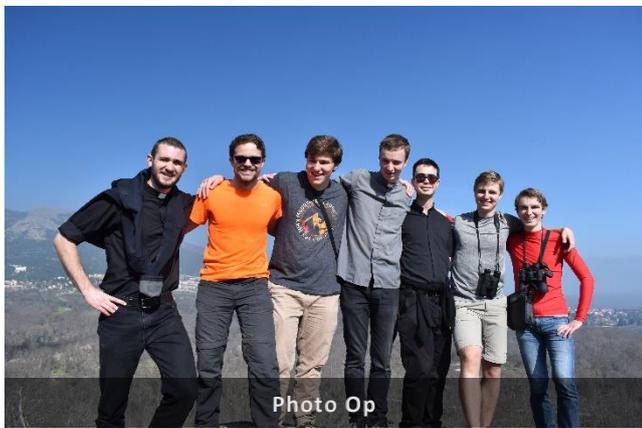


We have arrived. The end of exams. We barely made it out alive.

The end of exams is quite a time here with the Disciples, and we held several events to celebrate a successful conclusion. Our first was an all-American outing (plus a very welcome Br. José Luis) to the hills near El Escorial, former royal palace and current royal crypt of Spain. Following a car ride filled with banter, English, and questionable acapella improv, we hopped out and ascended the mountain to the stone seat where King Phillip II monitored the construction of his palace. Along the way we found an excellent photography opportunity on an overlooking rock, and we took full advantage. We



followed with a lunch straight



from the U. S. of A., including hamburgers, barbeque sauce, potato chips, and apple

pie muffins. And, of course, no picnic is complete without a game of two of football and ultimate frisbee.

Photo right (from left to right): Stephen begs for alms, Joe releases his long-repressed anger against Riley, who lays dying; José Luis happily receives his ear exam, Eric is confused by what he finds, and Calvin is... well, we don't want to assume.





The next was a Navigare-only night out (very exclusive) where we went bowling with the Honorable Tomás Sastre and the Esteemed Fr. Fernando. Fr. Fernando-- surprisingly or unsurprisingly, I can't decide which-- won both rounds, much to our chagrin. But the fun did not end there, because the following weekend the entire house of formation departed from Madrid and travelled to a retreat house near Avila where, upon arriving, we began to play the most intense game of pick-up frisbee of my life. Later that night, we held a Libroforum of the book *The*

Man who was Thursday by G. K. Chesterton (highly recommended). The following day we rose bright and early, consumed an especially hearty American breakfast, and set out for a nearby mountain. (Interesting note: Many mountains in Spain, including this one, become treeless at a much lower altitude than those in Colorado, which give them the wild, windswept beauty of the Alpine Tundra without the threat of asphyxiation). We were nearing the treeless peak when we came to a ridge overlooking an exquisitely green, reflective lake. We made an impromptu change of plans and made our way down the fairly steep mountain side (don't worry Moms, we were careful) to the rocky shore.



We found an excellent site for Mass, which we took advantage of, and afterwards tucked in to the delicious lunch we had brought. And what is the first thought that usually comes to mind after a big lunch? To jump in a lake, of course. Some of us did just that and emerged from the mountain lake feeling like new men, except in our feet, where we couldn't feel anything. Following the trek back--during which we encountered some enchanting mountain pools which we unfortunately could not jump into-- we had a Cineforum with the movie *1917*, the moving story of a young soldier in WWI with an urgent mission. On

Sunday the 23rd we celebrated the 25th anniversary of Fr. Jesus Enrique here in Stella Maris La Gavia.

P.S. The sailors of Navigare have also recently changed roles, which means that I (Gabriel Innerst) will be writing this newsletter for the next few months. If the quality suddenly plummets, you now know why.