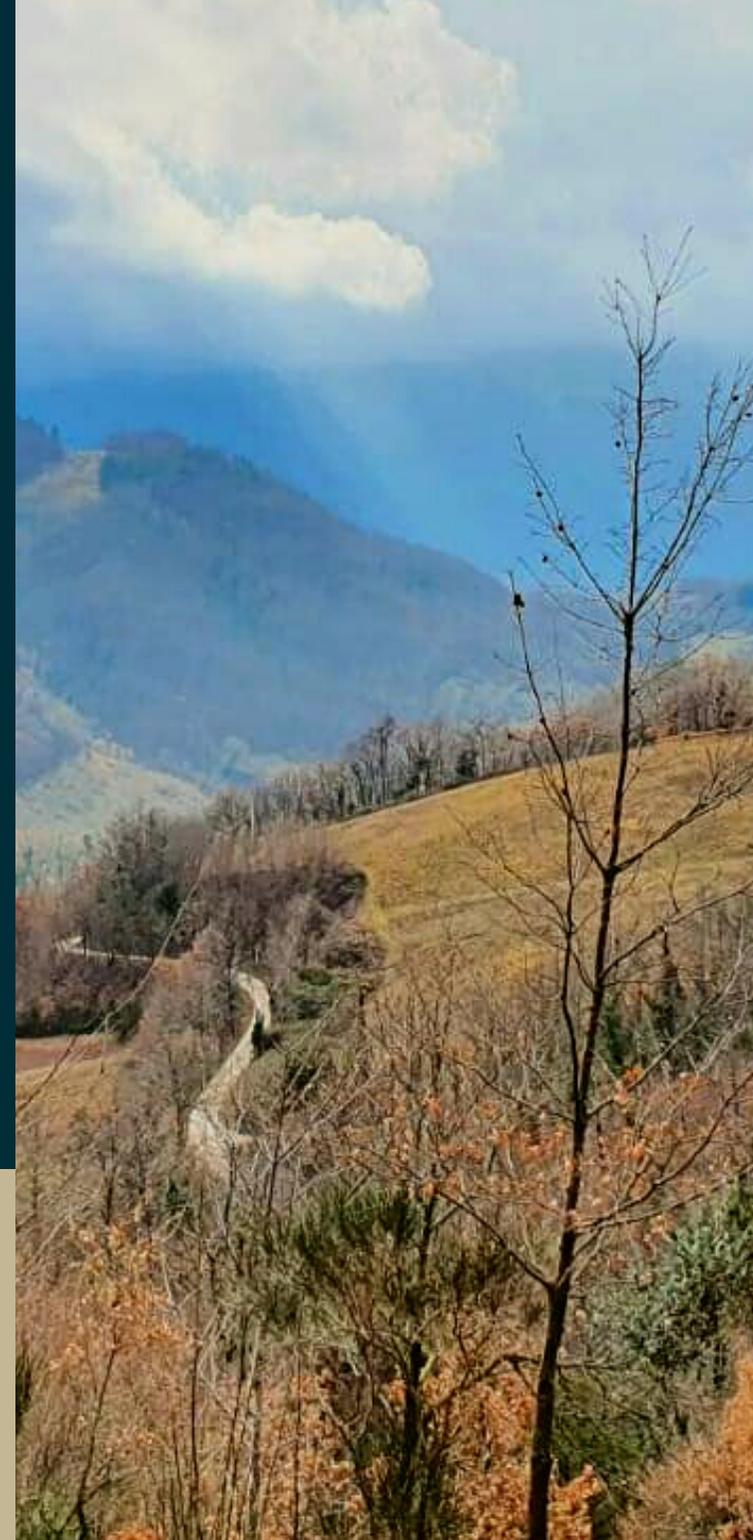




EYM JAN 2020

CASA DEL DIVINO ASHRAM-ASSISI

24TH TO 26TH JANUARY





The European Youth Meet started in the best way with the visit of youth from all over Europe to the Grace Kitchen in Rome. Grace Kitchen for now (we hope to increase service opportunities to the maximum), is operational in the preparation of about 320 meals per week for the

VENERDÌ, 24

homeless of the city. Before dedicating themselves to the lunch waiting for them, ready and steaming on the table, the boys wanted to carry on the work of the volunteers who would arrive in the kitchen shortly in the early afternoon to start the preparation.

