

THE FRANCISCAN FRIARS WYD NEWS



JOIN US IN RECAPPING THE FRANCISCAN WORLD YOUTH DAY WEEK. WITH 7 MAJOR EVENTS DURING THE WEEK, FROM BRISBANE TO BONDI ALL WAS BENE!

Fr Paul Smith OFM Provincial Minister of the Holy Spirit Province shares his thoughts and reflections on the Franciscan contribution to World Youth Day

Dear friend of the Franciscans,

The celebrations surrounding World Youth Day 2008 in Sydney have been acclaimed by Pope Benedict XVI as “an extraordinary experience” and “a new Pentecost”. The secular media were initially sceptical and critical and for some time were surprised by the fervor of the pilgrims and the momentum of the days. For those of us who believe in the power of the Holy Spirit, it was truly a grace-filled occasion and time of Christian witness, knowing that God’s Spirit was indeed in our midst. Throughout WYD week, Brother Sun shone brilliantly by day and Sister Moon illumined the night. Sister Water waited until the days afterwards to refresh the trampled lawns with nourishing rain – this surely must have been God smiling upon his pilgrims.

The Franciscan events of WYD08 were many and varied and touched the hearts of thousands of pilgrims and others. Words and even pictures cannot capture the complete atmosphere but in this brochure you will read stories and see images that capture Franciscan joy, brotherhood and sister-

hood, prayer and song, laughter and exhilaration. For those who participated, may this brochure bring back wonderful memories. For those who observed from a distance, may this brochure put you in the picture. For those who supported us by their prayers and encour-



aging words, may this brochure be a sign of our sincere appreciation.

To all who made the Franciscan component of WYD08 happen so well – the OFM WYD Office staff, presenters, friars, other religious and laity – we say thanks. To the pilgrims especially and those who shared in the Franciscan experience, we say thanks in abundance; your presence brought joy and enriched

the life and spirituality of your brothers and sisters.

In time, some of the euphoria of WYD08 will die down, but the Spirit of God who blessed us throughout the week will live on in our hearts and homes forever. Inspired by the Holy Spirit and guided by Clare and Francis of Assisi, may we continue to be open to “receive the power of the Holy Spirit and be witnesses throughout the world” (Acts 1:8, WYD theme)

May God’s blessing be upon you.

Paul Smith OFM

Paul Smith OFM
Provincial Minister

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10th - 13th July 2008
Padua College Kedron, Brisbane
St Francis Contemplation for Action
Franciscan Gathering with Youth



The week prior to official WYD events in Sydney, 150 Franciscan friars and pilgrims from around the world joined together to celebrate Franciscan life.

They came from the four corners of the earth, with every continent represented. Pilgrim nations included South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia (Africa), Poland and the Ukraine (Europe), Syria, Singapore, Malaysia, India, China, Burma and the Philippines (Asia), Papua New Guinea, New Zealand and Australia (Oceania), the United States and Mexico (North America), Ecuador and Peru (South America).

In total 30 friars attended the gathering including two very special guests, Bishop Stanislav Shyrokoradiuk OFM from Kiev, Ukraine and Bishop Adriano Tomasi OFM from Lima, Peru. Both were a great hit with the young people and gave a very human, warm and fun face to the magisterium of the church.

The diversity in culture, race and language was a challenge but the unity of the pilgrims common bond in St Francis and St Clare shone brighter.

The highlights of the gathering were numerous, though particular attention should be made to the key note addresses made by both Br Bill Short OFM and Donna Mulhearn. Br Bill spoke eloquently on Franciscan tradition and history (*St Francis Yesterday*) and Donna spoke powerfully on her personal experiences, inviting the pilgrims to discover in greater depth the call of both Jesus and St Francis to live in peace (*St Francis Today*). Both came together on the last evening in a joint presentation to take the pilgrims into *St Francis Tomorrow*. In an unplanned part of the evening Donna led the pilgrims into a prayerful meditation which proved an excellent beginning to the night's program where all pilgrims were offered the sacrament of reconciliation.

