Glauben unabdingbar ist.

Ich kann das *Studium Generale* nur jedem empfehlen, der nicht so genau weiß, wohin mit sich. Es dauert nur ein Jahr, aber dieses Jahr kann das eigene Leben wirklich zum Besseren verändern. ✂

Eines hatten aber alle Studenten gemeinsam – sie waren sehr sympathisch und besaßen einen fundierten Glauben an Gott.

It was unique and enriching



Once she completed the *Studium Generale* program, **Madeleine Savage** (SG 2013) went back to her previous studies while working at a Catholic retreat house, whose mission is to aid the youth in fostering their faith. She pursued a degree in Earth Science and Geography at Oregon State University. It was at that university that she became involved in the local Newman Center, which undertakes Catholic campus ministry. It was there that she had many opportunities to participate in pilgrimages, retreats, and countless other programs. She was able to go on a mission trip to Belize where she and her team were able to share their faith and serve the local community. Currently, she continues working for the Newman Center and starts an internship, helping with a program which teaches children about nature and science.

The first I heard of the ITI was at a time in my life in which I was asking a lot of questions about my faith, what was my purpose and what was I supposed to do with my life. It was the *Studium Generale* program which immediately interested me due to its main goal, which is to teach and to answer those types of questions. It was in my second year of university that I was able to attend the ITI, along with the help and support of my family and many friends.

The ITI was unique in comparison with any other schools I had ever attended, with its vibrant community life as well as the daily focus on one's faith and the Mass. The time I had at the ITI was not only that of theological learning but that of culture as well. It was so enriching to be able to live and study next to, and with so many different cultures and traditions, due to the vastly international student body and staff.

There were so many great classes and professors at the ITI. I took many classes ranging from Introduction to Philosophy, Ethics, Sacred Scripture and so many more. I was never unsatisfied with the classes I took, because each seemed better than the next. I now find myself constantly applying the things I learned at the ITI to my current studies as well as in day to day conversations. My education at the ITI aided me to learn more of my faith as well as instill within myself the desire to always seek knowledge of the Truth.

My time at the ITI has truly helped me learn more about my faith as well as to aid me in my discernment of what God's path for me is, which has taken me not only closer to Him but to those with whom I interact every day. ✨

A year of a very long retreat

Zarah M̄yhad (SG 2014) is back in her home country of the Netherlands to continue her studies in history. At the same time, she teaches history at a high school. Taking an ITI example of attending evenings of testimonies by married couples, at which they shared their life experience as a family, she organizes such meetings for her friends who are currently in a courtship.



I took a year off from my study in the Netherlands and decided to follow the *Studium Generale* program, because it was just one year and the program was presented as to teach me how to study. I could develop my whole person and deepen my knowledge about my faith.

What makes the ITI special for me is that it is a theological institute. Theology is taught there from the source, our mother Church.

This kind of theology is not offered at the universities in the Netherlands. What is also special is that I learned a lot about the byzantine and orthodox Church there as well. I liked it very much that the ITI is a small institute in a small village. In this way, I got to know people with whom I lived in a very good relation. I did not miss the big outside world that much when I was at the ITI, I actually loved the small community. Because of that, my year at the ITI felt like a very long retreat and it was so good.

My life changed a lot. I really learned how to study. Most of all, I learned who I am as a person and what it means to be truly Catholic. My friends and family who have known me for a long time said that when I came back home that I looked happy, more at ease.

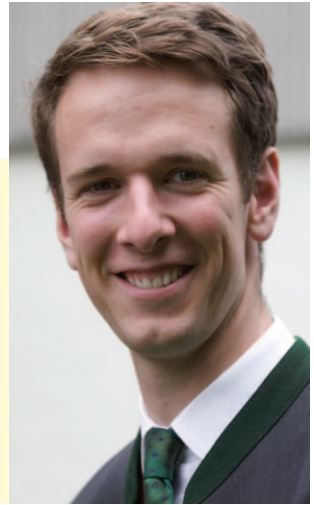
During my life at the ITI and the summer after, I discerned and tried to discover what God's plan for me was. It was so helpful that other people of my age thought about this as well. When I finally thought I had figured it out, I met this great guy at my university in September 2014. Sometimes God makes us wonder for a while, so that His plan is very clear when you discover it.

I finally know what I believe and why. Most of all, it taught me that God is very Good! ✂

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as a person and
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Ein Jahr der Selbsterforschung

Johann Jakob Khuen (SG 2014) wurde in Linz geboren und ist in Bologna und Bozen aufgewachsen. Er besuchte die Wirtschaftsfachoberschule Bozen, spricht Deutsch, Italienisch und Englisch, treibt gerne Sport und reist viel. Im Anschluss an das *Studium Generale* entschloss er sich, seine Ausbildung am ITI zu vertiefen und inskribierte ein Magisterstudium in Theologie.