After this loving and highly appreciated gesture, they all enjoyed lunch together: baked paccheri (a type pasta) with ricotta and bechamel, and salad. The lunch was not excessive in



the number of courses so as not to exaggerate, already imagining the abundant and loving dinner that we would then find ready for all of us a few hours later, in the Casa del Divino Ashram in Assisi, now home to all young Europeans.

After Swami's visit on 8th April 2019 to Grace Kitchen, the visit of our brothers from all over Europe is a great source of energy for us youth in Rome. This is because we share our experiences in the kitchens of our countries and we all feel in tune by sharing the same service.



The youth of the European Youth Meet arrived in Assisi at around 4,30 pm. Many had left early in the morning seeing that they had come from afar. We all met at the Porziuncola in Santa Maria degli Angeli. A Fascinating place to visit for its frescoes, and particularly for the energy it gives off. Continuing the visit we passed through the rose garden, a mystical place thanks to the presence of roses of a unique particularity, they don't have thorns. After the guided tour the youth left, headed for their transport vehicles and set forth towards the Ashram through winding roads immersed in the countryside, full of curves and ups and downs kindling in us a desire to walk through the woods. As soon as we arrived we immediately felt a great energy concentrated in that place, more easily perceived thanks to the fact that the house is surrounded by woods and hills, and therefore we were far from bustling town noises and distractions.

The house is very beautiful, with attention to detail despite its very simple style. As soon as you enter you feel that energy of welcome and protection that leads you to ask questions and look inside yourself. Once the youth arrived, they entered the meeting room and the retreat began with the devotional songs and the introduction to the weekend. After the session they went to the dining room for dinner. For some it was the first time, but most of those present had already been to previous retreats. After dinner, when the fatigue from the journey began to creep in, they said goodbye and went to their respective lodgings to rest; this time the women at the Ashram and the men at the B&B.



SATURDAY, THE 25TH

On a bright January morning, the boys had breakfast at the B & B and then went to the Casa del Divino Ashram. After gathering in the Satsang room (meeting) and singing the Sai Suprabhatam and the Bhajans (devotional songs), Giovanni Cinelli shared his precious experience of service as a clown to entertain sick children in hospitals and inmates in the prisons. Giovanni said that after the initial difficulties the path was full of satisfaction. At the beginning he had to work hard to make certain doctors value this important service, and he had to do a lot of work within himself to avoid taking "work" home, and therefore maintaining a healthy detachment.

The moment he started to feel joy, grace and blessings in having contributed to making a change to, even if only for a moment, the difficult life of a family with a child in the hospital and seriously ill, every question was answered and his every certainty got rooted.





He laughed and cried with joy and emotion, and each one drew their personal and rich teaching from this experience. The sharing lasted up to around lunch time. The youth had some time to do seva (service) by moving the wood that had been cut and placing it in the dining room ready for the stove, a new arrival at the Ashram which helped create a warm and welcoming atmosphere.

Lunch began as usual with the food prayer and was enjoyed pleasantly thanks to the impeccable cuisine as always. After lunch and a short interval to digest and converse, the youth immersed themselves again in the afternoon activities that were organized for the retreat.

Simone Venditti conducted a guided meditation to create a greater group atmosphere, greater cohesion and greater subtle union between the participants. This visualization facilitated the introduction and support necessary for the afternoon meeting in which Giovanni Cinelli held



a two hour workshop on clownery. Between funny faces and grimaces with complete abandonment of judgment, with concentration and light-heartedness, the visualization of the rain in the woods toward the end of the session, washed away every trace of heaviness and prepared the participants for a short but effective ending with laughter yoga.