Though many, the other major highlight of the event saw every pilgrim and friar working together on a rehabilitation of the environment project organised by Greening Australia. On Saturday July 12 the pilgrims travelled to the Oxbow site where they planted 1600 native plants and removed all the exotic environmental weeds in the area. It was a remarkable activity which demonstrated Franciscan care for creation.

The Franciscan Gathering with Youth will be remembered for many things; the diversity, the fun, the festival, the prayer, the celebrations, the speakers, the performers... it will surely be remembered as a joyous occasion where youth shared their passion and joy for St Francis and St Clare.



12th - 15th July 2008
St Francis Church Paddington, Sydney
Franciscan Youth International Gathering
YouFra World Days Sydney 2008



Sixty members of **Franciscan Youth** (YouFra) arrived from Croatia, Slovenia, Italy, France, Poland, Vietnam, the Philippines, South Africa, the Congo, the United States of America, Springvale in Victoria and St Johns Park in NSW for the Franciscan Youth International Gathering in Paddington, Sydney.



They were joined by Xavi Ramos, Secular Franciscan International Councillor for Franciscan Youth, Lucy Almiranez, Secular Franciscan Order (SFO) International Councillor for Asia and Oceania, Michele Cannone, Franciscan Youth Leader in Italy, Fr Ivan Matic OFM, General Assistant of the SFO and YouFra, Helen Britton, National Minister of the SFO and YouFra in Oceania, and Fr Carl Schafer OFM, National Assistant of the SFO and YouFra in Oceania. David Leary, Manager of the *Come In Centre*, and Louise Minogue, Principal of St Francis School, gave exceptional service to the Gathering, together with a host of volunteers, Secular Franciscans and parishioners.

When the official WYD week began the Croatians and Slovenians joined their national group for WYD. All the other Franciscan Youth stayed at Paddington for WYD. Four hundred other young people joined them for catechesis in St Francis Church. The Franciscan Youth Gathering was voted a great success. Staying together for WYD added greatly to the experience of fraternity.



15th - 20th July 2008
Sydney Convention Centre, Sydney
Vocations Expo

One of the many memorable experiences of World Youth Day was participating in the Vocations Expo at Darling Harbour. Along with many other groups in the Church, members of the Franciscan Family, women, men, religious and lay, joined together to share and bear witness to the many pilgrims an example of how to live life in the way of St Francis and St Clare today. We were touched by the many who stopped to speak with us and hope that something of that spirit has returned home with them. This was a collaborative effort between the Order of Saint Clare, Missionaries of the Kingship of Christ, Order of Friars Minor, Order of Friars Minor Conventual, the Missionary Franciscans of the Immaculate Conception, the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood and the Secular Franciscan Order.



16th - 18th July 2008
Mary Immaculate Church Waverley, Sydney
Catechesis

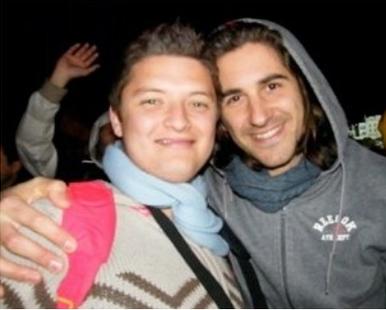
The Franciscan Chinese Catholic Community of Ashfield led a packed Mary Immaculate Church in the animation of Catechesis during the WYD week. The mornings began at 9am with song, prayer and discussion of faith led by a different Bishop each day.

Filled with pilgrims from various backgrounds and ages, the discussions took some interesting turns. The Church's views on homosexuality, the role of Saints, Our Lady and how to explain our faith to other young people were the predominant themes raised by the pilgrims. Each Bishop had his own words of wisdom to pass on, leaving pilgrims inspired to spread their renewed faith.



