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YOUTH COORDINATION
COORDINAMENTO GIOVANI

COORDINACION JOVENES
COORDINATION JEUNES

Queridos Jóvenes,

Es una gran alegría ver en ustedes el rostro joven de la Acción Católica, con los que en muchos países del mundo, compartimos una misma vocación.

Ver el entusiasmo, la generosidad y el trabajo del grupo que integra la Coordinación de Jóvenes del FIAC conducido por Chiara Finocchietti es solo una bella muestra de lo que sucede en cada comunidad concreta donde están presentes ustedes, donde desarrollan su tarea.

La Acción Católica nació con la energía y la generosidad de un grupo de jóvenes, que frente a las dificultades de su tiempo se decidieron a seguir a Jesús, en la Iglesia, sintiéndose corresponsables de la misión evangelizadora, especialmente en sus ambientes de vida.

No se conformaron con la realidad y lejos de sentirse impotentes no se desanimaron y no renunciaron a sus sueños, como también lo vemos en la vida nuestros Santos y Beatos de AC.

Hoy, S. S. Benedicto XVI los invita a asumir nuevamente estos desafíos. *“Son desafíos a los que estáis llamados a responder para construir un mundo más justo y fraterno. Son desafíos que requieren un proyecto de vida exigente y apasionante, en el que poner toda vuestra riqueza según el designio que Dios tiene sobre cada uno de vosotros. No se trata de realizar gestos heroicos ni extraordinarios, sino de actuar haciendo*

fructificar los propios talentos y las propias responsabilidades, empeñándose en progresar constantemente en la fe y en el amor”. Mensaje para la XXV Jornada Mundial de la Juventud (28 de Marzo de 2010).

Sigan adelante, construyendo su presente y su futuro en el encuentro con Jesús, a través de la oración, de la Palabra, de la Eucaristía y de itinerarios de formación que los ayuden a crecer para servir al bien común.

Con algunos nos veremos en los próximos encuentros continentales, todos prepárense para vivir a pleno, en Madrid o a la distancia, la próxima Jornada Mundial de la Juventud, donde seguramente podremos encontrarnos.

La Virgen María los acompañe en el camino.

Hasta la próxima!

Dear young people,

It is such a pleasure to see Catholic Action’s young face in you. We share the same vocation as you in all the many countries all over the world.

The enthusiasm, generosity and dedication, shown by IFCA’s Youth Coordination Group of which Chiara Finocchietti is responsible, is only one of the beautiful examples of what goes on in every community where you live and are involved.

Catholic Action started through the energy and the generosity of a group of young people, who, faced with the difficulties of their times, have decided to follow Jesus in the Church, as they felt co responsible in the evangelizing mission of the Church especially in the different everyday spheres of life.

They refused to conform themselves to prevailing currents and far from feeling helpless and discouraged they acted, as we see in the lives of CA Saints and Blessèd.

Today, H.H Benedict XVI invites you to take this challenge up again. *“You are called to answer to the challenge of building a more just and fraternal world. This calls for a demanding and exciting life-long project, where you have to use all your qualities to fulfill God’s plan for each and every one of you. This does not entail heroic or extraordinary deeds but it means using all your talents and your possibilities to grow steadily in your faith and in love”.* XXV World Youth Day Message (28 marzo 2010).

May you go ahead, building your present and your future, together with Jesus through prayer, the Word, the Eucharist and formation courses, which help you to grow and to work for the common good.

And may the Virgin Mary accompany you on your journey.

Cari giovani,

È una grande gioia vedere il volto giovane di Azione Cattolica in voi, con i quali in molti paesi in tutto il mondo, condividiamo la stessa vocazione.

Vedere l'entusiasmo, la generosità e il lavoro del gruppo compone il Coordinamento Giovani del FIAC di cui è responsabile Chiara Finocchietti FIAC è solo un bellissimo esempio di ciò che accade in ogni comunità concreta dove siete presenti, dove vi impegnate.

L'Azione cattolica è nata con l'energia e la generosità di un gruppo di giovani che di fronte alle difficoltà del loro tempo hanno deciso di seguire Gesù, nella Chiesa, sentendosi corresponsabili della missione di evangelizzazione, soprattutto nei loro ambienti di vita.

Non si adeguarono alla realtà e lontano dal sentirsi impotenti non si scoraggiarono e non rinunciarono ai loro sogni, come vediamo nella vita dei nostri Santi e Beati di AC.

Oggi, S. S. Benedetto XVI vi invita ad assumere nuovamente queste sfide: *“Sono sfide alle quali siete chiamati a rispondere per costruire un mondo più giusto e fraterno. Sono sfide che chiedono un progetto di vita esigente ed appassionante, nel quale mettere tutta la vostra ricchezza secondo il disegno che Dio ha su ciascuno di voi. Non si tratta di compiere gesti eroici né straordinari, ma di agire mettendo a frutto i propri talenti e le proprie possibilità, impegnandosi a progredire costantemente nella fede e nell'amore”*. Messaggio per la XXV Giornata Mondiale della Gioventù (28 marzo 2010).

Andate avanti, costruendo il vostro presente e il vostro futuro nell'incontro con Gesù attraverso la preghiera, la Parola, l'Eucaristia, i percorsi di formazione che vi aiutano a crescere per servire il bene comune.

La Vergine Maria vi accompagna sulla vostra strada.

Emilio Inzaurraga
Presidente nazionale AC Argentina
Coordinatore del Segretariato FIAC



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Youth Coordination (2008-2009)

Dear friends,

I am pleased to inform you that since the CA Youth Pilgrimage in the Holy Land, between the 28th December 2007 and the 6th January 2008, so many things have happened. During these last two years, we have kept up our friendship with our friends in the Holy Land. We have done this through twinings with CA groups in different countries and through conjoint voluntary work and formation programmes. We have also given our support in the organization of the collection for the Holy Land which is held universally. Young people from the Holy Land have also participated in our summer activities. We are now working on a project, which will include all the different initiatives undertaken in this area and which will be more structured. This will embrace other associations and foundations which work for and with the Christians in the Holy Land.

The Youth Coordination Group and the IFCA Secretariat met twice: in March and October 2009. These two meetings were attended by CA young members from 14 countries. Those who attended shared their experiences of exchanges and information about CA and its characteristics in their respective countries. They also spoke about centres of spirituality, formation meetings with theologians, writers and United Nations officials, preparations for the forthcoming WYD in Madrid and plans for the coming Youth Coordination activities.

We hope to meet you all in 2010 during the different IFCA Continental Meetings!

Cari amici,

dal pellegrinaggio mondiale dei giovani di Ac in Terra Santa dal 27 dicembre 2007 al 6 gennaio 2008 ad oggi abbiamo fatto tanti passi insieme: l'amicizia con gli amici di Terra Santa è proseguita in questi due anni, attraverso gemellaggi con le AC dei diversi paesi, attività di volontariato e formazione congiunte, il sostegno alla colletta universale per la Terra Santa, e la partecipazione ad attività estive. Stiamo lavorando a un progetto che inserisca le tante forme di impegno in un unico orizzonte stabile e condiviso anche con altre associazioni e fondazioni che operano per e con i cristiani di Terra Santa.

Il coordinamento giovani, insieme al Segretariato del Fiac, si è riunito due volte: in marzo e nell'ottobre 2009.

Nei due incontri hanno partecipato i responsabili dei giovani delle AC di 14 paesi: abbiamo vissuto momenti di scambio e di informazione reciproca sulla presenza e sulle caratteristiche dell'AC nelle diverse nazioni, spazi di spiritualità, incontri di formazione con teologi, scrittori, dirigenti delle Nazioni Unite, e spazi di preparazione alla prossima GMG di Madrid e di progettazione delle prossime attività del coordinamento.

Speriamo di poterci incontrare nel 2010, in occasione degli incontri continentali del FIAC!

Chiara Finocchietti
IFCA Youth Coordination

BENEDETTO XVI

Cristo offre di più! Anzi, offre tutto! Solo lui, che è la Verità, può essere la Via e pertanto anche la Vita. Così la "via" che gli Apostoli recarono sino ai confini della terra è la vita in Cristo. È la vita della Chiesa. Cari amici, a casa, a scuola, all'università, nei luoghi di lavoro e di svago, ricordatevi che siete creature nuove. Come cristiani, voi siete in questo mondo sapendo che Dio ha un volto umano - Gesù Cristo - la "via" che soddisfa ogni anelito umano, e la "vita" della quale siamo chiamati a dare testimonianza, camminando sempre nella sua luce. Il compito di testimone non è facile.

Christ offers more! Indeed he offers everything! Only he who is the Truth can be the Way and hence also the Life. Thus the "way" which the Apostles brought to the ends of the earth is life in Christ. This is the life of the Church. Dear friends, in your homes, schools and universities, in your places of work and recreation, remember that you are a new creation! As Christians you stand in this world knowing that God has a human face - Jesus Christ - the "way" who satisfies all human yearning, and the "life" to which we are called to bear witness, walking always in his light. The task of witness is not easy.

Festa di accoglienza dei giovani al Barangaroo East Darling Harbour (Sydney, 17 luglio 2008)

About the international Pilgrimage to Holy Land (28.12.07 - 6.1.08)

150 young catholic action members and leaders from 26 different countries went on a pilgrimage to the holy land from the 28 december 2007 to the 6 january 2008.

A dream, which started in cologne during the wyd 2005, came true. the pilgrims wanted to go through an intensive experience of faith and of being a church, by following the steps taken by jesus. they wanted to visit the holy places with the young people and the pastors of the christian communities who are presently living there. they also wanted to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the setting up of the world day of peace, celebrated on the 1st january, in Jerusalem.

Forty years ago, on the occasion of the world day of peace, paul vi sent a group of young members from the ica to Bethlehem.

He asked them to take the lamp of peace and place it in the grotto. likewise, this year, young ca members from all over the world, went together to Jerusalem as witnesses of peace and unity.

The young pilgrims were welcomed at the bethlehem catholic action centre, in the parishes in jerusalem and in families in nazareth. the spirit of friendship and fraternity which prevailed made them all feel very much at home.

The days were very full. there were visits to holy places and meetings with the christians living there and their pastors. the holy sepulchre was visited every time the group went to jerusalem until the 1st january in the early morning. the young pilgrims could pray in silence at the golgoltha and at the place of the resurrection.

The special characteristic of this journey was the opportunity which the young pilgrims had of mixing with the christian population of the holy land thus building bridges of hope in a land marked by the constant building of walls and divisions. the bond of friendship was strengthened even more as some young people from bethlehem, jerusalem, taybeh, haifa and nazareth joined the international pilgrims on this pilgrimage. they also met people, mostly religious men and women, in houses of spirituality and solidarity in bethlehem as well as in Nazareth.

Through this direct contact, the pilgrims could get a first hand experience of what the patriarch said when he addressed them: “we are two peoples, three great religions and god has gathered us here together. This land does not belong to anyone in particular. Today, the lack of freedom of movement makes everyone lose hope but we should still believe in peace”.

The custodian of the holy land, p. pierbattista pizzaballa said: “here, the need for dialogue is felt even more strongly especially between jews and christians as here, one must remember, the division has an institutional dimension. there is then the question of ecumenical relationships, where very often the problem concerns ‘joint ownership’ more than the church itself. the differences concern the management of holy places. This does not mean that one should stop all dialogue, rather we should persevere in it.