After a short break, Victory Craxi spoke to the group about the E1E1 (Each one Educate one) project which is another way to serve the grand humanitarian mission of Sathya Sai Baba. Helping others in every possible way, even from a distance thus fulfilling God's dream, where every child must and will receive an education necessary to live with dignity and grow consciously in His love.

After a short break, the afternoon activities continued with the concert of the Sai Youth Orchestra which proposed songs in various languages including Italian, Spanish and English. It is composed of youth of all ages (between 16 and 45 years of age) and nationalities! The concert lasted until just before dinner, offered by the musicians themselves, and allowed the participants to listen to excellent music in which the musicians were very united and synchronized. Everyone played from their heart towards Swami's big heart! The Master's presence was tangible. Arathi was then offered to Bhagawan.





Sister Giovanna adorned the late afternoon by putting in question the first answers to which everyone could find within themselves. The questions helped the youth to descend into themselves and prepared the ground for the topic of her speech, the "YES" to God, the "YES" at the beginning, when choosing the way of Love in one's life.

SUNDAY, THE 26TH



The youth who were staying at the B&B woke up early Sunday 26, had breakfast, prepared their things and headed for the Divine Ashram. The good weather and the delightful scenery of the surrounding mountains and forests warmed everyone's hearts and made it difficult to believe that this was already the last day of the youth meet.



Time flies when you're in good company!

All took their places in the satsang hall and the morning chants of Sai Suprabhatam marked the beginning of the last day of this EYM, followed by melodious bhajans that brought the spirits of all to divine heights. Subsequently, a 10-minute video sent by Branimir was projected. A passionate Croatian Veda scholar, who was unable to physically participate in the youth meeting, but managed to make his presence felt in a subtle form! In the video, he talked about the importance of singing the Vedas, as Swami has often taught. In fact, not only through his personal experience, but also on the basis of recent scientific studies, he explained how the Vedas help one become more concentrated, calmer and happier, thus improving our efficiency and general wellbeing in our



daily lives . He also announced that Swami wants 1008 young devotees to sing the Rudram during the presentation of the huge statue of Shiva, during His birthday festivities, in November 2020. Branimir urged everyone to consider learning the Vedas and sharing it with others to generate interest in veda chanting. After helping to arrange the Ashram, everyone was invited to visit Swami's upstairs room to receive His blessings before he left. Even the newcomers, who had never heard of Swami before, came out of that room with tearful eyes because His presence was deeply felt!



The time to leave was approaching, so everyone went outside to take the last photos before leaving. The highlight was obviously the group photo taken by Victory with a drone, since we were strategically positioned so that our bodies formed the word "LOVE" when viewed from above. In fact, a second attempt wasn't even necessary, somehow the group managed to do it perfectly on the first! Maybe it's because love is our true nature, who knows?

An emotional and grateful "goodbye" to the loving hosts - the older youth there! - brother Ampelio and sister Marilena, and they then headed to the Eremo delle Carceri, already missing the Ashram and planning our next visit! Salvatore and Antonello made them take a wonderful tour around the mountainous hermitage,

where San Francesco had spent so many years in penance and prayer, that the whole area is still vibrant with his love, for a distance of many kilometers. Even more interesting were the stories narrated by Salvatore on Swami's visit to that divine place and his revelations on the life of Saint Francis. It was time to proceed to the train station for the first group of young people to leave, while the rest would go to Rome airport. The hearts were full of mixed feelings of happiness and sadness as we said "goodbye", while at the same time the date for the next meeting was set in the presence of our beloved Swami, in three months time in April, in Rome, Assisi and Milan.





**WHAT A DIVINE
WEEKEND! HOW
LUCKY WE ARE!
THANK YOU
SWAMI!**