



As the first days of December rolled around, the community of the formation house took a trip to Burgos, Spain. We all hopped in the cars and headed north for about three hours. Burgos is both a province and the name of the capital city of this province. Before Spain was united in 1492, it consisted of many smaller kingdoms. In the 11th century Burgos, the city, became the capital of Kingdom of Castile. It's the birthplace of the National hero of Spain, El Cid, who helped fight against enemy Moorish and Christian territories eventually conquering and ruling the province of Valencia until his death in 1099.



We first stopped at the Cathedral of Burgos, the burial place of El Cid, and were given a tour of the cathedral by Fr. Michael Hellín. This cathedral is known to be one of the greatest Gothic buildings in all of Spain. It was consecrated to the Virgin Mary in the year 1260 while the construction of the side chapels finished in the beginning of the 14th century.



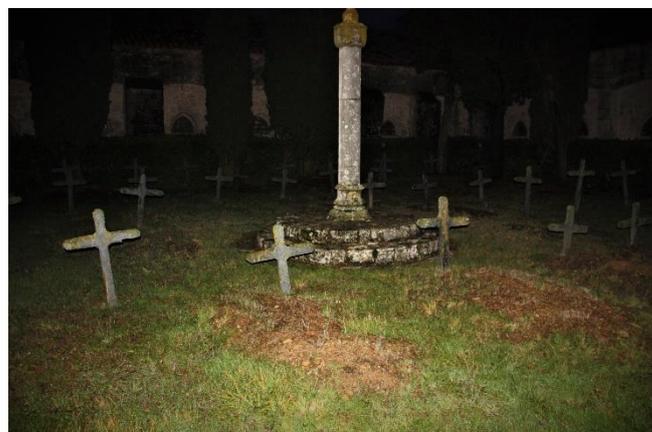
Afterwards, we took a short walk down the street to look at a previous house of the Disciples. They started renting one apartment in the late 80s and later on rented the apartment right next to it. To connect the two, they cut a hole in the wall. It was a beautiful street with the Cathedral and the seminary within a few hundred feet from it.

Later that day, we had the privilege of visiting the Carthusian monastery of Miraflores. While there is a museum and touristic part of the monastery, we were actually allowed to go inside and speak with the Superior of the monastery, Don Pedro. Considering how cloistered the monks live and the strictness of their rule of life, we were extremely fortunate to be able to enter the monastery as well as talk to Don Pedro for over an hour. He is an extremely kind and holy man, and the things that



he talked with us about were amazing to listen to. He spoke to us about prayer and how prayer is not to God but in God. That God and prayer are together. For Don Pedro, it was easy to stay with God. He said that it was harder for him to get distracted from God than it was to reside in Him. When asked about the worries of the outside world he replied that he was not afraid the things that go on in the outside world. In fact, he said that he had eliminated the word "afraid" from his vocabulary because his comfort resides in God. As we were walking through the monastery we realized just how much humanity was present there. One would think

that men who are in silence all week long except for at certain times on Sundays and regularly take part in fasting and penance would be somewhat removed from humanity. However, the exact opposite was true. The humanity present in these Carthusian monks was breathtaking and Don Pedro said that in order to have a vocation to the Carthusian Order you must be filled with humanity. The life of the Carthusian order may have removed them in many aspects from the world, but it brought out the purest aspect of their humanity. It was truly a gift to be able to witness this. As we came to the cemetery for the monks with unmarked crosses



placed over the graves of previous monks Don Pedro said that death is something normal for the community and that it is just another step for them. It was truly incredible. He then took us to their library which is filled with a countless number of books. The monks do a lot of reading and have modern books as well as books that are over 500 years old! To the right is a piece of art made by Don Pedro. It is the crucified Christ



hanging on a wooden cross. The most impressive part, however, is the fact that it is made out of one piece of metal that Don Pedro got from a refrigerator! From the Disciples of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, God bless.

