



YOUTH Matters

Issue 4 Autumn 2005 Produced by the Croydon Deanery Youth Project

We Have Come to Adore Him – World Youth Day 2005

10,000 priests, 800 bishops and the Holy Father on one altar. The theme of this year's World Youth Day in Köln was 'We have come to adore Him'. Nothing could have been more evident as one million young people bearing candles on a twilight evening huddled in a field for the papal vigil. The theme was apt for the city of Köln, within whose cathedral walls the relics of the three Magi are (according to a pious tradition) held and venerated. The pilgrims were called, in the same way as the Magi, to pay homage and adore the Messiah.

Contrary to what the name suggests, WYD was a week long with five days in preparation for the papal Mass. With cities Düsseldorf and Bonn supporting the event, these five days were spent in both individual reflection, discovery and growth, and communal worship and sharing of experiences. It was a time for questioning and conviction, not indoctrination. Small group daily catechesis were followed by a programme of themed events throughout the cities, on topics ranging from Globalization to

Women's role in the church, from the precious gift of sexuality to Eucharistic adoration. In just one day there were over 150 separate events. I even saw the famed Fr Stan; a free style rapping, bass playing Franciscan priest from New York!

What struck me most throughout the week however, was the atmosphere in an overcrowded city whose population had more than doubled in two days. In streets where space was an uncommon luxury, there thrived a truly international Catholic pilgrim community brimming with love, over spilling with rejoicing hearts. In train stations where you would be lucky to board the 5th packed train to arrive, there lacked no generosity of spirit nor sincere smiles, waving off fervently the 'strangers' who had got on the train before you. National flags held high in every direction, countries chanted for each other, jubilant with every new encounter. Singing in the streets was the order of the day; I recall a guitar and bongo drums on the steps of Köln Cathedral uniting the voice of nations.

All this expressive celebration, however, did not detract from the reverence of the pilgrimage. We came to adore Him and it was possible to quiet your heart and offer the moment to Christ even in the loudest assembly. Prayer, meditation and the Eucharist were ever central, and church doors were flung open for the purpose. As a small group of us started the Rosary on a train, our Hail Mary's were chorused by the whole carriage in contemplative prayer, followed by the gentle singing of 'Be still'.

Contact Tom Caluori at St.
Joseph's College Beulah Hill
London SE19 3HL
Tel: 0777 5592984
tomcaluori@blueyonder.co.uk
www.cdyp.org

But standing shoulder to shoulder in a euphoric crowd chanting 'Benedetto!' on awaiting the arrival of the Holy Father at the papal mass, I had a calm moment of reflection. What could possibly bring together a community of such joy and sincerity? In what gathering could you trust your unknown neighbour as your brother or sister? Which crowded platform would harbour neither contempt nor discourtesy as the few remaining spaces on the train are filled? We all had one thing in common; Jesus was ablaze inside us. We were one in body and all this praise was for Him. I felt so proud to be Catholic. I saw that the faithful community en masse could work. I saw strength and genuine drive for spiritual and pragmatic good in the Catholic Church. It is very much alive and kicking! I was stunned by the dedication of its religious people. Traditions do not persist out of pride, but are guides to strengthen our relationship with Him, vouched for by those who have dedicated their lives fully to Him. Mother Mary was also high on the VIP list as we learnt of her compassion for us.

The week climaxed in the incredible papal mass, demonstrating the power of communal worship. As the Holy Father proclaimed to the one million strong crowd; if the Lord is present at a gathering of two or three in His name, imagine His presence at such an assembly!

As the three Magi "departed by a different way", so we too returned home with hope of a renewal of mind in the following of Christ. WYD 2008 is to be held in Sydney. Start saving your pennies, I'll be expecting you!

Vincent Tang Thornton Heath

Looking Forward

We had been looking forward to World Youth Day. It seems we spent all last winter washing cars to fund the trip. We met for Catechesis and the Commissioning Mass in the Lady Chapel at St. George's. It was good to see how many young people were going from Southwark when the three coaches met up at Dover. The event itself was nothing like we expected. We thought it would be a Solemn and completely spiritual experience but our entrance into the football stadium for the opening Mass changed that, it was more like going to a football game. The energy the youth brought to the activities was astounding. At the Catechesis sessions we were impressed by the real communication that went on. Being at the Marianfield for the Saturday vigil and Sunday Mass with Pope Benedict was the high spot. We were a drop in the ocean among the young people present. Pope Benedict enlivened the crowd by making the experience personal, he spoke in many languages. We returned with greater confidence, determined to be more active in the parish.

*by the World Youth Day group from-
St Dominic's*



OTHER NEWS

Upper Norwood IMPACT

Our Disco - Forty plus young people, mainly from this year's Confirmation group took part. "The disco was a thrilling night to remember. There was a smile on faces that evening. It was vibrant and fun." *Michael*. The disco was fun because I met many new people and felt welcomed by everyone. I wish I could have stayed longer.