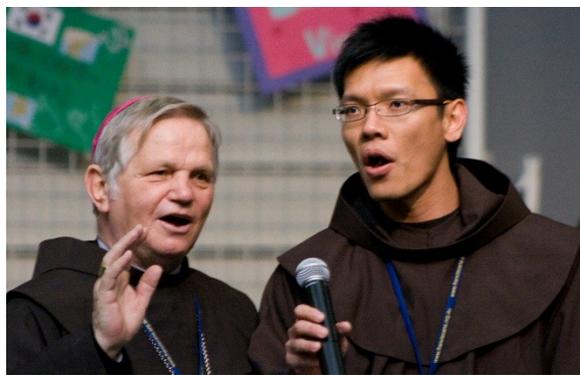


FRANCISCAN FRIARS





WORLD YOUTH DAY 08





At the beginning of 2007, the Franciscan Friars came together to reflect on World Youth Day and how they were to contribute to this momentous gathering. One particular idea was to host a large event by the sea focusing on the sacredness of water in baptism. *Come to the Water* was the name later given to the event and the invitation offered to the Christian Churches and pilgrims of Australia and the world.



The event was a remarkable celebration of both Christian and Inter-religious Unity with representatives from the NSW Ecumenical Council present along with church members from the Anglican, Coptic and Salvation Army, to name just a few. Present also were Roman Catholic representatives including several Franciscan Bishops, in particular Cardinal Napier OFM, who addressed the crowd on the topic of baptism and its power to unite people.



A representative from the NSW Jewish board of deputies, ETTY Aylon, read from the Prophet Isaiah in Hebrew, followed by our Franciscan Provincial Fr Paul Smith OFM who read in English. Br Bill Short OFM from the USA then broke open the meaning of the scripture.



In a powerful sign of Unity the Catholic Bishops and leaders of Christian churches joined together in a prayer for Christian Unity which was capped by a symbolic releasing of doves.

The formal and liturgical aspects of the event flowed on into the musical celebrations of the evening and as the crowd continued to arrive, pilgrims were graced with the musical talent of Passion, Fr Stan Fortuna and Matt Maher. Linking these performances were amazing testimonies and addresses from Dave Hansen (the Christian Motorcycle Club), Robyn Black (the Salvation Army) and Sam Clear, a young Catholic man who had arrived in Sydney days earlier from a two year journey walking by foot around the world for the Unity of Christians. In Sam's own words "Come to the Water was the fulfilment of my walking journey for Unity".



In total it is estimated that at least 10 000 people attended the event throughout the course of the day.

Come to the Water received both national and international media coverage and was reported as one of the major events of WYD08. However it may best be remembered by the words of an Australian friar, who when asked in a media interview "what was the Franciscans aim today?" responded "The Franciscans aim was for us to be Franciscans".



17th July 2008
Waverley, Sydney

Visit of the Minister General

Time with the friars and Franciscan Family Mass



The Holy Spirit Province was fortunate to welcome the Minister General, Br Jose Rodriguez Carballo OFM and Definitor General, Br Ambrosio Nguyen Van Si OFM, to Franciscan World Youth Day events in Sydney.

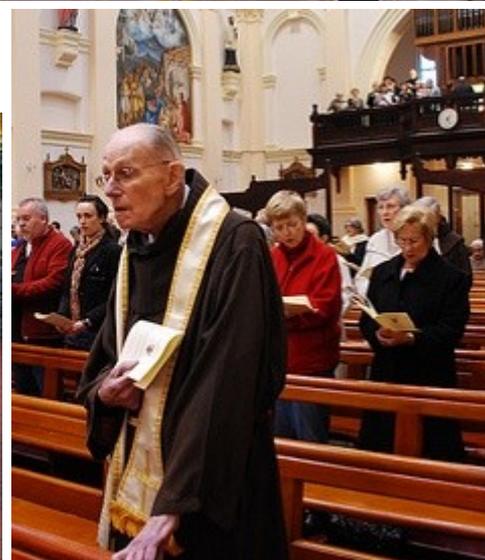
Friars in Melbourne and Sydney had the opportunity to meet with the Minister General and Definitor General for a discussion about the Order and in particular to have a session of questions and answers. In Sydney this occasion was held at the Star of the Sea friary in Waverley on Thursday 17th July during the Official World Youth Day week.