Undoubtedly, the most impressive moment was the 1st of january in jerusalem during the eucharistic celebration presided over by patriarch sabbah. when addressing the young people he said: “dear young people, be great, like jesus and not like the worldly so-called great, because you have to serve others before yourselves”. He then presented a young representative, of every country present, a hand-made ceramic lamp of peace, in the shape of a dove, produced by a local christian cooperative.

H.E. Mgr. Domenico Sigalini, bishop general assistant of the italian catholic action and bishop of palestrina, together with 15 priests from different countries accompanied the pilgrims. On the 31st december, he presided over the eucharistic celebration, with the singing of the te deum, in the latin parish of saint catherine in bethlehem and on the 2nd january in jericho.

Daniel Attinger, a monk from bose, who lives in jerusalem, conducted the daily meditation with a reflection on the incarnation.

Each young pilgrim will surely treasure for a long time the beauty of the places where Jesus walked with his disciples, the streets of Galilee and Judaea and Jerusalem. He will long remember the beaming faces of the persons he met, especially in the small christian communities. they are definitely a precious sign of peace and of gospel witnessing.

In the name of Christ, who became man in that land and who rose from the dead for all humanity, we have gone there with a great desire to build bridges and have come back with an even greater conviction to do so.

With simplicity and hope, humility and courage and looking beyond the walls, let us go on with our efforts to sow friendship and fraternity.

This is also shown in the pilgrimage's logo. The lines, which depict the colours of the flags of israel, palestine and the vatican, intertwine in such a way as to form a bridge with a swing towards peace and justice.

And now our journey goes on in our parish and diocese but with a greater responsibility towards those who live in the holy land, a better disposition to organize meetings and exchanges and a deeper joy when we read, meditate and study the word of god.

150 giovani e responsabili dell'Azione Cattolica di 26 paesi del mondo, pellegrini in Terra Santa dal 28 dicembre 2007 al 6 gennaio 2008. Un sogno cominciato a Colonia, durante la GMG 2005, e diventato realtà: abbiamo vissuto una forte esperienza di fede e di Chiesa sui passi di Gesù, nei Luoghi Santi, con i giovani e con i pastori della comunità cristiana che vive oggi in Terra Santa, per celebrare i 40 anni della Giornata mondiale della pace il 1° gennaio a Gerusalemme. Come 40 anni fa, quando Paolo VI inviò un gruppo di giovani dell'ACI a Betlemme per deporre una lampada della pace nella grotta, in occasione della prima giornata mondiale della pace, i giovani di AC da tutto il mondo si sono riuniti a Gerusalemme, testimoni di pace e di unità.

I giovani pellegrini sono stati accolti con amicizia e fraternità, si sono sentiti a casa, presso la sede dell'AC di Betlemme, nella parrocchia di Gerusalemme, nelle famiglie di Nazareth.

Le giornate sono state molto intense, per favorire sia le visite ai Luoghi Santi, sia gli incontri con i cristiani e i loro Pastori: la visita al Santo Sepolcro è stata quasi la tappa di ogni giorno a Gerusalemme: fino al 1° gennaio all'alba, i pellegrini hanno potuto sostare in silenzio al Golgota e nell'edicola della resurrezione.

La caratteristica che ha reso significativo questo pellegrinaggio è stata l'opportunità di entrare in contatto diretto con la comunità cristiana della Terra Santa, per costruire ponti di speranza in una terra segnata dal continuo sorgere di muri e divisioni. È nata l'amicizia con i giovani che hanno partecipato a tutto il pellegrinaggio da Betlemme, Gerusalemme, Taybeh, Haifa e Nazareth, con quanti operano, soprattutto religiosi e religiose, in tanti luoghi di spiritualità e di solidarietà, sia a Betlemme, sia a Nazareth. Attraverso questa esperienza diretta, si è potuto quasi toccare da vicino quello che il Patriarca ha affermato durante l'incontro con i giovani: «Siamo due popoli, tre grandi religioni, e Dio ci ha radunati tutti qui. Questa non può essere la terra di uno

solo. Oggi la mancanza di libertà di movimento toglie speranza a tanti di noi, ma dobbiamo credere ancora nella pace».

Il Custode di Terra Santa, padre Pierbattista Pizzaballa, ha affermato: «La fatica del dialogo qui si percepisce con maggiore forza. Innanzitutto tra ebrei e cristiani, dove c'è una dimensione istituzionale di cui tenere conto. E poi anche in relazione all'ecumenismo, dove spesso si innescano dinamiche più da "condominio" che da Chiesa a causa dei dissidi sulle proprietà e la gestione dei luoghi santi. Ma non per questo dobbiamo rinunciare a parlarci, anzi». Un momento significativo è stata la Giornata mondiale della pace, il 1° gennaio a Gerusalemme, con la partecipazione alla celebrazione eucaristica presieduta dal Patriarca Sabbah che ha affidato a un giovane rappresentante di ogni paese una lampada della pace a forma di colomba in ceramica, prodotta artigianalmente da una cooperativa di cristiani.

S.E. Monsignor Domenico Sigalini, Assistente generale dell'Azione Cattolica Italiana e vescovo di Palestrina, ha accompagnato i pellegrini con 15 sacerdoti dei diversi paesi ha presieduto la celebrazione eucaristica con il Te Deum il 31 dicembre nella parrocchia latina di Santa Caterina a Betlemme, e il 2 gennaio a Gerico.

Daniel Attinger, monaco di Bose che vive a Gerusalemme, ha aiutato la meditazione quotidiana con una riflessione sull'incarnazione. Nel cuore di ciascuno rimarranno la bellezza dei luoghi che ha visto Gesù camminando - con i suoi discepoli - lungo le strade della Galilea e della Giudea fino a Gerusalemme e la luce dei volti delle persone conosciute, soprattutto nelle piccole comunità cristiane che sono davvero un prezioso segno di speranza per la pace e per la testimonianza del Vangelo.

Siamo andati con un desiderio grande, e siamo ritornati con una certezza ancora più grande, nel nome di Cristo che si è incarnato in questa terra e che è risorto per tutta l'umanità di tutti i tempi: con semplicità e fiducia, umiltà e coraggio costruire ponti, guardare oltre i muri, seminare amicizia e fraternità. Questo è anche il significato del logo del pellegrinaggio: i fili dei colori della bandiera israeliana e palestinese e della bandiera vaticana, si incrociano come un ponte, con uno slancio verso la pace e la giustizia. E ora il cammino continua nelle nostre parrocchie e nelle diocesi, con una maggiore responsabilità verso coloro che vivono in Terra Santa, con la disponibilità a creare occasioni di incontro e di scambio e con una gioia profonda nel leggere, meditare, studiare la Parola di Dio.

150 jóvenes y responsables de la Acción Católica provenientes de 26 países del mundo peregrinaron a Tierra Santa del 28 de diciembre de 2007 al 6 de enero de 2008.

Un sueño que comenzó en Colonia durante la JMJ 2005 y que se convirtió en realidad: hemos vivido una fuerte experiencia de fe y de Iglesia, siguiendo los pasos de Jesús, en los lugares santos, con los jóvenes y con los pastores de la comunidad cristiana que vive hoy en Tierra Santa, para celebrar los 40 años de la Jornada Mundial de la Paz, el 1º de enero en Jerusalén.

Como hace 40 años cuando Pablo VI envió a un grupo de jóvenes de la ACI a Belén para depositar una lámpara de la paz en la gruta, en ocasión de la Jornada mundial de la Paz, los jóvenes de Acción Católica de todo el mundo se reunieron en Jerusalén, testigos de paz y de unidad.

Los jóvenes peregrinos fueron acogidos con amistad y fraternidad, se sintieron en casa en la sede de la Acción Católica de Belén, en la parroquia de Jerusalén y en las casas de familia en Nazareth.

Las jornadas han sido muy intensas para permitir ya sea la visita a los lugares santos, los encuentros con los cristianos y sus Pastores. La visita al Santo Sepulcro ha sido la etapa de cada día en Jerusalén, hasta el 1º de enero al alba los peregrinos pudieron permanecer en silencio en el Gólgota y en el pabellón de la resurrección.

La característica que hizo único este viaje fue la oportunidad de entrar en contacto directo con la población cristiana de la Tierra Santa, para construir puentes de esperanza en una tierra signada por el continuo surgir de muros y divisiones. Ha nacido una amistad con los jóvenes de Belén, Jerusalén, Taybeh, Haifa y Nazareth que participaron de toda la peregrinación y con todos los que operan sobre todo religiosos y religiosas en lugares de espiritualidad y de solidaridad tanto en Belén como en Nazareth.

A través de esta experiencia se ha podido tocar de cerca aquello que el Patriarca afirmó durante el encuentro con los jóvenes: “Somos dos pueblos, tres grandes religiones y Dios que nos ha reunido a todos aquí. Esta no puede ser la tierra de uno solo. Hoy la falta de libertad de movimiento quita la esperanza a muchos de nosotros, pero debemos creer todavía en la paz”.

El Custodio de Tierra Santa, padre Pierbattista Pizzaballa afirmó: “El trabajo del diálogo aquí se percibe con mayor fuerza. Sobre todo entre los hebreos y cristianos, donde existe una dimensión institucional que hay que tener en cuenta. También en relación al ecumenismo, donde frecuentemente se produce una dinámica más de ‘condominio’ que de Iglesia, a causa de las disidencias

acerca de la propiedad y la gestión de los lugares santos. Pero no por esto debemos renunciar a hablar, sino todo lo contrario”.

Un momento significativo fue ciertamente el 1º de enero en Jerusalén, con la participación en la Celebración Eucarística presidida por el Patriarca Sabbah que ha confiado a un joven de cada país la lámpara de la paz con forma de paloma hecha en cerámica, producida artesanalmente por una cooperativa de artesanos cristianos.

S.E. Monseñor Domenico Sigalini, asistente general de la Acción Católica Italiana y obispo de Palestrina acompañó a los peregrinos junto a quince sacerdotes de los diversos países y presidió la celebración eucarística con Te Deum el 31 de diciembre en la parroquia latina de Santa Catalina, en Belén y el 2 de enero en Jericó.

Daniel Attinger, monje de Bose que vive en Jerusalén, ayudó a las meditaciones cotidianas con una reflexión sobre la encarnación. En el corazón de cada uno permanecerá sobre todo la belleza de los lugares que vieron a Jesús caminando – como El con sus discípulos, a lo largo de los caminos de Galilea y la Judea hasta Jerusalén y la luz de los rostros de las personas conocidas, sobre todo en la pequeña comunidad cristiana que es verdaderamente un signo precioso de esperanza para la paz y de testimonio del Evangelio.

Hemos ido con un deseo grande y hemos retornado con una certeza aun mayor, en el nombre de Cristo que se encarnó en esta tierra y que resucitó para toda la humanidad de todos los tiempos: con simplicidad y fe, humildad y coraje construir puentes más allá de los muros, sembrar amistad y fraternidad. Este es el significado del logo de la peregrinación, las líneas con los colores de las banderas de Palestina, de Israel y de la bandera vaticana, se entrecruzan como un puente, con un salto hacia la paz y la justicia.



Ahora el camino continúa en nuestras parroquias y en nuestras diócesis, con una mayor responsabilidad hacia quienes viven en Tierra Santa, con la disponibilidad de crear ocasiones de encuentro e intercambio y con una alegría profunda de leer, meditar, estudiar la Palabra de Dios.

