

## GOOD JOURNEY!

## ¡BUEN CAMINO!

It is impressive to see how pilgrims  
- who do not know each other- wish  
every fellow pilgrim a Good Journey!,

The academic year 2011-2012 was the first year to make a direct commitment to train our volunteers. In this particular case, we decided to train the volunteers going to Panama for the academic year 2012-2013 after signing a collaboration agreement between the international volunteers program "Weltwärts" and our association.

Judith Schnurr and Elena Fenchel, specifically, who are already in Panama since 7th August 2012, took part in the compulsory training activities during a 15-day period before their departure. Additionally, Anne Laible and Lara Hönig -two volunteers from the Robert-Bosch-Gymnasium (secondary school) in Langenau – are in Peru since the end of July. In this other case, the training was performed through the BDJ (Bund der Deutschen Katholischen Jugend), a kind of youth delegation within the bishopric of Rottenburg-Stuttgart, with whom we signed an agreement for a period of three years.

The experience of the preceding years taught us how important is to build a strong bond with our volunteers. This was shaped into the idea of performing eight days of training, walking part of the Way of St. James in Spain. We were interested in prioritizing the aspects of sharing and living together, the nature and the bonds with Spain – not only because of the language but also because of our twinned association "Clam per la Dignitat". From 23rd to 30th May 2012, Anne, Lara, Elena and Judith, together with the training team (the trainers) comprising Stephanie Wildenberg, Anne Wittmann and myself (the writer), we took our backpacks and flew from Stuttgart to Bilbao. Our objective was

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not to make long daily walks, neither to reach the city of Santiago, however we wanted to feel like pilgrims. With an average of 16 Km per day, we walked several parts of the Way. We spent the nights in Pobeña, Castro Urdiales, Laredo, Noja, Güemes and Santander. Every afternoon we had the time to perform the planned training activities (already prepared and scheduled in Germany by the trainers and trainees). On the last day of our journey we went to Durango, where we were kindly received by the deacon Gonzalo Eguía Cañón and his family. We spent the night at the Monastery of Clarisas in the same town. We also had the chance to share the afternoon with young people from Durango and with Leire Sarachaga, a friend of us and regular translator of our bulletin. It was a beautiful ending for an unforgettable week.

During the course of those days of pilgrimage we had the time to walk in silence, to talk, to laugh, to eat together and also, to get to know each other. The greeting amongst fellow pilgrims is very simple "¡Buen Camino!" i.e. "Good Journey!". However, it is impressive to see how pilgrims - who do not know each other- wish everybody a Good Journey!, a ¡buen Camino!. It is moving to take part in such a simple but deep experience like that of sharing with other people the simplicity and greatness of life: we all walk the same road, we all long for more humanity and love. After that first experience we would like to include eight days of team building, walking the Way of St. James in Spain, as part of the training activities with our volunteers.

In this bulletin you will find an interesting article from Lluís Serra Llansana and the presentation of our four volunteers - for the present academic year (2012-2013) - who are currently in Peru (Anne and Lara) and in Panama (Judith and Elena). Good Journey! ¡Buen Camino!

Édison Fañanás Lanau

## OVERCOME THE DISENCHANTMENT

Distinguish the permanent from the transitory, the truth from the deceit, love from the selfishness, freedom from the slavery, God from the idolatry

We live in a time of disenchantment. The actual crisis, in every level, emphasizes it. Big hopes have been withered. Great stories have lost consistency and it there is only room for the anecdote. The monotheisms have been cracked and broke apart in a thousand pieces of idolatry without limit. The political and social struggles are revealed inoperative. Their achievements crumble at the first change. The deception and disappointment emerge everywhere. The hope loses its arguments. The welfare state is sinking in quicksand. Men and women wander in their lives without the meaning that provides working for a fair cause. Meanwhile, a lot of persons distract themselves with technological devices and social networks transiting in a fuzzy search without knowing what to found.

In a radio interview, the program presenter asked me what can be done to overcome the disenchantment. I answered: "First it is needed to know why a person has been charmed about a thing and what happened that produced the disenchantment". Deception is reached when someone is charmed by things that are secondary, superfluous, transitory, banal. In this case, sooner or later we fall in the disenchantment because nothing inconsequential can offer something that fills life meaning. Sometimes happen that someone can be charmed by projects that are worth it and puts in them a lot of expectations. Then, if these projects are not successful, the disappointment arrives. Disenchantment comes, this time, from the way to confront life situations. A price is paid for the loss of realism. Everyone else do not have the obligation of please us in the fulfillment of our personal dreams. Finally, if a person is charmed by

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the essential and face it with surrender without seeking himself, disenchantment never can arrive.

