

News from Abroad

A Message from Christy Tolliver in Costa Rica

Dear Montreat College,

This semester in Costa Rica has been incredible. I have read more this semester than in my whole life put together, but I have also learned more this semester than in any other semester.

We've learned about the world's poverty and how the US contains 4% of the people in the world but consumes 40% of the world's resources! More than anything, we've broadened our worldviews and had our eyes opened to many realities, which were covered by presuppositions and biases before.

Last week I started five weeks

of study in my concentration - Language and Literature. Of course it's all in Spanish. The professors are Latino and they talk to the students like we are too! All our texts are in Spanish and I just can't express how much work we're doing! I spend my weekends doing homework, from Friday night until Monday morning.

Don't get me wrong; I'm having fun too. I have held a monkey, ridden a horse on the beach, seen both tropical birds and flowers, and visited a couple of beautiful beaches, but these times are very far and few between.

We did take a 2-week trip to Nicaragua and while we were there we lived with families for 6 days. That was quite an experience! Nicaragua is the third poorest country in Latin America and there weren't many jobs, so there were lots of people just sitting around. At first we didn't know what to do, because there wasn't much going on. But towards the end we learned to just engage in the culture. You can learn a lot more by engaging in your surroundings, than by sitting back watching it all happen.

God has taught me so much here, through the people, the cul-

ture, and the language. Why does it seem that the people that have the least in this world are the ones who give the most? How can the person with the least seem to have more peace than those who appear to have everything? How do these people find God when they have children dying of curable diseases, and starving because they can't find a job?

There is so much to say, it overwhelms me to try to get this all in one letter for the *Whetstone*, so I'll leave you with what I've written and I'll have to share the rest when I get back.

I miss you all and I would

appreciate your prayers as I finish up here with the most difficult part of the semester, twice as much work, fatigued from the first half of it, absolutely no room for slacking, and missing my family and friends! I'll see you all soon!

Love you all,
Christy Tolliver

P.S. Hey Stace! I love you! And to everyone else--take care of her since I'm not there and she seems to be having some problems with a broken leg.

Love, Christy Tolliver

Aimee Schimpf Hails from Athens, Greece

To all at Montreat,

The Lord opened the door for me to study abroad in Greece this semester, so I transferred to Arcadia University and now find myself studying in the busy metropolitan area of Athens.

I am taking a variety of classes that aren't offered at Montreat! I'm enrolled in classes

like Modern Greek, an in depth study of the Life of Alexander the Great, Virgin Mary in Byzantine History and Iconography, and Environmental Conservation in Greece.

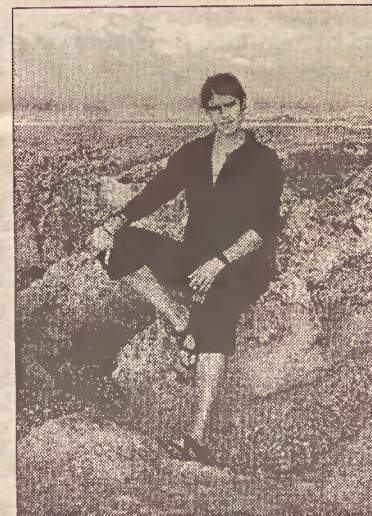
I came to Greece trying to trace the roots of my heritage, but also with the intent of stepping out of my life-long Christian fellowship

and into the uncertainties of our present day society.

I have seen the diversity and breathtaking beauty of the Greek islands and the majesty of the northern mountains in the Peloponnese.

My time in Greece has been like a relationship with a dear friend. In the beginning everything was new and exciting. But as time went on and I became more accustomed to the environment, I realized things that I had not noticed before and I was disappointed. Now I have learned to love Greece for what it is and what it is not.

I have learned what it means to be lonely and needy, and in that place I have seen a new side of my Savior's heart and love



for me.

Greece is a hard country because it is so steeped in tradition and rituals. A large majority of the people here are blind to their need of Christ. Seeing the

spiritual dryness of Greece first hand has made me appreciate the Christian fellowship back home in the States.

I encourage you all to be thankful for the fellowship that you are surrounded by. Take part in what the Lord has so graciously given you, and pray for the people of Greece. Pray for the Christians that are here and are seeking the Lord and leading others to Christ. And pray that I might boldly proclaim the truth to those I encounter while I remain here.

Studying abroad in a secular environment has changed me. I have seen global needs more clearly, but also the faithfulness of God to His children. I have learned, as Rich Mullins sings, to make my home anywhere if Christ is where I am.

Stepping out of your comfort zone and following God's plan is so exciting! You will see Him move through you and challenge you in ways that would have never seemed possible.

To all who have kept me in their prayers I want to thank you it has made all the difference in the world. May the love and peace of Christ fill you as you walk in his light and keep us united in spirit and in truth. I miss you all and look forward to seeing you next semester.

-Aimee Schimpf



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From
the
Whetstone