Ein Gedanke hat mich in den ersten Wochen am ITI besonders beschäftigt: Es war der Blick auf den Lehrplan, der mich fragen ließ, weshalb ich von diesen Fächern so gut wie keine Ahnung hatte.

Wie kann sich aber jemand in einer Welt zurechtfinden, die er nicht von Grund auf verstanden hat, oder wenigstens versucht hat, zu verstehen?

Nach der Matura stellen sich viele Schulabgänger die Frage, was sie einmal werden wollen. Aber es ist genau diese Frage, die die meisten in eine missliche Lage bringt und die sich dann auch oft noch durch ein gewisses Unbehagen in einem bereits gewählten Studium äußert. Zumal man sich dann fragt, ob man wirklich auf dem richtigen Weg ist. Aber den richtigen Weg, den gilt es *zu finden* und nicht *zu nehmen*. Genau darauf zielen die oben erwähnten Fächer ab, die hier gelehrt werden: auf die Erforschung, die Erkenntnis seiner selbst.

In diesem Jahr habe ich in vielen Fächern aufgeholt, die mir während meiner Schulzeit zu einem tieferen Verstehen der Zusammenhänge, die sich hinter den einzelnen Gegenständen verbergen, geholfen hätten. Denn Fächer wie Logik und Anthropologie stellen in gewisser Weise Grundvoraussetzungen für ein klareres Verständnis all jener Bereiche dar, in denen junge Leute heutzutage in der Schule unterrichtet werden. Von Biologie und Physik über Mathematik und Wirtschaft bis hin zu Buchhaltung, Marketing und Wirtschaftsgeographie ist ein klares Verständnis vom Aufbau logischer Argumente und der Lehre vom Wesen des Menschen unumgänglich. Hinzu kommen am ITI noch Ethik, Naturphilosophie und natürlich Theologie. Kenntnisse in diesen Bereichen helfen uns nicht nur, „das Wahre“ vom „Falschen“ zu unterscheiden, sondern helfen uns, in allen Bereichen des Lebens, des Studiums und der Arbeit, einen tieferen Sinn zu sehen und dadurch mehr Freude an dem zu gewinnen, was wir zu tun haben.

Das Schöne am ITI ist, dass es genau auf diese Art von ganzheitlicher Bildung Wert legt. Man wird nicht *belehrt*, man *lernt*. Das Studium ist nach der

Seminarmethode auf dem Prinzip aufgebaut, dass man sich den Stoff selbstständig erarbeitet. Texte und Schriften sind in der Bibliothek in den Grundfassungen vorhanden, das bedeutet, dass man in erster Linie lernt, die Originaltexte zu studieren und nicht die Sekundärliteratur.

Damit wird ganz einfach vermieden, unhinterfragt Denkmuster von Interpreten zu übernehmen. Auch werden viele Themen außerhalb des Unterrichts weiter diskutiert, so zum Beispiel beim abendlichen Zusammensitzen, sei es im Sommer an Lagerfeuern oder einfach nur beim Frühstück in den Gemeinschaftsküchen. Hat man Probleme, schwierige Fragen oder Aufgabenstellungen zu lösen, so bietet ein gemeinsames „Brainstorming“ die besten Voraussetzungen für spannende Gespräche, bei denen auch der eine oder andere Tropfen Wein nicht fehlen darf.

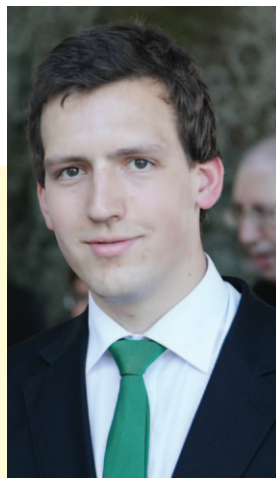
Es ist eine kleine heile Welt, in der man für eine gewisse Zeit lebt und die man ungern wieder verlässt. Das gemeinsame Gebet, die Gottesdienste in verschiedensten Riten, Ausflüge, Vorlesungen, Bälle und Sportaktivitäten nehmen einen mit-hinein in das „katholische Abenteuer“ ITI, das die gesamte Campus-Gemeinschaft, zu der auch Familien und einige Professoren zählen, in freundlichem Umgang miteinander reifen lässt. Das Schloss und der Schlossgarten bieten zudem einen guten Rückzugsort für intensive Lernzeiten oder zum ruhigen Lesen. Am ITI geht es eben nicht nur um das Lernen von Inhalten, sondern um die Bildung der ganzen Persönlichkeit und um die Stärkung des Selbstwertes. Die Theologie ist hier „das Rezept“ zum Erfolg, denn nur durch sie schauen wir zwar in die gleiche Richtung, können aber individuell wachsen und reifen, ohne Angst haben zu müssen, dass dies nirgendwo hinführt.