Oana Tuduce
Oradea - Roma, 6 de abril de 2008
Presidente nazionale AC Romania

Youth Coordination Meeting - March 2009

Participants

Yvonne	Ndayikeza	Burundi
Salvator	Niciteretse	Burundi
Chiara	Finocchietti	Italy
Marco	Iasevoli	Italy
Marco	Sposito	Italy
Joe	Teuma	Malta
Marvic	De Bono	Malta
Dulce	Rivera	Mexico
Zuzanna	Karmanska	Poland
Oana	Tuduce	Romania
Codruta	Fernea	Romania
don Iuliu	Muntean	Romania
Maria	Palau Melet	Spain
Elio	Moran Villalobos	Venezuela



Programme

14 March

The participants attended the course at the Pontifical Gregorian University organized by the International Forum of Catholic Action and the Italian Catholic Action in collaboration with the Christian Life Community under the patronage of the Pontifical Council for the Laity. The course started this semester.

The programme included a theological debate on the laity based on *Christifideles Laici*. Prof. Marco Vergottini and Prof. Stella Morra were the lecturers.

The afternoon was free. In the evening, the participants joined the National Council of the Italian Catholic Action for Vespers.

15 March

This was an intensive day. During the morning, Sandro Calvani UNICRI (UN agency) Director spoke about the contribution which Catholics can make to the governments of the world in the context of the current crisis.

During the afternoon, after the opening address of welcome by Emilio Inzaurraga, IFCA Coordinator, the members of the Secretariat and of the Youth Coordination Group had an interesting discussion with Sandro Calvani on the morning's presentation. This was in fact an in-depth study of aspects related with CA's main task, namely, formation.

Each country then made its presentation and this gave a clear picture of CA youth in the different parts of the world.

The evening ended with a short presentation given by Prof. Stella Morra about "the challenge of presenting CA: content, target audiences, language used and communication aids"

16 March

During the morning the participants paid a visit to the Pontifical Council for Lay where they were received by the Secretary, Bishop Msgr. Josef Clemens, the Under-Secretary Prof. Guzmán Carriquiry and Fr. Eric Jacquinet, responsible for the youth sector.

A working session with Fr. Eric Jacquinet followed. Each country gave a short presentation about the challenges which their youth have to face and what the Church and Catholic Action in their country can offer. A general outline of their Formative Projects was presented.

As a follow-up of the work carried out on Sunday and the presentations given in the morning, during the afternoon we split up into two working groups and worked on two projects: a project for the Holy Land and a project for the promotion of CA among

youth. We discussed the involvement of CA Youth in the preparations for WYD 2011 which is being held in Madrid. We proposed to draw up a preparatory itinerary and to organize a meeting for CA youth who will be in Madrid for the WYD 2011.

We also discussed the possibility of creating a video about CA Youth in the different parts of the world and of organizing a meeting for CA youth every 2 or 3 years.

The Youth in Action Project, which was planned during the January meeting and which could be a resource for the next meeting, was presented.

17 March

During the morning the two working groups carried on with their work at the IFCA Central Office in Via della Conciliazione 1.

The group which worked on projects for the Holy Land presented a concrete plan, developed by IFCA and CA Italy. A copy of the plan is attached. The first proposal was to support the collection for the Holy Land which takes place each year on Good Friday. A poster with an appropriate text was prepared. Another proposal was to do something on the occasion of the Pope Benedict XVI's visit in the Holy Land (8-15 May). It was agreed that a message of support is to be sent and that an appeal is to be sent to CA in the different countries to organize prayers at local level.

In the group which worked on the promotion of CA among youth, it was decided to prepare material which answers to the following questions: Who are CA youth? For whom is CA? Why is CA a good proposal? What do we do in CA? Where does CA stem from?

We all agreed about the importance of sustaining CA at parish, diocesan, national and international level. To support this idea it was proposed to create a spot (a sort of advertisement) which breaks the already existent stereotyped concepts.

The group also proposed to use the website and to issue a newsletter, which will be published every three months and which will include different initiatives at local and national level. It was also proposed that there has to be someone or a group which caters for CA at international level.

Another task was the finalization of the project Youth in Action which is to be submitted to the National Agency by the Italian CA by the 1st April. In this project Spain, Malta and Romania agreed to work with Poland and Bulgaria.

At noon the participants attended a meeting with Card. Leonardo Sandri, the Prefect of the Congregation for Oriental Churches including the Holy Land. So the group presented him with the projects concerning the HL.

In the afternoon the conclusions of the meeting were drawn up and presented during a meeting with the members of the Secretariat.

The priorities for the Youth Coordination Group are:

- The drawing up of the poster to support the Collection for the HL which is held on Good Friday.
- The setting up of a discussion group which will help to facilitate communication among the participants
- The preparation of a message of support for the Pope's visit to the Holy Land.
- The finalization of the project Youth in Action and its submission by the 1st April.
- The preparation of CA promotion material aimed at youth (power point or video).

The next Youth Coordination meeting is planned for October 2009

On the 19th we all participated together in a Holy Mass in the church of San Paolo alla Regola. This church is found in Trastevere and was built on the site of the house where St. Paul lived as a prisoner.

Codruta Fernea, ACRO National Secretary

FIAC - Coordinación de Jóvenes

Del 15 al 18 de marzo se llevó a cabo en Roma una nueva reunión del Secretariado del FIAC, y el primer encuentro de la Coordinación de Jóvenes (CJ) del Forum Internacional de Acción Católica del cual han participado responsables y representantes de las Asociaciones de nueve países (Argentina, Burundi, España, Italia, Malta, México, Polonia, Rumania y Venezuela).

Marisa Spinelli, representante de la ACA en este encuentro, nos contó que durante el mismo, junto al Secretariado del FIAC, se han vivido momentos de formación, de encuentro y de compartir proyectos e ideas que se tienen en común como jóvenes de AC, en particular para el trienio 2009-2011.

Al preguntársele cuál es el tema de trabajo que destacaría de la reunión, respondió: "Un punto importante fue el deseo de continuar el camino y profundizar la amistad con la comunidad cristiana de la Tierra Santa, después de la peregrinación mundial de jóvenes de AC (28.12.07-6.01.08). En efecto, estamos trabajando en un amplio proyecto centrado principalmente en la formación." Precisamente relacionados a Tierra Santa están los dos signos concretos, surgidos de esta reunión de la Coordinación, a los cuales se invita a sumarse a las comunidades de Jóvenes de AC de todo el mundo.

Oración durante la peregrinación del Santo Padre en Tierra Santa - 8 al 15 de mayo.

La Coordinación de Jóvenes del FIAC invita a todos a comprometerse en una oración continua durante los días de la peregrinación de Benedicto XVI por Tierra Santa (<http://www.lpj.org/newsite2006/news/2009/benoisxvi-voyage/programma-it.html>).

Esto es en respuesta a la solicitud del Santo Padre: "Del 8 al 15 de mayo cumpliré una peregrinación a Tierra Santa para pedir al Señor, visitando los lugares santos de su pasaje terreno, el precioso don de la unidad y de la paz para Medio Oriente y para la humanidad entera. Desde ahora cuento con el sostenimiento espiritual de todos vosotros, para que Dios me acompañe y colme con su gracias a cuantos encontraré a mi paso!" (Benedicto XVI - Ángelus 8.3.09).

Para esto se invita a unirse en la oración con todos los fieles del mundo, en particular con la plegaria que propuso Su Beatitud Fouad Twal, Patriarca Latino de Jerusalén.

Señor Jesús, en el sucesor de Pedro la Iglesia siempre tuvo en la historia una guía y un Pastor que le ha indicado el camino a recorrer para cumplir la voluntad de Dios Padre.

Te confiamos estos meses de preparación a la visita de nuestro Papa Benedicto.

Dona tu Santo Espíritu para que sepamos prepararnos en la oración a fin de que esta visita sea para la Tierra Santa un momento de renovación y de gracia particular.

Promoción de la Colecta "pro Tierra Santa" - Viernes Santo - 10 de abril. En todas las iglesias locales y en sus parroquias, se desarrolla esta colecta, en la que las ofrendas recibidas son destinadas a la Custodia de Tierra Santa y al sostenimiento de otras obras realizadas en este territorio.

Los jóvenes de AC de todo el mundo se comprometen a promover y sostener esta colecta como gesto, simple y concreto, de paz y de unidad con nuestros hermanos de la Tierra de Jesús.

Para tal fin se ha preparado un afiche destinado a toda la Acción Católica, contando con una versión en español, con la posibilidad de personalizarla incluyendo el logo nacional o diocesano.

Nerina Rodriguez Cosco
AC Argentina



Summer in Holy Land 2009

IN BETHLEHEM

A. participation in the CHILDREN'S SUMMER in the Bethlehem Catholic Action Centre from the 21st June - 31st July 2009.

Raluca Fernea Gabriel Codrut Morariu CA youth from Cluj - Romania
Gabriele Pinca and Alessandra Perticoni 2 CA youth from Assisi - Italy
collaborated with the volunteers from the parish under the guidance of Vincenzo Bellomo, a Fidei Donum lay person, who drew up the programme, coordinated and animated the children's activities

B. service in the parish

Domenico Montenuro - young student from Basilicata studying in Rome
pilgrim in the Holy Land as part of the IFCA pilgrimage and was also in Bethlehem last August

FROM AC ROMANIA Volunteers in the Holy Land

Our experience in the Holy Land. Codrut Morariu and Raluca Fernea

Catholic Action of Bethlehem is organizing this month, a summer camp for the children of Bethlehem. Through the International Forum of Catholic Action (IFCA) there were invited to participate some volunteers from differentes Catholic Actions in the world, out of which the Catholic Action of Romania.

Young people from the Catholic Action of Romania had the opportunity to meet young people from the Catholic Action Bethlehem during the international pilgrimage in the Holy Land (8 December 2007-6 January 2008). As a continuation of that pilgrimage and the contacts made with the Catholic Action of the Holy Land are these activities carried out together.

Two persons representing the Catholic Action of Romania, Raluca Fernea and Codrut Morariu gave their disponibility to participate at this summer experience.

Here are some impressions after the first week of activities:

After a 3-hour flight, started in Romania, a night landing in Tel Aviv, we opened a gate to a world full of charm and contradictions, where the answers always raise new questions. Occurrence of the day and a strong sun brightness revealed a barren ground,

but covered with vegetation, whose source of water it launches another theme of thought. I realized that the will of God has guided us in these lands, roads once travelled by the steps of Mary and Joseph, hearing - like a bridge over time - words of the Scripture: "And the word was made flesh and lived among us".

Entering into the Church Nativity I felt it as an accomplishment, as a watering of the soul at the wellspring of the faith in the light of the Star that sunrise on the humanity's sky. Aware of the power of prayer without limits, we brought in our hearts feelings of people you carry in the soul and mind; rising to the heavens as thanks for what mission he was entrusted.

Help us, Lord, not to deviate from the path you have prepared for us, and that we can be light that come to confess, with hearts penetrated of fire that we love you.

Under the motto, "Go to your homes and tell them all that the Lord has done for you", a summer camp was organized by the Catholic Action of Bethlehem that gathered daily activities for over 100 children.

