

Ravioli, Religion, and a Reading Challenge

“So, what it comes down to is this: Who really is Jesus?” I boldly questioned Ami, my English-speaking Romanian friend from last summer's language classes. I took a sip of my drink at the Italian restaurant and leaned back in my chair. We had been discussing the similarities and differences between Christianity and Islam for the past 20 minutes or so. Later in the conversation, she asked me if I'd ever been interested in reading the Quran, and if I would read it, she could help me understand it. I paused, shifting my weight in my chair again, and said, “I would read it if you promised to read the Bible for me in the same manner, me helping you understand what you are reading.” Please pray that these conversations will continue and that she will actually read God's Word and be drawn to Jesus Christ because of it. I found out that day as well that she and her family are moving to a Middle Eastern country in a few months, so also pray that I would take advantage of meeting up with her over the summer before she leaves, and may God do a work in her heart and mind!

Mini Adventures/Vacations in June

After teacher work week, including many meetings, cleanings, and conversations, a few co-workers and I headed to the beach for a long weekend of sand, sun, and shore to kick off the summer break. Later this past month, my roommate Ali, my friend Lauren, and I did a hiking trip in the north of Spain. We walked/backpacked for 4 days, covering 89km (about 55 miles) from Santiago to the tip of Fisterra, on a route that is part of the Camino de Santiago. Normally, most people walk to the city we started in, which contains a massive cathedral, but we did the “epilogue” part of the trail, which ends at the coast! We saw many beautiful sights in the province of Galicia and met other “pilgrims/peregrinos” along the way. Click [here](#) to read more about the Camino de Santiago, a spiritual pilgrimage that has existed for centuries.

What's Next?

As I've continued living here in Spain, the need to be able to effectively communicate with Spaniards becomes more and more apparent. The need to understand, to be understood, and to effectively converse with others is vital; not just for missionary work,

but also for good community and friendships, no matter where one lives. When I was in language school last summer, I grew a lot in my language skills, but then, during the school year, I noticed that I could not maintain that growth while teaching full time at ECA. Many of you know that teaching is “more than a full-time job” because of the grading, lesson planning, and other tasks that can’t always be completed in “contract hours”. I still love teaching and have thoroughly enjoyed my time at ECA, but this next season will be a change for me. Through much counsel and prayer, I have decided that during this next “school year”, I will be the student instead of the teacher. My primary focus will be language learning and trying to utilize it in the community. Here’s what I’ve planned out so far, Lord willing.

July: Spanish language course in Madrid, Mon.-Fri., 9a-1p (starts June 30), getting together with Spanish friends (when possible).

August: Fly to the USA and spend time with family and friends.

September-May: Take trimester Spanish courses in Alcala (same school I attended last summer), Mon-Thurs, 9a-1p. Other hopes/plans: keep meeting with my discipleship group at ECA, be involved in some community activity 1-2 times a week if possible, help with a Brilla conversation class, and whatever else the Lord has for me.

Praises:

- The opportunity to focus on language learning this next school year.
- Gospel conversation with Ami.
- Quality time spent with Lauren and Allie as we walked part of the Camino.

Prayer Requests:

- For the Lord to work as I do this “reading exchange” with Ami (see first story above).
- That I would continue to walk closely with Jesus, seeking to please Him in all that I do, and that I would walk in the good works that He has prepared for me to do here (Ephesians 2:10).
- That I would use my time well this summer in strengthening relationships—my relationship with God, as well as my friendships with unbelievers (Colossians 4:5).

Thank you for your prayers, encouragement, and support for me as I continue to serve the Lord and live on mission for Jesus Christ here in Spain!

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