Das ITI bereitet einen in einer ganz speziellen Art und Weise auf das kommende Leben und ein etwaiges Studium vor. Es nimmt die Angst, sich bei dem heutigen Überangebot an Studienrichtungen entscheiden zu müssen, indem man zu klareren Einsichten über sich selbst findet, es zeigt Interessen und Wissenslücken auf, die dann zu einer entsprechenden Motivation werden, in eine bestimmte Richtung weiterzugehen. Besonders denjenigen, die sich unsicher fühlen, was ihre Zukunft anbelangt, kann ich nur ausdrücklich empfehlen, dieses Jahr der Selbsterforschung auf sich zu nehmen. ✂



Verleihung der Dekrete durch S.E. Kardinal Dr. Christoph Schönborn, Großkanzler der Hochschule

Ein geniales und unvergessliches Jahr



Mark Goda (SG 2015), geboren in Voitsberg in der Steiermark, absolvierte nach der Matura am Gymnasium in Köflach das *Studium Generale*. Im Anschluss daran begann er an der Universität Graz mit einem Medizinstudium. Die Richtung, die er später als Arzt einschlagen möchte, ist noch unklar. Aber er spielt mit dem Gedanken, so wie sein Vater Chirurg oder Anästhesist zu werden. Beide Eltern stammen aus Ungarn. Abgesehen von Deutsch, Englisch und Französisch spricht er auch Ungarisch. Als viertes von sechs Kindern wurde er bereits in Österreich geboren. Neben seiner Faszination für die Philosophie liebt er das Theater und reist sehr gerne. Sein Lebensmotto: „Nicht die Armen brauchen uns, sondern wir brauchen die Armen.“ (Jean Vanier).

Das *Studium Generale* am ITI war für mich nicht nur ein unglaubliches Jahr und eine enorme Bereicherung, sondern hat mich auch für mein weiteres Leben geprägt.

Einerseits habe ich Grundlegendes für mein alltägliches Leben gelernt – und damit meine ich das tägliche Aufstehen in der Früh, das richtige und effektive Lesen von herausfordernden Texten, praktische Tipps beim Kochen oder einfach das Annehmen von Schwierigkeiten ohne gleich zu murren. Andererseits aber nehme ich mir aus Kursen wie Anthropologie oder Moraltheologie wesentliches Wissen für mein Medizinstudium und meine spätere Tätigkeit als Arzt mit. Gerade in diesem Beruf geht es oft um Leben und Tod, richtige Entscheidungen müssen in kürzester Zeit getroffen werden. Die persönliche Formung im Alltag und im geistlichen Leben, die äußerst interessanten Lehrfächer und natürlich die vielen Freundschaften mit Menschen aus der ganzen Welt machen das *Studium Generale* am ITI zu einem genialen und unvergesslichen Jahr. ✂

Neu: zweisprachiges Studium Generale

Mit September 2015 begann das ITI mit der *Philosophisch Theologischen Hochschule Benedikt XVI. Heiligenkreuz* zusammenzuarbeiten und bietet neben dem englischsprachigen *Studium Generale*, das seit Jahren sehr erfolgreich läuft, ein zweisprachiges – Englisch und Deutsch – *Studium Generale* an.



INTERNATIONAL THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

Our Mission Statement

The mission of the ITI rests on four pillars

THE FIRST PILLAR is the founding intention of Pope John Paul II. The ITI was founded for the study of Catholic theology as a unified whole within which particular attention is devoted to the theme of marriage and the family. A solid theological formation is needed for Catholic leaders, lay and clergy, to achieve critical judgment in our culture and the capacity to contribute to the new evangelization, which is especially needed in the area of marriage and the family.

THE SECOND PILLAR of the ITI, also part of John Paul II's founding vision, is its international character, its bridge function between East and West. This international character allows a genuine experience of the universal Church, which must "breathe with both lungs" (John Paul II), East and West.

THE THIRD PILLAR of the ITI is its pedagogy, which consists in studying the original writings of the great Masters of Theology, especially the Fathers and the Doctors of the Church, in addition to Sacred Scripture. Contact with original texts develops an eye for quality, especially in theology. The great masters lead faculty and students most directly to the realities discussed in theology, above all God himself. This pedagogy also develops the virtues of active reading, attentive discussion and penetrating understanding.

THE FOURTH PILLAR of the ITI is a rich Catholic community that lives and prays together in the same place and its close vicinity. The example of the Christian family life lived by many among the faculty and students offers the most persuasive and practically helpful evidence of the beauty and practicability of that life. It also encourages the formation of religious and priestly vocations and their blossoming.

It is the simultaneous presence of these four pillars that constitutes the strength of the ITI.

For further information please visit: www.iti.ac.at
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