Split into teams, 3 age groups, participants take the shirts of different colours, bearing the name of three saints: the smaller, blue, apprentices' of St. Francis. Group two, yellow, apprentices' of St. Joseph, and the largest in gray are apprentices' of St. Anthony.

After the Morning Prayer and the games and energizers, the volunteers help teams to accompany children to activities on the workshops: religion, music, practical skills and dynamic games. There are special workshops for viewing movies or games in the pool.

Initially little timid, then increasingly active, we realized our role in these activities, intervening when necessary to boost the participants in this campus, through games, songs and bances, or by suggesting ideas and conducting workshops.

Children's activities are held from 8 - 12.30, but volunteers continue to work each evening by providing spatial and logistics required organising activities for families: bingo, watching movies, shows, and party nights at the pool or sports.

The day of Saturday was allocated to travel by Bethlehem on the route once traveled by the steps of Mary and St. Joseph in fulfillment of their destiny: the Nativity Church, Milk Grotto, and Field of the shepherds. Children and volunteers have come along the road of history, living with this thought pushed towards a better future.

Codrut Morariu and Raluca Fernea
AC Romania





Youth Coordination Meeting - October 2009

SEMINAR

Hand in Hand We Stand
Rome, 17th -22nd October 2009

PROGRAMME

SATURDAY 17

- h. 10 Secretariat is working
- h. 13 lunch
- h. 15.30 INTRODUCTION
Going through programme
Icebreaking games
- h. 18 Presentation of organizations.
Building blocks
- h. 20 dinner
- h. 21.30 Eurotaste
More acquaintances with ICA
Youth from Rome and from different regions in Italy

SUNDAY 18

- h. 8.30 Breakfast
- h. 10 SESSION
MY Y/OURope - workshop
- h. 13 lunch
- h. 16 SESSION
Piero Pisarra Paris - Journalist, writer
This is MY SHARE
The European Youth Pact
- h. 20 dinner
free evening

MONDAY 19

- h. 8.30 Breakfast
- h. 9.30 SESSION
Meeting with Father Eric Jacquinet - PCL Youth Section

h. 13 lunch
h. 15.30 SESSION
Hi...I'm YiA
h. 17 SEMINAR Justice Peace and Reconciliation in Africa
h. 20 dinner
h. 21 AFRICAN MUSIC

TUESDAY 20

h. 8.30 Colazione
h. 9.30 SESSION
Project Management
h. 13 lunch
h. 16 SESSION
Leaders in Action
h. 20 dinner
h. 21.30 Visit the city

WEDNESDAY 21

h. 8.30 Colazione
h. 9.30 SESSION
Go Concrete
h. 13 lunch
h. 16 SESSION
Mirror Exercise
h. 20 dinner
Farewell party

THURSDAY

h. 22 departures

RELIGIOUS PROGRAMME

17
h. 15 opening prayer

18 - 19- 20 - 21

h. 8 Holy Mass

The meeting, organized by the Youth Coordination Group from the 17-22 October in Rome, was attended by young people from 6 European countries (through EU funding) and some young priests and lay leaders from Burundi, Rwanda, Kenya, Argentina, Myanmar and Jerusalem.

They worked on four projects, which indicate four main areas where CA young members all over the world will be focusing their attention:

1. A programme for the preparation of CA young members for the WYD in Madrid
2. A meeting on the Ecumenical Prayer for Peace
3. A formation session for Justice and Peace
4. Support, through voluntary work, to the Holy Land

On the IFCA website, on the pages dedicated to Youth Coordination, you can find a summary of the workshops and the 4 projects

Countries of the Participants on March and October 2009 Meetings

1. Argentina
 2. Burundi
 3. Italia
 4. Myanmar
 5. Polonia
- (IFCA SECRETARIAT 2008-2012)
6. Bulgaria
 7. Kenya
 8. Malta
 9. Messico
 10. Romania
 11. Rwanda
 12. Spagna
 13. Terra Santa
 14. Venezuela

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Soon, the IFCA website <http://www.fiacifca.org/> Youth Coordination Section could become a CA Youth site on condition that... we get everybody's cooperation!

Send us reports about your activities in your native language AND in English and/or Spanish and /or French. Send us also CD DVD with photos or short videos for the photo gallery, in view of a possibility of getting some space on the You Tube.

5th Asian Youth Day, Imus Philippines, 20-27 November 2009

The youth of the Fiac participating in the 5th Asian Youth Day, 20-27 November, the Diocese of Imus, Philippines

Share the Word, live the Eucharist, be heroes in the mission: These were the three fires of the Fifth Asian Youth Day, 'which 23 to 27 November 2009 has made to converge in the Philippines about 2,500 youth from 22 countries of Asia.

The structure is that of GMG was three days of hospitality in dioceses Philippines, then meet in the beautiful and lush and the Diocese of Imus → live after the celebration and welcome party in the cathedral, the moments of reflection, celebration and sharing.

What we report in our pilgrim's bag? Certainly the image of a young Church, joyful and strong in the weakness of being a minority, living, deprivation of liberty or in some cases explicit situations of conflict.

We bring with us a lot of curiosity and interest in Catholic Action, which today in Asia present only in Burma and the Philippines. And then the Asia move has been the opportunity to experience once again, of our being Catholic Church civa universal: the encounter with different languages, cultures, different faces, we shared one faith and one direction towards which it directs.

We bring with us a commitment to continue to walk alongside our brothers in Asia, in friendship, prayer and collaboration to build the Church, common house.

I giovani del Fiac partecipano alla 5th Asian Youth Day, 20-27 novembre, diocesi di Imus, Filippine

Condividere la Parola, vivere l'eucarestia, essere eroi nella missione: sono stati questi i tre fuochi della V Giornata Asiatica della Gioventù, che dal 23 al 27 novembre 2009 ha fatto convergere nelle Filippine circa 2500 giovani da 22 paesi dell'Asia.

La struttura è stata quella della GMG: tre giorni di accoglienza nelle diverse diocesi Filippine, per poi riunirsi nella bella e rigogliosa diocesi di Imus e cioè vivere, dopo la celebrazione e la festa di accoglienza nella cattedrale, i momenti di catechesi, festa e condivisione.

Cosa riportiamo nella nostra bisaccia del pellegrino? Sicuramente l'immagine di una chiesa giovane, gioiosa e forte nella debolezza dell'essere minoranza, del vivere la privazione della libertà o in alcuni casi situazioni di esplicito conflitto.

Portiamo con noi anche tanta curiosità e interesse per l'Azione Cattolica, che oggi in Asia è presente solo in Birmania e nelle Filippine. E poi l'Asia è stata l'occasione per fare esperienza, ancora una volta, del nostro essere Chiesa cattolica, cioè universale: nell'incontro con lingue, culture, fisionomie differenti, abbiamo condiviso un'unica fede e un'unica direzione verso cui dirigerci.

Portiamo con noi l'impegno a continuare a camminare insieme ai nostri fratelli d'Asia, nell'amicizia, nella preghiera e nella collaborazione per edificare la Chiesa, casa comune.

Chiara Finocchietti

"Asiatic Youth, Meet together, Share the Word, Live the Eucharist"

A*siatic Youth, Meet together, Share the Word, Live the Eucharist.* This was the theme of the five day meeting of the Catholic Asiatic Youth. The meeting was held in the diocese of Imus in the Philipines. Chiara from Italy and Maria from Spain attended in IFCA's name.

- * Asiatic Youth, the theme starts by saying. It is a call for everybody and for everyone. God called young people to this land, very far for many, and young people have responded well. They answered with joy, with sincerity, with dances, with daily offerings and with their life.
- * Meet together, the theme continues. Come, because there is something in store for everyone: a fuller, happier and more balanced life. And young people answered the call. They came together as Jesus wished. It seems that

they have understood him well. They never tired of presenting themselves, of asking each other where they came from, what they did...they wished to get to know one another, to share, to collaborate, they were open to each other and wished to get to know one another better.

- * Share the Word, taste and study in depth the Word of God so that daily words may become life-giving. When in union with God and his Word, the words with which they express their sentiments, their ideas, their aspirations, their roots... resound more fully.
- * Live the Eucharist, discover the strength which it gives and which helps you befriend each other to go and meet Him.
- * Happiness, dance, courage, simplicity, church, freshness, everyday life, faith, life, peace, smiles, love, ... These are the words which describe the feelings experienced during the meeting. These words, seen in the light of our faith in Jesus Christ, are evidence of the fact that God continues to love this land and the people who live therein profoundly. They are also words which in reality are a poor but are words which express young people's experiences during these days. These words, read through faith in Jesus Christ, express the fact that God still loves this land and its inhabitants profoundly. They are words which in practice are a poor but generous reply to God's profound love.
- * Some said that they are grateful to the Spanish people for having brought them Christianity. IFCA calls us to do the same thing, to pass on the Good News and make Catholic Action known in places where it is not so that people may start living their faith in Christ more profoundly and more steadfastly. So, let us keep up our commitment!

G*iovani dell'Asia, Incontratevi, Condividete la Parola, Vivete l'Eucaristia.* Questo è il tema delle cinque giornate della gioventù asiatica cattolica. Ve le raccontiamo dal cuore delle giornate, la diocesi di Imus nelle Filippine. A nome del FIAC siamo venute Chiara dall'Italia e chi scrive, Maria dalla Spagna.

- * Giovani asiatici, inizia dicendo il tema. Si tratta di una chiamata, una chiamata per tutti e per ciascuno. Dio chiama qui in queste terre, per molti lontane, e vi possiamo dire che i giovani rispondono. Rispondono con allegria, con profondità, con balli, con offerte quotidiane, con la loro vita.
- * Incontratevi, continua il tema. Venite, perché c'è qualcosa da offrire, una vita più piena, più felice, più giusta. E vengono. E insieme, questo è il desiderio di

- * Compartir la Palabra. Saborear y profundizar la Palabra de Dios para llenar de vida las palabras cotidianas. Las palabras con las que expresan sus sentimientos, sus ideas, sus anhelos, sus raíces... suenan mas llenas cuando se engarzan con Dios y su Palabra.
- * Vivir la Eucaristia, descubrir la fuerza que emana de ella, para dejarse encontrar y para salir al Encuentro.
- * Alegria, danza, coraje, sencillez, iglesia, frescura, actualidad, fe, vida, paz, sonrisas, amabilidad, ... son palabras que expresan lo que aqui estamos viviendo estos dias. Palabras que leidas desde la fe en Jesucristo son expresion de que Dios sigue amando profundamente esta tierra y esta gente que la habita. Y tambien palabras que hechas realidad son una pobre pero entregada respuesta al amor profundo de Dios.

Alguien comentaba ayer que estaban agradecidos a los espanoles, porque les trajeron el cristianismo en su momento. Desde el FIAC estamos llamados a hacer lo mismo, transmitiendo la Buena Noticia y dando a conocer la Accion Catolica alli donde no es conocida, para que la fe en Jesus pueda ser vivida con mas profundidad y coherencia. A por ello!

Maria Palau Melet
ACG Jovenes España

La Colleta del Venerdi santo Pro Terra Santa
The Collection for the Holy Land on Good Friday
La Collecte pro Terre Sainte du Vendredi Saint
La Colecta pro Tierra Santa del Viernes Santo

It is a sign of the CA Youth commitment to promote and to be responsible for the Good Friday Collection for the Holy Land in all the parishes, where CA is established, and more widely in all the dioceses.