What realities enjoy of this essential label? If someone is charmed by the physical beauty of a person, with the pass of the time this person falls in the disenchantment when traits are losing freshness or because any other reason. The main character of the movie "Damage", by Louis Malle (1992), destroys his family and ruins his career being passionate for his son's girlfriend. When everything is lost he expresses his last memory: «I only saw her once more. I saw her by accident at the airport, she was changing plains. She did not see me. She was with Peter. She was carrying a child. She was not different than everyone else». The last sentence is devastating. Was it worth it be charmed that way to ruin everything? Instead, being charmed by the beauty, knowing how to trace their footprints everywhere, never leads to disappointment. It is about to know how distinguish the permanent from the transitory, the truth from the deceit, love from the selfishness, freedom from the slavery, God from the idolatry. The first one captivates when it reaches the bottom. The second one attracts while it works, but eventually falls in the disappointment, that has all the ingredients of a lost. A grief it is needed to be done. Just like Saint Francis Borgia when once he discovered the death effects of Empress Elizabeth of Portugal, he claimed: «Never again serve a man who can die». To be open to realities that provide life meaning is a way of being vaccinated against the disenchantment. Temptations of easy promises are always lurking. Advertising, like charming snakes, know how to seduce us and capture us in its net. Instead, the essential has the stamp of eternity, against which there is no possible disappointment.

Lluís Serra Llansana  
("Catalunya Cristiana", 13/05/2012,  
with the author permission)

## FACING A SPECIAL YEAR

### The volunteers from 2012-2013 want to introduce themselves

ELENA (PANAMA)

My name is Elena Fenchel and I am 19 years old. I usually live in a small village in the Black Forest, where I really feel at home. Now I am studying in an Economic Institute and at the end of June I'll pass the Selectivity Test. From the beginning of August I will be living in the capital of Panama, sent by Claim for Dignity Association, to cooperate with the Mercedarios del Chorrillo Institution, where I'll stay for a year. I've always admired those who renounce to the comfort and security of the occidental culture to live and dedicate themselves, on site, to other people. Now it seems to me to be the right time to go abroad, to a foreign country, with its own culture and language, to contribute with my qualities, and where at the same time, I will learn new things. I have a year to dedicate myself to different projects, to carry out ideas or simply to give my time to other people, which make me feel really happy. With the knowledge and confidence in the fact that my heavenly Father goes along with me and is guiding me even when I am far away, I would like to cope with new challenges, correct my points of view, accept any disappointment as well as fears and homesickness, let myself be inspired, and above all, to bring a bit of love to the world.

JUDITH (PANAMA)

My name is Judith Schnurr, I am 19 years old and I have recently passed my Selectivity Test. I live in Schlaitdorf, a small town between Tübingen and Nürtingen where I was born, grew and had a very happy childhood. After leaving my school period, I am really excited to pursue new paths and to get to know other parts of the world. This is why I want to start my volunteering in Panama, in August 2012. I will live and work for a whole year in the Mercedarios del Chorrillo Institution, in the city of Panama. I think that this is a very enriching experience that can mark deeply the personality of a human being. In the meanwhile, August and the flight are coming closer and closer and this, often arouses opposite feelings in me: this year means a step to the uncertainty of going to a new country with different culture and language. Moreover, this step means that I will have to leave all my friends, my relationships and my family for a year, which I surely know will be hard for me. On the other hand, I am incredibly happy and hopeful in going towards this new beginning. I am glad to have the chance to know the way of life and the culture of Latin America and to see how people from other parts of the world live. I am also glad to have the chance to live this period of time without the European living standards, to join a completely different community and to set new friendships. In addition, I would like to add something with my skills, and above all, to be there for the children and youth of the Mercedarios del Chorrillo Institution,



Judith, Lara, Anne and Elena (left to right) on the Camino de Santiago in Spain

# experiences



who usually come from difficult conditions. I am longing to see the challenges, experiences and situations that are waiting for me in Panama!



Elena and Judith (right) with the girls of the residence

#### LARA (PERU)

Hi, I am Lara Hönig and I am 19 years old. This year I have done my Selectivity Test in Robert-Bosch's Institute, in Langenau, and from July on I will live in Arequipa, Peru, as a one year volunteer. Since the very beginning, I became excited when I took part of the partnership project of our German Institute with the Primary School I. E. Villa Independiente in a poor neighborhood in Arequipa. I always wanted to go abroad and do something meaningful, after the Selectivity Test (I love to work with children), therefore I am really happy that next year is approaching and I have the curiosity of the experiences that I will live, the people I'll meet and the foreign culture in which I will live ...

#### ANNE (PERU)

Hello, my name is Anne Laible and I am 18 years old. I am doing my Selectivity Test in Robert-Bosch's Institute in Langenau and from July on I will live one year in Arequipa, Peru, as a volunteer. Since 2008, the student council from Robert-Bosch's Institute supports a partnership with a school in Arequipa and has a dining room there as well, supervised by the NGO Claim

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for Dignity. Through my agreement with the student council, I have been able to know well the project and I would like to give my unconditionally support to it, staying there for a year. Moreover, I love to work with children, which will take up most of the time of our work in Peru. That is why I have sent my application for that position. I have a great curiosity about the Peruvian culture, their people and the new experiences that are waiting for me. I am happy to receive this amazing year and to experience, first-hand, this culture.



Anne (left) and Lara deliver the breakfast in the school Villa Independiente

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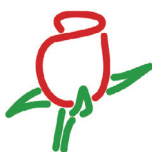
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