The Minister General encouraged the friars in their Franciscan vocation and challenged them to be authentic witnesses of Francis of Assisi. He urged them to use the 2009 celebrations for the eighth centenary of the approval of St Francis' way of life to reconnect with their origins, to renew their passion for the Gospel and to recommit to simple and humble service of others. He emphasised the importance of the friars' being brothers to each other, strengthening their community and prayer lives, and being in solidarity with all God's people, especially the poor and disadvantaged.

After discussion and question time with the friars a Mass was celebrated by Br Jose at Mary Immaculate Church, where friars were joined by members of the Franciscan family. A social gathering after the Mass provided people with an opportunity to meet all the brothers and sisters of the other branches of the Franciscan Family and people associated with Franciscan ministries.

Br Jose and Br Ambrosio were also able to spend some time relaxing in Sydney, a short cruise on Sydney Harbour, past the Opera House and famous Harbour Bridge to visit Taronga Zoo and see some of the unique fauna of Australia – koalas, kangaroos, platypus, wombats etc.

The Holy Spirit Province was truly honoured and blessed that Br Jose and Br Ambrosio accepted the invitation to visit Australia during World Youth Day.





As part of the Franciscans' world youth day program, a solemn pontifical vespers was held at the mother church of the province, Mary Immaculate Church, Waverley. This beautiful liturgy, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary and presided over by His Eminence, William Cardinal Napier of Durban, South Africa was very well-attended and received.

A large number of friars were present and the homilist for the liturgy was the Minister Provincial, Fr Paul Smith OFM. The vespers was a collaborative act of worship, involving the choir of St Francis of Assisi, Paddington, the organist of Mary Immaculate and St Joseph's Edgecliff and members of the sanctuary party from both churches.

The solemn vespers is a highly embellished liturgy, rich in symbolism and imbued with a sense of dignity and deep spirituality. One of the unique features of the music at the vespers, was the liturgical rendition of a magnificat sung in the old "in alternatum" style between the organ and choir.



Dear Friends,

The past year has been a truly rewarding experience. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time working with the Franciscan planning team. From all accounts I believe the International Franciscan Gathering with Youth in Brisbane was a huge success. It was a pleasure meeting and working with you all and I hope to cross paths with you again in the future.

Best wishes Caitlin King

Caitlin, Ben and Fr Paul worked together as a team. Caitlin and Ben take with them the Franciscan Spirit as they journey through life. Fr Paul will take on the role of Vocation Director.

More than ever before, the world is crying out for what the Franciscans have to offer; a spirituality grounded in the humanity of Christ and focused on the Gospels...

Interested in joining us on this journey? Then contact:

Fr Paul Ghanem OFM
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vocations@franciscans.org.au
47 Victoria Street Waverley NSW 2024

Dear Friends,

Days before I began working on the WYD project, I was overcome by the enormity of the task ahead of me. I felt the Lord assure me that it was his large vessel in the vast and turbulent sea ahead that would carry through my small boat. The success of Franciscan WYD events can only be attributed to the amazing faithfulness of God, who never leads his servants astray. Truly he is Good...

My time with the friars will be forever etched in my memory. Thank you for your hospitality, your support, your prayers and your belief.

Pax et bonum! Benjamin Galea



An Invitation to pray...

We could not have accomplished what we did without the power of your prayer. To make WYD WYDER (wider) let's continue the prayer that we began together so many years ago. We invite you all to continue praying the following prayer for the good of the church and the good of the Franciscan Family.

Lord, you are the Good Shepherd tending your flock and calling us by name. Look kindly on the young people that are following you to the "ends of the earth". Shower your Spirit upon them and give them the power and courage to be your witnesses in the spirit of St Francis and St Clare. Show each one the path by which you wish them to follow you.
Amen.