From Sydney to Madrid

An unforgettable experience of faith and love

World Youth Day had just finished and we were preparing our bags to depart for Italy. In our pilgrims' rucksack, together with our personal belongings, we also packed all the experiences we had been through during this event: from the catechisis to the festive moments, from the meeting with the Pope at Bangaroo to the vigil and the closing mass at Randwick.

Our WYD experience is different from the one about which the newspapers and television stations have given full coverage. Most important for us were the persons and faces we came across during this journey together. These were incredible days for Sydney. Alongside the height of the skyscrapers of this efficient western city, which make you go dizzy when you look up at them, another lofty reality appeared - the testimony of so many young lay people, priests and members of religious orders who sowed seeds of love and hope which could sprout and split the asphalt of indifference and the distracted hurry which underlies relations in contemporary metropolis.

During the Saturday vigil, the Holy Father spoke to us about the Holy Spirit, starting by quoting the three qualities which Saint Augustine attributes to His work: unity, fidelity, gift. We really felt the breath of the Spirit in those extraordinary days!

The first impressive evidence of these three qualities was given by the inhabitants of this marvellous land of Australia. They welcomed, helped and accompanied the pilgrims, who came from all over the world, with their smiles. In the cities, in the hostels, in the places where young people attended for catechisis, in Randwick, where the meeting with the Pope was held, and on all the other WYD events, young people experienced a spirit of fraternity and friendship which goes beyond oceans.

The other unforgettable evidence was precisely the colourful and noisy presence of all those young people, all eager to search and hope, so typical of their age.

Among all the young people whom we met, we would like to refer particularly to those from Asia. These attended in large numbers, something which is not easy for them when meetings are held in Europe. Through the

International Forum of Catholic Action and as Delegates of the Italian Catholic Action in Sydney, we had been invited to the Continental Asiatic Youth Meeting. There, we witnessed and enjoyed dances and songs by groups coming from Turkmenistan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Philippines. It was a garland of colours, a varied display of costumes, a variety of cultures, a multifaced expression of our faith which makes you live the Church's universal principle of love.

But during WYD we had two special travelling companions, who, more than anyone else, have been a strong evidence of the action of the Holy Spirit: a man and a woman, a young Italian man and a very senior Australian woman.

The first was Pier Giorgio Frassati, who, like us, had travelled a long way to be with us in Australia. The testimony of his spiritual life, lived to its fullness under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, attracted thousands of young people, who everyday queued for long hours to pay him homage in Sydney Cathedral.

The other person lives at Randwick, a couple of meters away from the hipodrome where Pope Benedict XVI had the meeting with young people. Her name is Rosemary Goldie: a name unknown to young people. She was the first lay woman to be appointed as undersecretary of the Pontifical Council for the Laity. It is thanks to her that today we have a Church where young people can feel at home.

When we paid her a surprise visit after participating in the Mass with the Holy Father, her touching remark was: Catholic Action is found everywhere! And undoubtedly, the action of the Holy Spirit may be seen even here: in the link there is between the small room where, hanging on the wall we could see Rosemary's photos, one with Paul VI and another one with John Paul II, and the enormous asplanade where Benedict XVI celebrated Mass, the continuity between this little great woman and the thousands of young people, encamped in the cold Australian night.

Thank you Rosemary, thank you Pier Giorgio. With your life you have shown us that it is possible to accomplish in real life the Pope's mandate to all young people in the world: May unifying love be your gauge; enduring love your challenge; self-giving love your mission!

Un'esperienza indimenticabile di fede e di amore

La giornata mondiale si è appena conclusa, e preparando la borsa per ripartire alla volta dell'Italia nel nostro zaino del pellegrino infiliamo anche tutto ciò che abbiamo vissuto in questi giorni, dalle catechesi ai momenti di festa, dall'incontro con il Papa a Barangaroo alla veglia e alla messa conclusiva a Randwick. La GMG che vogliamo raccontarvi non è quella degli eventi, a cui giornali e televisioni hanno dato ampio spazio, ma quella delle persone, dei volti incontrati in questo cammino. Sono stati giorni incredibili per Sidney: alla verticalità dei grattacieli da capogiro di questa efficiente città occidentale si è affiancata un'altra altezza, quella della testimonianza dei tanti giovani, preti e religiosi che hanno gettato semi d'amore e speranza in grado di germogliare e spaccare l'asfalto di indifferenza e fretta distratta che appare cifra costante delle relazioni nelle metropoli contemporanee. Durante la veglia di sabato il Santo Padre ci ha parlato dello Spirito Santo, a partire dall'intuizione di Sant'Agostino, di tre qualità della sua opera: unità, fedeltà, dono. E il soffio dello Spirito l'abbiamo sentito davvero in queste giornate straordinarie!

La prima grande testimonianza della sua triplice opera ce l'hanno data gli abitanti di questa meravigliosa terra australe, che hanno accolto, aiutato e accompagnato con il sorriso i pellegrini giunti da tutto il mondo: l'esperienza fatta nelle città e nelle strutture di accoglienza, nei luoghi delle catechesi, nell'arrivo a Randwick per l'incontro col Papa e in tutti i momenti di questa giornata mondiale ci hanno fatto sperimentare uno spirito di fraternità e di amicizia che oltrepassa l'oceano.

L'altro segno indelebile di testimonianza è stato proprio la presenza colorata e chiassosa dei giovani, con la loro sete di ricerca e il desiderio di speranza proprio della nostra età.

Tra tutti i giovani che abbiamo incontrato un pensiero particolare va a quelli provenienti dall'Asia, una presenza numerosissima e visibile meno facile da trovare negli incontri che si svolgono in Europa: come delegazione dell'AC italiana a Sidney abbiamo partecipato all'incontro continentale dei giovani asiatici, a cui eravamo stati invitati attraverso il Forum Internazionale di Azione Cattolica. Abbiamo conosciuto e assistito a balli e canti di gruppi provenienti da Turkmenistan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Filippine. Una girandola di colori, costumi variegati e diversità di culture, una multiforme

geografia delle fede che ci ha fatto respirare l'universalità del principio d'amore della Chiesa.

Ma ci sono due persone che abbiamo incontrato nel cammino di questi giorni, due nostri compagni di viaggio, che forse più di tutti ci hanno testimoniato la forza dell'azione dello Spirito: un uomo e una donna, un giovane italiano e un'adultissima australiana.

Il primo è Pier Giorgio Frassati, che come noi ha percorso un lungo viaggio per essere qui in Australia: la sua testimonianza di pienezza di vita spirituale, intesa come vita secondo lo Spirito, ha richiamato migliaia di giovani, che ogni giorno hanno percorso file lunghissime per entrare a salutarlo nella Cattedrale di Sidney.

L'altra vive a Randwick, a pochi metri dall'ippodromo dove si è svolto l'incontro con Papa Benedetto XVI. Si chiama Rosemary Goldie: un nome che forse molti giovani non conoscono, ma è anche grazie a lei, prima donna laica a essere chiamata come sottosegretario al Pontificio Consiglio per i laici, che oggi esiste una Chiesa dove i giovani sono di casa.

Quando andiamo a trovarla dopo la messa con il Santo Padre, facendole una sorpresa, la sue parole ci fanno commuovere: l'Azione Cattolica è sempre presente!. E forse l'azione dello Spirito è anche qui, in questa vicinanza tra una stanza dove alle pareti sono appese le sue foto con Paolo VI e Giovanni Paolo II, e l'enorme spianata dell'ippodromo dove si svolge la messa con Benedetto XVI, nella continuità tra questa piccola grande donna e le migliaia di giovani accampate nel freddo della notte australiana.

Grazie Rosemary, grazie Pier Giorgio. Con la vostra vita ci testimoniate che è possibile incarnare il mandato del Papa ai giovani del mondo: Fate sì che l'amore unificante sia la vostra misura; l'amore durevole sia la vostra sfida; l'amore che si dona la vostra missione!

Chiara Finocchietti

WYD Madrid 2011
<http://www.jmj2011madrid.com/>





Sydney 2008 - Madrid 2011

Pontifical Council for the Laity

International Meeting of WYD organizers - Rome, 3 - 5 April 2009

The IFCA Youth Coordination Group took part in an international meeting for WYD organizers. This meeting offered all those who attended a splendid opportunity to appreciate the positive results of the WYD held in Sydney. The organizing committee of the WYD to be held in Madrid spoke about the pastoral, spiritual and organizational aspects of the 2011 WYD. We would like to invite National Associations to start preparing their young people for the coming WYD by using the material available on the following link, <http://www.laici.org/index.php?p=homegiovani>.

We would like to draw your attention to the interventions by (Fr. Eric, Fr. Salvatore (Burundi) and Joyce (Youth Desk Federation Asian Bishops' Conference).

Towards WYD 2011

We are starting to give you some guidelines regarding the preparations for the WYD in Madrid.

- a) CA Young members, as members of the local Churches, should participate in these World Youth Days, with their respective dioceses
- b) We are working on a space Infopoint Catholic Action on the IFCA website where you can find useful material and helpful information.
- c) We should stick to the information which we receive through our dioceses however, in the meantime, we could establish contact and twinnings with dioceses in Spain where CA is established. For indications and information about these dioceses, you may write to info@fiacifca.it
- d) Together with the Spanish CA young members we are thinking of organizing a short meeting for young CA members who will be in Madrid, just as we did on the occasion of the WYD in Cologne in 2005, before the start of the Catecheses.

Some Speeches during the PCL international Meeting

The impact of WYD in Burundi

Abbé Salvator Niciteretse
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Conférence des Evêques Catholiques du Burundi

FORUMS AND GATHERINGS OF YOUNG PEOPLE THAT ARE INSPIRED BY WYD AND ARE THE RESULTS OF WYD

We shall deal here with forums and gatherings of young people at parish, diocesan, national and regional levels that were supported by the Episcopal Commission for Lay Apostolate in collaboration with the diocesan commissions for lay apostolate. We shall also speak about the pilgrimage of the WYD Cross in Burundi and about the Burundi National Youth Cross, and we shall conclude with the impact of WYD on Burundi.

I. Parish and Diocesan Forums and Youth Gatherings

The first national forum in Burundi took place in August 2005 at the same time as WYD was taking place in Cologne. However, there had previously been forums in the diocese of Bujumbura since 2003 with the support of the Emmanuel Community. Since that time there has been an annual national forum as well as several parish, vicariate and diocesan forums and gatherings. For the national forums we invite representatives from neighbouring countries like Rwanda, RDC and Tanzania. Sometimes representatives come from western countries. Since 2006 we have had at least three forums per year of three to five days duration in each diocese. Some dioceses like the Archdiocese of Gitega have had up to seven forums each year, and this does not include gatherings organised in the parishes. These forums and gatherings take place in a climate of faith, prayer and devotion.

Huge numbers of young people join these gatherings. For the year 2008 the total number who have taken part in one-day gatherings throughout the country amounts to over 200,000 young people, and the forums of three to five days have been attended by around 70,000. These figures refer to the gatherings and forums that have involved the Episcopal Commission for Lay Apostolate which has given financial support and some

of the talks. There have been several parish forums and youth gatherings organised without the assistance of the CEAL. Most of these young people are members of Catholic Action movements and others are from the new communities. They contribute generously and voluntarily to the organisation of these forums, and then they in turn organise them in parishes and attract thousands of young people.

