



Austrian Youth Summer Retreat

Tyrol, Austria, Elisabeth Cook - July 29 - August 1, 2019

Every day our mental and physical "battery" gets more and more strained. Every day many responsibilities, expectations, influences, thoughts flow into us, which drain our energy. Especially, when it's stressful with school, university or work; when conflicts within the family and in our circle of friends seem to reoccur; when our own thoughts are sometimes filled with worries and fears; when unhealthy habits dominate our lives... the questions "HOW do I recharge my battery every day? What energy sources do I connect to? With what things do I have give and take with in my everyday life?", become more important for a fulfilled Life.

The motto of this year's Youth Summer Retreat, "Unplug to Recharge" expresses: In order to recharge our spirit, to recharge our battery, we first have to consciously "unplug" ourselves from these harmful energy suckers, so that we can make space for God and reconnect to this positive source of energy!

Furthermore, an important point of this motto was, that everyone is different and there are many ways to recharge yourself, BUT we should always ask ourselves: Is this activity a healthy source of energy? Can God work through this activity and do I let Him into my heart, so that I can recharge myself with His energy? :)

From the 29th of July to the 1st of August, a total of around 20 young and young-at-heart people had the opportunity to "unplug" themselves in the beautiful Tyrolean mountains and spend time with each other, in nature, and with God, and hopefully return to their everyday lives filled with positive energy! The activities ranged from Morning Services & Internal Guidance, Prayer, Time for Sharing, HDHs about the topics of gratitude, Life & Time, God's Heart, taking a gondola ride to the Schlick 2000, adventurous hiking in the Stubaital and, despite the rainy weather, having fun with karaoke and a game afternoon with a lot of excitement!

The participants experienced these activities in 3 teams, each of them had a Tyrolean legend assigned to them: The team of Patrik Umgeher received the legend of "Mrs. Hitt", Chiara Bauer the "The Legend of the Berglsteiner Lake", and Michele Grاسبöck "The Giant Haymon". All 3 of these legends embodied a tragic fate, which the teams indemnified by rewriting the legends to principled versions and by fulfilling special indemnity-taks during the course of the retreat. On the last day we concluded the retreat with an evening stroll with prayer, games and conversations, as well as feeling very grateful to the Tyrolean community, for providing us with the church center in Innsbruck for the whole duration of the retreat!

Participants share: "I could feel God's presence the most through...

- ...the mountain hike
- ...the community
- ...the atmosphere
- ...the games afternoon.