Sinead

Deanery Pastoral Council

World Youth Days and . . !

Come and hear from young people
from Croydon
who took part in World Youth Day
St Mary's School, Woburn Rd

14th November 2005;

7.30-9.30pm

All Welcome



Croydon Deanery Youth Mass

The deanery youth Mass, which took place at St. Chad's, South Norwood had as its special theme World Youth Day. The evening included a power point presentation of World Youth Day along with a talk by one of the group who travelled to Cologne from St. Chad's parish.

Among the young people who were present were people who went to World Youth day from St. Chad's, South Norwood, St. Dominic's, Waddon and St. Mary's, West Croydon.



There were other groups of young people present including Youth 2000 from St. Mary's and the YCW IMPACT group from Virgo Fidelis, Upper Norwood.

There was a great feeling of unity and post World Youth Day enthusiasm during the evening with encouragement to start preparations for the next WYD in Sydney in 2008.

National Youth Sunday Christ the King

The next Croydon Deanery Youth Mass will take place on Saturday 19th of November at St. Mary's Wellesley Road West Croydon Starting at 7pm
The theme of this Youth Sunday celebration is
Vocation is the dream
God has written on your heart...

Altar Servers afternoon

Over 30 young people from several parishes took part in this gathering at Virgo Fidelis Upper Norwood. Father Stephen Boyle gave a talk on the Eucharist. there was free time and the afternoon finished with the the youn people serving at the 6pm Mass. The next afternoon willl take place at St. Dominic's Waddon on Saurday the 18th January at 2pm.



Confirmation Away Day to Wonersh seminary

37 candidates from St Mary's and 26 from St Aiden's enjoyed a day together at St John's. There were 3 catechists from St Aidens and 7 from St Mary's; The facilitator was Conor Mahon R.E. teacher from St Michael's Bermondsey A great day!

St Gertrude's South Croydon

The 'Young Minds' group in the parish have been involved in the Youth CAFE programme over the past few weeks. This has gone down really well and provoked much thought and discussion about Faith issues.

Age gap bridged

Despite a dodgy tea urn, the IMPACT group of Virgo Fidelis, Upper Norwood had fun serving teas, refreshments and generally assisting the Ascent members who were celebrating the Silver Jubilee of the movement on Saturday 15th October.

The first seeds of this movement for men and women in their middle to later years were sown in Virgo Fidelis parish 25 years ago. There are now about 70 parish groups in England and a couple in Scotland and Wales.

God calls us at every stage of our lives so in His eyes there is no retirement as He wants to use us until our very last moment here on earth. The Gospel message is at the heart of Ascent meetings plus the three aims : Spirituality, Mission and Friendship which are woven into each meeting.

It was great to see the Impact group happily giving of their time and we hope these 8 young people saw that the crumbles can also have a good time.

Paula Conrad



Why not - why not - why not?

How can the local parish engage young people?

Well, among the possible ways of doing this might be - through service projects whereby young people approaching Confirmation take on some

action, ministry or service alongside appropriate adults as part of their preparation for Confirmation - or running a Youth CAFÉ as a follow up to Confirmation (school year 9 - 11). Youth CAFÉ can be a launching pad for youth groups like YCW, IMPACT, Youth SVP, Youth 2000.

Whose job is it? Is it the task of the Confirmation team? Or the youth club leaders? Or the altar server's co-ordinator?

The responsibility for meaningful engagement of young people is surely that of the whole parish.

Therefore - Why not form a youth ministry team bringing together all those adults working with young people, those with a heart for young people and older young people so as to put together a plan which is realistic- accessible - relevant - attractive.

For more information speak to your parish priest or contact the Croydon Deanery Youth Project for the leaflet, 'Side by Side' which suggests ways in which a youth ministry team can be set up. **Why Not?**

Informal education...

St. Andrews Thornton Heath

The youth club meet bi-weekly with over 20 young people ranging from school year 7 to 9 coming along.

"The club have had a few 'games evenings' and plan to come together for the centenary youth celebrations in November associated with the parish" says Joanna, one of the adult helpers. The club had a pumpkin and mummy making competition which was judged by Fr. Anto and have elected a male and female spokesperson from the young people. We will be there to facilitate their structure if this is what they want says Joanna.

A REWARD IS OFFERED

To those who would like to be Informal Educators with Teenagers

Within the parishes of Croydon, adult educators are needed to work informally with our teenagers. And Croydon Deanery Youth Project can provide the opportunity for them to be trained to work with young people from the age 12 upwards. In this modern society,

young people facing secular values and attitudes, require listening adults that can support them in their developing growth towards maturity and independence.

Last year, an introduction to Informal Education was run by CDYP and Croydon Youth Service. Some nine or so Youth Workers from the Catholic Parishes attended the Course and enjoyed their experience. One of their recommendations was that further Courses of that nature should be provided by CDYP for those in Catholic Parishes who wanted to work with Teenagers.