We would also like to emphasise that in all these forums, our bishop pastors and numerous priests and religious are always present to accompany the youth with spiritual and moral help and to give them catechesis. The presence of the Apostolic Nuncio at the forums contributes to the dimension of the universal Church and encourages our youth.

We would also like to point out that the International Forum of Catholic Action (IFCA) has supported the CEAL in coordinating and training young people in Burundi, Rwanda and the Kivu Region of RDC. IFCA also helps us to better coordinate them for all-round training that will help them to become more involved in pastoral ministry.

II. The WYD Cross and Icon of Our Lady in Burundi from 19 October to 2 November 2006: greatest impact

These precious signs of our faith were expected to arrive at Bujumbura international airport on 19 October 2006 coming from Congo-Brazzaville. Unfortunately, they did not arrive until 23 October, and they had to leave on 2 November 2006.

In spite of this setback, the pilgrimage of the WYD Cross and Icon of Our Lady in Burundi saw a massive participation of Christians, particularly young people, during the pilgrimage throughout the dioceses of Burundi. Of a population of eight million of whom sixty-five per cent are Catholic, over 700,000 people welcomed these sacred symbols of our faith with great devotion. The veneration and respect shown by the Christians for the Cross and Icon as they passed was obvious to all. Some of them fell to their knees, others pressed forward in order to touch the Cross and Icon, reminding us of when Jesus was on the lake, on a mountain or in the villages and the people hastened to reach him in order to hear his words and to be healed by touching him.

Miracles took place. The rain fell continuously wherever the Cross went on this pilgrimage, yet there had been a lack of rain before that time. As the Cross passed by, some people were healed of their infirmities. Members of other religious confessions and other Christians joined with their Catholic neighbours to welcome and venerate the Cross and Icon of Our Lady. We noticed the presence of Muslims and Protestants.

The bishops, priests and religious welcomed the Cross and Icon with devotion and faith. They spent days and nights with the people praying. This can be said also for the priests and the team of six people who accompanied the Cross throughout the country. The priests sometimes heard confessions until four o'clock in the morning.

The Cross and Icon were generally well received in Burundi. This pilgrimage renewed and reaffirmed the faith of the Christians of Burundi in general and of the youth in particular. Continuity was provided by the Burundi National Youth Cross

that was blessed by our bishops on 17 August 2007 in Ngozi. That pilgrimage was certainly of huge impact in affirming the faith of the Christians of Burundi and in particular of the young people.

III. Pilgrimage of the National Youth Cross in the Diocese of Ngozi continuing the impact of the WYD Cross

The National Youth Cross of Burundi that was blessed by our Bishop pastors on 17 August 2007 at the third National Youth Forum in Ngozi went on a year-long pilgrimage throughout the diocese of Ngozi. It passed through all the parishes and ecclesial communities before being passed on to the diocese of Muyinga. The words of the Bishops of Burundi delivered during the blessing of this Cross are written on the plaque: *“Dear young people, receive this Cross as a sign of God’s love for humanity and as a sign of unity and reconciliation as Christ commanded us”*.

As in the pilgrimage of the WYD Cross, each community celebrates with a solemn Mass of the Glorious Cross, adoration of the Cross, the Way of the Cross, Marian prayer, prayer vigils until dawn (1500 to 2000 people) and confessions. Catechesis on the meaning of the Cross are given before, during and after the pilgrimage of the National Cross. This pilgrimage certainly brings about many spiritual benefits. Over 182,620 people from different parishes and areas took part with faith and devotion at the various welcome ceremonies for the National Cross in 2008 in the diocese of Ngozi.

Other consequences of the WYD Cross visit to Burundi

- These youth forums and gatherings help to **refocus the faith and lives of young people on the person of Jesus Christ** who reconciles us while he hangs from the Cross and makes us brothers and sisters. For this purpose there is a pilgrimage of thousands of young people with the National Youth Cross and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament throughout the night that concludes with Mass. The faith of young people, currently threatened by the proliferation of sects and the rapid expansion of Islam, is given new strength.
- **The utopia of universal fellowship can be felt:** young people from different ethnic groups are hosted with families they do not know. At the beginning they are afraid they will be killed, but after three or five days, they become friends of these host families. Youth networks for peace are started with young people in other dioceses or in neighbouring countries.
- **The desire to experience the joy of faith:** Young people experience the joy of faith during youth forums and gatherings. For this reason many parishes ask for these events to take place in their areas.
- **Youth engagement:** Young people strive for a culture of peace, reconciliation and forgiveness in a country where the social fabric has been torn by war and ethnic, regional and political rivalries. When the young people in the Catholic Action and

spirituality movements are given responsibility and become more active in their parishes and Church groups, they begin to take responsibility for many youth activities.

- **A youth network in the sub-region:** A youth network is being set up to foster a mature and responsible faith and a culture of peace and reconciliation between Burundi, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo. It is for this purpose that the youth of these three countries invite each other to their forums in order to exchange experiences of faith and look at the challenges that stand in the way of peace and reconciliation or that erode human dignity in the sub-region. From 29 July to 3 August 2009 a similar forum will take place in Bujumbura if the means allow.

I cannot conclude this talk without paying tribute to the wonderful response of the young people and their spirit of sacrifice and self-giving for the sake of others. I also wish to point out that our bishops show great interest in these forums. They remain the activities organised each day. We are very grateful to the International Forum of Catholic Action (IFCA), Catholic Action in Spain, the Fund for Evangelisation in Spain and the Episcopal Commission for Lay Apostolate in France who have supported us financially as well as in organisation. As long as parallel WYDs are not organised in Africa, African participation will be limited for financial reasons, and also on account of those young people who do not want to return to their country of origin because they are in search of a better future.

May Pope Jean Paul II, founder of WYDs, be canonised!

The impact of WYD in Asia

Joy Candelario

Executive Secretary

FABC (Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences)-OLF-YOUTH DESK

I. ASIAN YOUTH STORIES

The Union of Catholic Asian News faithfully covered the World Youth Day in Sydney through various interviews, news updates and opinion articles on the event and with the young Asians as their primary subjects. Let us take a look at some reflections they have of the WYD:

I have learned the importance of unity and reconciliation, and that has made me feel more confident and motivated, said Shahzad, who lives in Hyderabad, 150 kilometers northeast of Karachi (Pakistan). In his view, such activities are needed for Christian youths "living silently" in this Muslim-majority country.

Deviana Wijaya of Bandung diocese in West Java, Indonesia told UCANews on August 2, *One big lesson I have taken from WYD is about giving. We should just give and give, and never think of what we'll get back.* He also said *WYD really gave me a strong impression of togetherness, peace and solidarity.*

Hin Rothana, of St. Joseph Parish in Phnom Penh, Cambodia: *I cannot speak English,* he admitted, but added he made many new friends *through body language.* The youth said he appreciated the music during the WYD events. *I didn't understand the lyrics, but listening to the music made me fall silent in the heart even though there were thousands of young people around me.* As I had scrawled on a pilgrims' wall just a few days previously: *We have come from Singapore to meet Jesus! And there, in the Blessed Sacrament, I met Jesus.* And I understood that had I not had such a terribly disappointing day, I would not have been able to experience the God of comfort in such a wonderful way. *I have seen mutual international friendship. It strengthens my faith. Our host families were lovely. They treated us as if we were their children,* added Busaraphan Bootsala, a young man from Chiang Mai province, northern Thailand.

The experience *urged me to lead a life in the spirit and try to be a witness to Christ,* Adrian Ho said. Already an altar server at Blessed Sacrament Church in Kuching, eastern Malaysia, Adrian said he is now motivated to become a lector and take an active role in the parish youth ministry.

Sirikunya Makullawanichnun, 34, said *seeing a group of tribal youths receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation* impressed her most as Thai youth coordinator. *Some said they hadn't received the sacrament for five years. Most of them had forgotten how to confess. However, the Holy Spirit changed that and kindled in them the fire of God's love,* she recalled. These stories suggest the impact World Youth Day has created among Asian young Catholics. In a discussion with fourteen (14) heads of youth commissions within Asia, these heads shared that youth delegates from their countries found the event significant for many reasons:

a. It provides an experience of the universal church - With only 3% Christians in this most populated region in the world, the WYD helps young Asians experience what it is to belong to the Catholic community. Celebrating the Mass in a language not their own, praying with people from all over the world, listening to the same truth spoken to them in catechism but presented in different approaches, they realize that they are not alone in living the faith. They are with millions of others who center their life in Jesus.

b. It helps them to celebrate and enjoy their young life as Catholics - Especially for young Asians coming from countries with socialist governments and places where poverty and strife are ordinary realities of life, the WYD gives them time to celebrate and appreciate the gift of being young. With youthful music, song, dance, and other lively elements expressed in the various WYD events, they are encouraged to appreciate their giftedness and explore possibilities for growth around them. Their encounters with counterparts from all over the world enable them not only to see the world in a different way, but also to appreciate more the basic essentials in life.

c. **It develops community spirit among them** - Journeying as one delegation, sharing stories, going through struggle and pains and dreaming together, they become a church - a small community desiring to see God in others and in themselves. In the process, leadership capacities are also enhanced. This makes for fertile ground for deeper ministry for the young.

d. **It renews them in their faith: discovering Jesus and the Church** - The experience is life-changing to young Asians. The formative experiences as well as the spaces for contemplation and communal worship help them grow in faith and to understand it better. Coming back, they feel empowered to share their faith and to live it radically. Many of them volunteer their services to the parish, while still others discover their vocation to the priesthood or consecrated life.

II. ASIAN CHURCH AND YOUTH MINISTRY

Most Catholic churches in Asia have already developed their own structure to care for the needs of their young populace. While some countries like India, the Philippines, and even Indonesia have a very clear and systematic structure for their youth ministries, many, like Laos, Mongolia and Cambodia, are still young as their local churches are also slowly emerging. Yet, despite these diversities, it is interesting to note that most of these countries organize a contingent for the WYD.

Mongolia, for instance, sent fifteen (15) young people out of only five hundred twenty-five (525) Catholics throughout the country. It might even be the most well represented Catholic church in Sydney! Vietnam had more than three hundred (300) delegates in the recent WYD, a far cry from its very small contingent in the past.

a. **WYD, a major youth ministry event** - Youth commissions also take the WYD as a major event in their youth calendar. Through the years, they have developed their own mechanism to make the tedious process of organizing effective and efficient. Some commissions, like Hong Kong, create a separate committee and employ personnel to handle the process of promotion, screening of delegates, and coordinating WYD-related activities with them. Dioceses are also given the proper orientation for endorsing delegates so they are screened from the parish up to the national level. In the aspect of finance, despite the economic realities in our region, it is amazing how countries are able to raise funds and how groups are willing to expend resources. In the Philippines, various creative approaches have been employed by would-be delegates to raise funds. From the classic solicitation letters and request for second collections in Masses, some young people also raise funds by organizing concerts, house to house serenading, crafts making, and others.

But there are also countries, Nepal, for instance, which chose not to send any official delegation. According to a church official in the apostolic vicariate, *The Church in*

Nepal had given youths the opportunity to attend such events in the past, but the results were not satisfactory. He said he wanted the youths to attend such events and put into practice what they learned, *but this has not happened so far here in Nepal.* The other reason for the Church not sending youths to WYD this year, he added, was that a Catholic youth from Nepal went missing during the last international WYD celebration, in Germany in 2005.

