



As January 1st rolled around, the four of us Navigare were excited to see what the new year entailed. Getting to spend Christmas with the Disciples and traveling to Paris were definitely experiences that we will cherish forever. But the greatest part of this year is not the countries we go to, the churches we see, and not even the amazing Spanish food! The greatest part of this year is that we get to spend it in a community.

There are many aspects of community that are present in our year of Navigare. First and foremost is the community present among the four of us Americans: Calvin, Stephen, Gabe, and Mark. Setting out on this year we had no idea what to expect. Going to a new country, thousands of miles away from home, that speaks a new language is no easy task. On top of that, adjusting to the new way of life, studies, and helping out with kids every week can make some parts of this year a little overwhelming. However, it is made easy through the brotherhood present among the four of us. When one of us is struggling with something, odds are another one of us is as well. We study together, travel together, and grow together. And while we may all come from the same place, we all bring something unique to the table.

Stephen Suddjian simply put it the man you go to for help. He is incredibly talented in music and plays the piano every day for mass and prayers. It just so happens that the four of us can carry a tune so if a song is to be learned Stephen will be the one to help us learn it. He came over to Spain with a very good grip on Spanish so whenever we need help understanding something or if we get lost on our way to applying for our residency cards... Stephen is the one to help us out. He also practices calligraphy and inspires each one of us to write better.



Calvin Farrell is the man of many hidden talents. We discovered this on one of our first nights here in Spain where the entire community was sitting around singing Spanish songs. The next thing we know Calvin is up and Irish step dancing. A skill that he learned from his neighbor. He is a talented singer and usually sings the high notes when Navigare sings a song. He also plays his trumpet over here and outdoes us in fashion every day by sporting his Denver Broncos scarf.

Gabriel Innerst since day one has been entertaining us with his octave mandolin. He puts a lot of work into practicing the beautiful instrument and it shows when he performs during different community events. He undoubtedly has the best sense of humor out of all of us and he can make us laugh in both English and Spanish! He ensures that we all have a good time and he has a passion for learning and reading. He always has a book to read and if there is a good book in the house it will probably find its way into Gabe's hands.





As for myself, Mark Lederhos, I try to keep things entertaining within the group. Whether it's getting a cookie from my forehead to my mouth without using my hands or performing a magic trick for the community, I always try to make someone smile. Out of the four of us, I am the only one who doesn't play an instrument. But don't worry, I make myself useful by singing to my heart's content and with a lot of prayers, and a little bit of luck, the four of us can sound pretty good together!

The aspect of community is strong among the four of us but it can't compare to the incredible bond of the community as a whole. The community is what makes this year so rewarding. The brothers and priests help us to grow every day and make it possible to do things we never imagined. Every week there are always times of community. Whether it be a soccer game or sitting around on the couches talking about something, community is always put first. This manifested itself when we stood around and sang songs on New Year's. We gathered around and sang songs from Spain and from the United States blending the cultures that make up the Disciples. We then finished off the night with performances from every house and from many individuals as well. Everything from poems to piano, mandolin to magic tricks, there was something that everyone was able to share with the community.



After New Year's the brothers and Navigare headed to a house in Valencia while the priests had a General Chapter and elected a new Superior General. The Disciple's house in Valencia has hundreds of orange trees growing beside it and we took advantage of it, having orange juice and fresh oranges every day. It was very different than the New Year's we are used to having back in Colorado. The days were beautiful and sunny and the nights were pretty chill but overall it was a very nice break from the busy Disciple life. While there, we visited a life-sized nativity scene in the city of Xativa filled with hundreds of full-scaled sculptures depicting the different aspects of



Bethlehem on Christmas. The whole thing was very impressive and contained many live animals including a cow, donkey, and even a



camel! That day we received the news that the new Superior General of the order had been selected; Fr. Jose Granados. To celebrate, all of the brothers enjoyed Spanish churros just across the street from the nativity scene. After spending a weekend with the brothers there was no better way to end it than eating churros and drinking chocolate!

Along with the selection of the new Superior General, all of the priests met during the General Chapter to renew the constitutions of the order and to look back on the past six years. They talked about what can be improved and what the community as a whole can focus on. A General Chapter happens every six years and is an important part of the community. It was great to see the priests from Colorado and talk with them about how things are back home. And while being away from our families is hard, we are comforted by being welcomed into the family of the Disciples. A family of fraternity.