Among the many issues explored were adolescent needs, listening skills, the process of informal education, oppression and inequality, purposes of parish work with young people, and the role of young people in the Church. The Course was recognised by the Local Authority and Certificates of Achievement were awarded to those who sought assessment.

The reward lies in the fun young people can have and the pleasure you could have in doing a worth while job in your parish.

It is urgent that there are more Informal Educators in our Parishes, and a new Course is soon to take place. So if you require further information contact Tom - contact details at the top of this newsletter.

Article by *Jim Jones* - St. Gertrude's parish, South Croydon

At the time of writing... a meeting is planned with Jim Jones and those involved in informal education in our youth clubs on Thursday the 10th of November at St. Chad's South Norwood.

Confirmation Pack

Croydon Deanery Project have produced a resource pack for Confirmation catechists which has gone out to all parishes. Further copies are available from Tom Caluori at CBYP office price £2. Feed back from this resource would be much appreciated.

The IMPACT (school year 10 and 11) group at Virgo Fidelis are just about to start the Youth CAFE. Visitors welcome. For more information about Youth CAFE contact Tom Caluori.

YOUTH 2000 WEST CROYDON

The Day of Prayer at St Mary's started with coffee and welcome from Noel Murphy and Alex Peters. No welcome would have been complete without music of course and our live singers and musician helped to set the mood of the day - a celebration of Faith and Love for God!

Following the introduction, we had our first guest speaker *John Pridmore*. He gave a talk on the Eucharist as well as sharing his own testimony of conversion. John has also published his testimony in a book called 'From Gangland to Promised Land'.

After discussion groups, we had a break for lunch. Around 2pm we went back up to the Church for Exposition and a special Rosary of Light including meditations in song.

Our second guest speaker was *Fr. Stephen Boyle* from the Good Shepherd in New Addington. His talk was focussed on the grace and blessing of reconciliation and confession. He included a video about the prodigal son, which was very well received, especially by the younger people in our group. We were then all invited to be reconciled, and during the discussion groups there was an opportunity to go for confession, which nearly all attendees partook. We then had a break for tea and biscuits before reconciliation resumed.

We began a Holy Hour at this point, with songs and meditations, to help turn our contemplations towards the events of the day and ultimately, to our faith and to our Holy Family in the Father, Son, Holy Spirit and Blessed Mother Mary.

Holy Hour concluded with a special Benediction service followed by Holy Mass.

Our final conclusion message and supper were well attended and the day was enjoyed by all. One of the attendees who did not get to Cologne for World Youth Day said:

"Cologne has come to Croydon.."

Many felt personally very blessed to be involved in this wonderful celebration to end The Year of The Eucharist.

A special thanks goes out to all the Youth 2000 members, particularly those from the Croydon prayer group who worked very hard to make this event a success.

Youth 2000 in Croydon meet every Tuesday evening at 7:30pm in the church. Please email Y2Kcroydon@hotmail.co.uk for more information.

COMING HOME MASS

Young people are on a journey and along the way many stop practising their faith and some perhaps adopt life styles and values which run contrary to their upbringing as Catholics. Parents love their children unconditionally but often find this situation heartbreaking. We believe in the power of prayer and the need to place our young people in God's hands - God our Father who loves our young people more than we ever could.

There is an opportunity for parents (and grandparents) to come together to pray for the conversion of our children. Also for anyone who wants to pray for loved ones. In particular those who have gone astray following Confirmation that they may come to a renewed Faith and relationship with Jesus Christ.

Wednesday 7th December at St. Mary's, Wellesley Road West Croydon starting with the rosary at 7.30pm with Mass at 8.00pm. Car parking in the school play ground down the slope alongside the presbytery.

That they may come to know Him and love Him...



DIVERSITY IN OUR SCHOOLS

Southwark School Chaplain's Meeting

At a recent meeting of Chaplains in Secondary Schools in the Archdiocese, held at Tooting Bec, the topic under discussion was Multi-culture and Multi-faith in schools. Most of the schools in the Archdiocese have students from a range of religious and ethnic backgrounds. For many of them English is not their first language; for others their experience of life has been very difficult - because they have had to leave their homes under difficult circumstances, refugees, war, the threat of Aids; and for many others there are great challenges in settling in this country or living in this country even if they have been born here. This is especially hard if the students parents still see home as outside GB.

The challenge with the rich diversity of peoples and background in schools is to think about how well we form a community, not just for motives of peace or keeping up academic records in school, but as an expression of our religious conviction that we are all created, loved and saved by the God who is the Father of all of us. In a world where fear and misunderstanding of others who are different from us is all too common, we need to make our schools real communities, open to all, respectful of all, supportive of all, so that we can be a sign of hope and peace for our world.

Who said young people have nothing to teach the world?!

Bro Ben Foy

Education for living

St. Philomena's School are about to hold another conference given by the Life Team for year 10 students. The message of this conference is much needed by the young people in our schools. For more information about this conference contact *Tom Caluori* at CDYP office