These sentiments are not isolated. Many youth ministers have also expressed the constant fear of losing people in the WYD. This is especially true in Southeast and South Asia, where people have migrated to other countries for more financial stability. As the financial crisis looms all over the region, this occurrence will surely continue in the next WYDs.

At the same time, the huge amount needed to send each delegate is enough to finance several programs for young people in a diocese or a parish. While the spirit of solidarity and oneness achieved by the event is incomparable, there might be more pressing concerns in the local level which the young need to face.

b. Pre-WYD Programs

1. Catechesis - Pre-WYD formation programs are organized by most countries. This is a venue to prepare their delegates spiritually for the event. Thai youth, for example, have studied the WYD 2008 theme, learned about the 10 patron saints, and reflected on Pope Benedict XVI's message for the WYD 2008 as preparation. In other countries like India and the Philippines, pre-WYD programs are made available to dioceses so that it can be used for their local formation. Implementation, however, is left to the decision of the dioceses. In Shanghai, China, the diocese held its very first national youth day before the WYD in Sydney. Adopting the same theme of the WYD 2008, three hundred (300) youth, including some who are non-Catholics, gathered in Sacred Heart Parish for a whole day of prayer, teaching, and community building.

2. Celebration - Before the WYD 2008, some countries had the opportunity to have the WYD Cross and Icon of Our Lady go on pilgrimage in their dioceses. This became a spiritual experience not only for delegates but for the entire church. In Dili, where the WYD Cross and Icon stayed for four (4) days, about five thousand (5,000) people accompanied the Cross and Icon in the different parishes of Dili. This became a moment of solidarity for the church, as people prayed for forgiveness. Bishop da Silva said *it is time for young people to forgive each other, turn away from sin, in order to bring this country on the right path of development.* According to the report, *many young Catholics have admitted participation in crimes such as gang violence, theft and arson after a military mutiny was staged in April 2006.* The same experience happened in Korea, the Philippines, and other Asian countries where the Cross and Icon went on pilgrimage.

3. Community Life - There are countries that also offer teambuilding experiences for their delegations, to help them to relate with each other better during the WYD and after. Asian countries are typically multi-lingual and multi-racial. Preparing the delega-

tes coming from different ethnicities is a pastoral challenge, but it is also an opportunity for community building.

In Sri Lanka, Tamil and Sinhalese delegates learned to share cultural differences, and came to a common vision for peace-building in their war-torn country. *It is a great gift to get a general idea of the condition of Lankan youths*, said Philip Sanjeeva Ranasinghe, 21, a Sinhalese student from Galle diocese. He said the group discussed the *common ideas to share with the world youths*. In addition to uniting in prayer, meditation and Mass, the youths practiced the Sinhalese Kandyan dance, the Tamil *Bharathanatiyam* dance, and a common dance for members of both communities.

c. Post-WYD Programs

1. A Call to Action - The experience of WYD has encouraged some youth delegations towards a common response to action. Indonesia, which has experienced major calamities in the last couple of years, has pledged for environmental campaign even before the WYD. When they attended the Green World Youth Day campaign in Sydney, Indonesian delegates united in a common plan of action for environment when they return. *We need to launch a common movement, such as peaceful action against companies whose operations may destroy the environment, asserted an Indonesian young lady. For her own part, she said, I will ask young friends to care for the environment by collecting garbage and planting trees.*

Likewise, members of some youth movements (i.e. IYCS, IYCW, IMCS, and MIJARC) rooted in Asia responded to the call of the Spirit to become witnesses. They have committed themselves to six goals:

1. Be active in the struggle against hunger, poverty, discrimination and exclusion, and work toward a world of justice and peace.
2. Think and act responsibly in personal life and in community in support of the U.N. Millennium Goals.
3. Call upon young people to share experiences and energies in social, political and economic issues.
4. Call Church and civil society leaders to support and encourage young people in action to eradicate poverty, hunger.
5. Call Church leaders to witness to young people, of faith lived in actions of justice and equality.
6. Call civil society to hold governments accountable to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

Vietnam and some other countries organized a collective response, such as going to rural places to share their lives with other young people, and also providing experiences for them. Few however have reported having a comprehensive plan of action not only involving the delegates but the local church as well. Though as earlier reported, many youths commit themselves to work for the Church, the WYD does not provide a scheme for the mission to be actualized. With the various challenges each region and country is facing,

there is a need to enable the young to become aware of global and local issues, reflect on them in the light of the teachings of the Church, and respond together. This will enable them to dialogue with life and live their faith in the context of everyday realities.

2. WYD Reunions - After the WYD, delegates normally experience a special bond among co-pilgrims. Most countries reported that because of this, even without a structure, delegates create opportunities to continue the link and grow in relationship with their companions. Some have set up their own websites so that photos can be downloaded and personal reflections can be continually shared. Some have prayer gatherings and fellowships together.

However, these reunions seem short lived, since there is no structure and clear goal to achieve for the group. Besides, the group that is created cannot really survive, as young people come from different parts of the country. If a parish community, however, has a structure where the youth delegate can be absorbed and where s/he can feel a sense of belonging, her/his experience of community will continue. While this happens in some instances, a youth ministry plan that is rooted in the realities of young people and the vision of the local church will make this possible.

In this regard, youth commissions, with all the youth ministers present in the WYD, should also be provided a means to reflect on the theme of the WYD in the level of ministry. Furthermore, some directives can be given so that what is taken up during these events will be helpful in the overall accompaniment the local church has for the young.

3. WYD Follow-up Sessions - After the WYD, many young pilgrims desire for a continuous experience, especially in the area of formation or catechesis. Catechesis in the WYD ideally provides foundation in Scriptures and Church teachings, for young people to imbibe the chosen theme in their daily lives. Some bishop-catechists chosen for this purpose have helped many of our pilgrims to grow in their faith and thirst more for the truth. However, some pilgrims did not have the same experience with their bishop-catechists.

There is a need for catechesis to be more relevant to issues of the young, to be more youth-friendly and participatory. Likewise, issues like inter-religious dialogue, should find a space in catechesis. Further, the team approach, employed by some catechesis animation teams from Asian countries with their bishop-catechists, proved helpful. Lay leaders animate the program with songs, games, sharing and creative prayer linked with the theme of the day, while the bishops provide the sound teaching.

Aside from producing the desired results, the medium, which is teamwork, becomes the message. An example for youth ministers to exemplify—youth ministry with, for and by the youth.

c. Summary

On the whole, the entire WYD journey provides the Asian church a framework by which the Church can minister to the young: journeying with the young through for-

mation, community building, and mission, among many others. However, if youth ministry is seen as a developmental ministry and not just as a one-shot event, it should be able to help in developing structures and strategies for youth commissions to take up the theme for on-going ministry in the local level.

If it is seen as a ministry of the church, it ought to touch base with reality, allowing the young to dialogue with global and local issues around them.

If youth ministry is pro-active and result-oriented, the WYD should enable delegations to move towards change, transforming their societies by their presence and contribution.

We hope for deeper dialogue and collaboration between the country host, the PCL and youth commissions so that the youth ministers themselves can be considered as the crucial link in making the vision of WYD operative not only in the days of the celebration but beyond.

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Points for reflection on WYD and youth ministry

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A. WHAT IS WYD?

1. John Paul II's prophetic insight - Benedict XVI regards WYD as a prophetic insight that came to John Paul II. "... the establishment of World Youth Day, desired with prophetic insight by my unforgettable Predecessor (Benedict XVI, general audience after his return from Cologne, 24 August 2005).

2. Far more than solely an event! - WYD is often accused of being just an event that consumes lots of energy and means without contributing to renewal in the ordinary lives of young people in the Church. To this accusation Benedict XVI responds: *World Youth*

Day is much more than an event. It is a time of deep spiritual renewal, the fruits of which benefit the whole of society. Young pilgrims are filled with the desire to pray, to be nourished by Word and Sacrament, to be transformed by the Holy Spirit (Benedict XVI, general audience, 4 July 2007)

3. The goal of WYD: to refocus young people's faith and life on the person of Jesus Christ - Ideas are regularly presented from all over to improve the content of WYD or to renew it. For example, people dream of WYD offering testimony of youth engagement on behalf of peace, or the defence of life, or for justice in the world, or for the fight against poverty and discrimination, or on behalf of ecology. It could also contribute in the area of ecumenism or interfaith dialogue. All of these objectives could be very useful, very important and very appropriate. But is this the goal of WYD? What are the criteria for discernment in order to choose one pastoral aim or another? In order to find criteria for discernment, we must look at the goal of WYD and its special charism.

John Paul II defined the goal of WYD thus: *The principal objective of World Youth Day is to focus the faith and life of every young person on the person of Jesus Christ so that Jesus may be their constant point of reference as well as the inspiration of every initiative and commitment for the education of the new generations. This is the 'maxim' of every Youth Day. Taken altogether throughout this decade, they have been an ongoing compelling call to build life and faith upon a rock, and that rock is Jesus Christ* (John Paul II, letter on the occasion of a seminar on WYD, 8 May 1996).

4. Going forth together to meet Christ - Like his predecessor, Benedict XVI identifies WYD as a meeting with Christ: *The solemn World Youth Days are nothing if not the culmination of a long process in which the young people turn to one another and then, together, turn to Christ. In Australia it was not by chance that the Way of the Cross, winding through the city, became the high point of those days. Once again, it summed up everything that had occurred in previous years, while pointing to the One who gathers us together: to that God who loves us all the way to the Cross. Thus, the Pope himself is not the star around which everything revolves.*

He is completely and solely a Vicar. He points beyond himself to the Other who is in our midst. In the end, the solemn liturgy is the centre of the whole event, because in it there takes place something that we ourselves cannot bring about, yet something for which we are always awaiting. Christ is present. He comes into our midst. The heavens are rent and the earth filled with light (Benedict XVI, address to the Roman Curia, 22 December 2008).

5. Sending young people forth on pilgrimage along the roads of the world - This meeting with Christ takes place during a pilgrimage, we are told by John Paul II: *Young people are therefore called periodically to set out on pilgrimage along the roads of the world. The Church can see itself and its mission to humankind in these young people. With young people the Church faces the challenges of the future, at the same time being aware that all humanity needs to be rejuvenated in spirit. This pilgrimage of youth builds bridges of fellowship and hope between continents, peoples and cultures. This journey is in constant movement, just like life, and just like youth* (John Paul II, letter on the occasion of a seminar on WYD, 8 May 1996).

6. **To experience the joy of faith** - John Paul II and Benedict XVI emphasised that the joy of faith is one of the characteristics of WYD that they had observed: World Youth Days have proved to be “occasions for young people to profess and proclaim their faith in Christ with ever greater joy” (John Paul II, letter on the occasion of a seminar on WYD, 8 May 1996).

I have always felt a very special joy at these encounters (Meeting with the youth at the Municipal Stadium in Pacaembu, São Paulo, Brazil, 10 May 2007).

According to Scripture, joy is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit (cf. Gal 5:22). This fruit was abundantly visible during those days in Sydney. [...] An integral part of any celebration is joy. A celebration can be organized, joy cannot. It can only be offered as a gift; and in fact it has been given to us in abundance. For this we are grateful. Just as Paul describes joy as a fruit of the Holy Spirit, so John in his Gospel closely links the Spirit to joy. The Holy Spirit gives us joy. And he is joy. Joy is the gift that sums up all the other gifts. It is the expression of happiness, of being in harmony with ourselves, which can only come from being in harmony with God and with his creation. It is part of the nature of joy to spread, to be shared. The Church's missionary spirit is nothing other than the drive to share the joy that has been given to us (Benedict XVI, address to the Roman Curia, 22 December 2008).

7. **A manifestation of God's action in the hearts of young people** - John Paul II spoke with emotion of the joy of faith that is a sign of God's action in the hearts of young people: *Throughout these memorable World Youth Gatherings, I have often been deeply touched by young peoples' joyous, spontaneous love for God and for the Church. They tell of suffering borne for the Gospel, of apparently unsurmountable obstacles that were overcome with God's help: they speak of their anguish before a world tormented by despair, cynicism and conflict. Each Meeting leaves me with an ever greater desire to praise God for revealing to young people the secrets of his Kingdom (Mt 11,25) (John Paul II, letter on the occasion of a seminar on WYD, 8 May 1996).*

8. **The Emmaus experience (Lk 24)** - Our first conclusion is that young people at WYD have the same experience as that spoken of by the disciples in Emmaus (Msgr Renato Boccardo):

- like the disciples who were walking along the road, young people leave their homes and come to WYD as pilgrims
- as Jesus taught the pilgrims with the Word of God, the various events in WYD form one great catechesis where the Word of God is at the centre and is communicated, witnessed, meditated and prayed.

World Youth Day is composed of various activities that all together form one great catechesis, a proclamation of the path of conversion to Christ that starts out from the experiences and queries arising from the daily lives of the young people. The Word of God is the central point, catechetical reflection is the method, prayer is the sustenance, and communication and dialogue are the distinguishing style (John Paul II, letter on the occasion of a seminar on WYD, 8 May 1996).

- as the disciples recognised Jesus in the breaking of bread, young people can meet Christ at the various celebrations (liturgies, Masses, way of the cross, Eucharistic adoration)

- as the disciples returned to Jerusalem to witness to the living Christ to the Church that was gathered together and that confirmed them in their faith, WYD is a Church event in which young people are both confirmed in their faith and are witnesses to others.

9. *Everything directed towards meeting Christ in the Church* - Our second conclusion allows us to answer the question that was asked before: can we make place in WYD for signs of service to peace and justice, to the drive against social inequalities and world hunger, of service to ecology and interfaith dialogue? All of these domains are important missionary territory for the Church. They follow on from the mission of service to humankind that the Church has received, the service of unity and communion. In a word, these missions of the Church arise from God's love for humanity (cf. Benedict XVI, *Deus caritas est*). This love has been given to us and we have received the divine command to live it out: "that you love one another as I have loved you" (Jn 15:12).

In order for the younger generations to enter into this framework of charity and to be engaged with the world, WYD guides young people towards the source of charity, God, whose Mercy is made manifest in Christ in the heart of the Church. At WYD we must also avoid being dispersed in following several objectives, no matter how legitimate they may be. The basic objective is to lead young people towards a meeting with Christ. We are certain that this meeting will then guide them towards service for their brothers and sisters.

In this spirit, we must be careful to keep on course with the proposals for activities made during WYD and during the preparatory days in the dioceses. In recent WYDs, care was taken to allow only whatever would prepare for a meeting with Christ and to refuse anything that might not be helpful for this purpose. In practice this referred to choices made regarding music, exhibitions, concerts, shows and animation during waiting periods.

During WYD and the preparatory days in the dioceses, there is a need to "take a breath". Young people cannot be enclosed in a church praying all day! Can entertainment be offered with secular dancing and rock music? Can they go sight-seeing during the preparatory days in the dioceses? The decision was made - and it has been regarded as justified and fruitful -, not to encourage entertainment and amusement that come from a secularised culture unless they embody, in one way or another, the search for Jesus Christ. This does not rule out rock concerts and traditional dances when they are explicitly directed towards Christ in the Church. In choosing activities, the question to ask regarding each one is: will this foster a relationship with the Saviour? Will it contribute to a discovery of the Church?

The criterion is therefore to think of things in a way coherent with Christian spiritual experience. In this way we have a great amount of freedom with this process.

B. THE FRUITS OF WYD

10. *Countless benefits: fellowship and vitality in the worldwide Church* - We know that the experience of meeting Jesus Christ at WYD produces much fruit. Benedict XVI tells us: *I have always felt a very special joy at these encounters. I remember espe-*

cially the Twentieth World Youth Day at which I was able to preside two years ago in Germany.

Some of you gathered here today were also present! It is an emotional memory for me on account of the abundant fruits of the Lord's grace poured out upon those who were there. Among the many fruits which I could point to, there is little doubt that the first was the exemplary sense of fellowship that stood as a clear witness to the Church's perennial vitality throughout the world... (Meeting with the youth at the Municipal Stadium in Pacaembu, São Paulo, Brazil, 10 May 2007).

11. WYD gives youth the opportunity to feel responsible for the Church - Another benefit of WYD is that the Church allows youth to take responsibility

- Responsibility is given in the organisation of WYD, e.g. there were 25,000 volunteers for Rome 2000

- At WYD, the Church sends the young people out on mission. John Paul II emphasised this aspect:

With their enthusiasm and their exuberant energy, young people ask to be encouraged to become 'active in evangelization and participants in the renewal of society' (Cristifideles laici, 46). Young people - who represent the youthfulness of the Church that is the ever young Bride of Christ (cf Eph 5,22-33) -, are not only evangelized in this way, but they also become evangelisers as they take the Gospel to their peers, even to those who are distant from the Church and have not yet heard the Good News (John Paul II, letter on the occasion of a seminar on WYD, 8 May 1996).

12. A place with a special call for vocations - One of the important aspects of this conferring of responsibility and sending forth on mission is the call to vocation. In this regard, Benedict XVI had this to say: *However, I would like here to recall a special Meeting, my encounter with the seminarians, young men called to a more radical and personal following of Christ, Teacher and Pastor. I wanted a specific moment to be devoted to them, also to highlight the vocational dimension typical of World Youth Days. In the past 20 years, many vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life have been born precisely during World Youth Days, privileged occasions when the Holy Spirit makes his call forcefully heard (Benedict XVI on his return from Cologne, General Audience 24 August 2005).*

13. A new beginning for youth pastoral ministry in the host country - Another beneficial result of WYD is the depth of renewal of youth ministry in the host country. At WYD in Cologne, Benedict XVI spoke of this when addressing the bishops: *The experience of these past 20 years has taught us that every World Youth Day is in a certain sense a new beginning for the pastoral care of young people in the country that hosts it. Preparing for the event mobilizes people and resources. We have seen it right here in Germany: how a true "mobilization" has pervaded the Country, prompting a surge of energy. Lastly, the celebration itself brings a gust of enthusiasm that must be sustained and, so to speak, rendered definitive. This enormous potential energy can further increase, spreading across the territory. I am thinking of the parishes, associations and movements. I am thinking of the priests, Religious, catechists and animators involved with young people (Benedict XVI, WYD in Cologne, meeting with the German bishops, 21 August 2005).*

C. THE IMPACT OF WYD ON THE PASTORAL WORK OF THE CHURCH WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

14. A support for regular pastoral ministry with young people in the Church - We see WYD as being a huge support for the Church's regular pastoral ministry with young people. I quote from John Paul II: *World Youth Day is the Church's Day for youth and with youth. It does not claim to be an alternative to regular youth ministry which often requires great sacrifice and dedication. It is intended more to consolidate this work by offering new possibilities for engagement, objectives that can foster ever greater involvement and participation. While aiming to awaken more sustained enthusiasm in apostolic action among young people, the Church certainly does not wish to isolate them from the rest of the community, but rather to empower them to be responsible for an apostolate that will reach out to other age groups and social milieux in the context of the 'new evangelisation'* (John Paul II, letter on the occasion of a seminar on WYD, 8 May 1996).

15. WYD renews youth ministry - Our final conclusion is that we observe how WYD gives a multifaceted response to the current needs of young people, and that it has characteristic elements that have been present since the earliest WYDs or that have been fashioned by the Holy Spirit over the years. Some of the elements of WYD can illuminate regular youth ministry. Here we list some of them:

A. the dimension of fellowship and communion through:

- gatherings
- the artistic dimension: music, theatre

B. the ecclesial dimension through: o closeness to the bishops:

- contact between young people and the ministry of the bishop
- the bishop has to be involved in youth ministry o active involvement of priests
- youth ministry requires priests who are trained and committed; the fact of being a young priest is an advantage because of a closer cultural connection with youth, but this in itself does not confer competence. Training is necessary.
- the diversity of young people, the universality of the Church

C. proclaiming Christ o the core of our pastoral work is the proclamation of the kerygma

This proclamation is increasingly necessary because younger generations have not heard about the plan of salvation revealed by Christ. They know little about the vocation of the human person, of the Covenant, of the divine presence within us (grace), the words of the Covenant contained in the Commandments, sin and salvation in Christ. When Benedict XVI spoke to the young people on his arrival in Sydney (Thursday 17 August, welcome ceremony at Barangaroo) he outlined for them the plan of salvation, very simply, beginning with his observations from the window of his plane.

Do we do this often enough? o the proclamation of the kerygma is a catechesis centred on Christ: *The experience of Youth Days is an invitation to all of us, Bishops and pastoral workers, to constant reflection on our ministry among young people and our responsibility to present to them the whole truth about Christ and his Church. How can we not interpret their massi-*

ve, willing and enthusiastic participation, as a constant demand to be accompanied on the pilgrimage of faith, on the journey which they undertake in response to God's grace working in their hearts? They ask us to lead them to Christ, the only One who has words of eternal life (cf Jn 6,68) (John Paul II, letter on the occasion of a seminar on WYD, 8 May 1996).

- testimonies
- the centrality of the Word of God

D. steps in faith

The proclamation of the kerygma, the core of our pastoral work, should be carried forward with activities centred on faith and sacraments where the grace of God is given in abundance

- Eucharistic and non-eucharistic celebrations, the sacrament of Reconciliation
- Way of the Cross
- Silent prayer and Eucharistic adoration

We know that young people long for these when they are right, that is, when they emanate from a true and suitable proclamation, and when they offer a true experience of God in Christ.

E. responsibility given to young people

F. diversity in approach and in the aspects mentioned above, and pastoral coherence regarding an encounter with Christ, are the strengths of WYD. This should be said also for everyday youth ministry.

<http://www.fiacifca.org/it/attivita/giovani/gmg2011>

INSIEME pellegrini sulla strada verso MADRID 2011

IN PREGHIERA CON I SANTI DI AC

Un itinerario in tredici tappe da Pentecoste 2010 alla GMG 2011 (agosto), una al mese

TOGETHER pilgrims on the way towards MADRID 2011

IN PRAYER WITH CA SAINTS

This comprises a programme of thirteen stages from Pentecost 2010 to WYD 2011 (August), one for each month.

JUNTOS peregrinemos hacia MADRID 2011

EN ORACIÓN CON LOS SANTOS DE ACCIÓN CATÓLICA

Un itinerario de trece pasos desde Pentecostés de 2010 hasta la JMJ 2011 (agosto), uno por mes

ENSEMBLE pèlerins en route vers MADRID 2011

EN PRIÈRE AVEC LES SAINTS D'AC

Un itinéraire en treize étapes de Pentecôte 2010 à la JMJ 2011 (août), une chaque mois