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WYD 08
THROUGH
FATH

WE FLEW BECAUSE EARTH ANGELS CARE

Albury, 21-31 July 2008 | ZinyaGuterres, fdcc

... WHEN GOD MIXES WITH US...

(Sr. Terezinha Guterres, FdCC)

I remember a song which I used to sing when something wonderful happen to me: *“great things happen when God mixes with us”*. Perhaps this song summarizes all that has happened to us, the ten Timorese here in Australia.

Personally, this event is a dream come true. I was in Manila when Cologne WYD was held, and I remember telling one of my co-sisters: “I want to go to Sydney to celebrate the coming WYD”. Then one day towards the end of 2007, Sr. Sonia Sangel, a Filipina Canossian Missionary in East Timor, told me that she has picked me to be the group leader of 9 other Timorese for the World Youth Day in Sydney the next year. I felt as if my dream is to be a reality soon. Of course I was so excited. Though I was quite busy myself, it was a blessing for me because WYD is an extra-ordinary event in our Christian life. On our briefings she was telling us (the group) about a Project held somewhere in Australia, where some caring people are working hard raising money for our cause. She also mentioned that the organizer of the project happened to be a Parish Priest and he is a pilot and owns a small plane. I was more delighted. Then the big day came.

We packed our things and on that day, July 9th 2008 the ten of us: Sr. Frans, Evi, Francis, Michi, Nanda, Kiki, Feli, Carol, Rosa and me, boarding Air North, flew to Darwin on our way to Brisbane. There, we the two sisters stayed with our Canossian Community in Gregory Terrace at Spring Hills Suburb, while the rest of the group joined the other Timorese at Wavell Heights.

In Brisbane, we joined the program of the Archdiocese of Brisbane. The church was very supportive and everywhere we went for mass, there will always be a prayer invoking the blessings as well as the commissioning. The generosity of the people of Brisbane was expressed to pilgrims from at least 24 other countries. At Roma park all the pilgrims were greeted by the Archbishop of Brisbane John Bathersby (ABJB), the Premier of Queensland, and other big people. Finally on the 14th July, we had our formal commissioning mass and there we went riding our bus all the way to Sydney.



At Sydney, we stayed at St. Gerard’s Primary school at Carlingford, Eping together with another 100 young people from East Timor. Again here, we were well taken care of.

The city of Sydney is grand, beautiful and spectacular. Having held the event of WYD08 there added another aspect of religiosity to its grandeur. Everyone was talking and being friendly with one another, and peace was being built. Sign posts of “Free hug”, “free kiss”, “free



conversation” were overwhelmingly held up by these young people. It was wonderful to be part of all the events, witnessing people expressing their faith and friendship, which at the same time enriched my own. The Pilgrimage to Southern Cross Precinct (SCP) was particularly meaningful to me. As I set foot on the path, I reflected on my journey of faith. It was a journey of relationships, where contacts among people were celebrated in sorrow or in joy. It was a journey done individually yet collectively: a journey of hospitality, of patience, of learning, of constant falling and of getting up again. It was a journey towards a destination: the encounter with my God. In him only can I find rest and everlasting joy. Hopefully I am closer to Him day after day.

Within the week we were able to meet our Sponsors: the Sacerdotists fathers at their booth at Vocation Expo. We were to communicate with Fr. Joel Wallace, CCS “the busy man”. The Priests took the matter into their own hands.



Busy as they were, arrangement were made, therefore, right after WYD celebration, our group, equipped with high spirit, boarded another bus to Albury. Hence another pilgrimage started. Located at the border of the two states of NSW and Victoria, Albury is a peaceful country. I love Albury for its quiet scenery and its friendly and generous people. In Thurgoona, we were kept very busy, and were constantly moving around Wodonga and Albury: visits to the schools (Murray, Scoots, Billabong, Holy Spirit, Sacred Heart) and homes (Simone and Nicky’s, Bernie, Dardy, etc), sightseeings (Smith’s, Andrew and Liv’s), Kangaroo hunting up the hill (none was found) but then feeding them at Oz.e wildlife, flying with the Earth Angel, tobogganing at Mount Buffalo (thanks Fr. Fowles and Terry, no worries about the after-effect). We enjoyed the fun so much that we forgot about the bumps and the rolling downs.



In Thurgoona, we shared our life with the **Sacerdotists**, and we are grateful to Fr. John Fowles, Fr. Joel Wallace and Br. Dennis for taking turns and be with as we went around. Thanks as well for the daily Masses celebrated only for us. *“Well done! You did not miss anything: not even the haircut(thanks to Ann-Maree) or the nail polishing (Thanks Theresa)”*. Pauline Pascoe, Mary Saedl and the Fowles family are among the Parish corner-stones, and the main supporters of Fr. Fowles project. Behind the stage there are so

many more people: many of whom we have never come to know (God knows who). The pilots (we met Jeff at Andrew's farm), the generous people from Thurgoona Country Club Resort, the media people and all the anonymous benefactors, the artists. Thank you Korey Livy for the beautiful song that you sang. Thank you Steve (Wonder), Sean, Mich, Cecilia and all, and of course Andrew. Thank you Terry and Ann Wright for the souvenirs and the bags. Thank you our dear foster parents for your hospitality and love. Thank you Pauline, for helping me screaming out my nervousness right after the interview with ABC. In short, we were spoiled indeed and we love being spoiled! We are forever grateful to all of you.

Now that we have come and shared our lives with you, I become more conscious about what Benedict XVI said during the mass at Randwick on the 20th of July: *"Life is much more than success, it is more than being fulfilled; it is the transformation in the Holy Spirit and with the Holy Spirit that we will give meaning to our life, therefore, we may transform first of all ourselves and then our family, our homes, our cities and our nations"* and the world. Thank you dear people of Albury, for being opened to the Holy Spirit and being transformed to be *"In search of answers, to help the wronged feel right"* and thank you for being persistent with your efforts.

We, the East Timorese, have been subjected to sufferings for ages and ages, but despite our sufferings we never despair. In many instances, we recognize that God's helping hand has been upon us, through all the people that have shown their solidarity with us. We are thankful to Him forever as we thank you from our hearts. May your help be as a means to transform our lives, the lives of our people, and may we learn to love one another and make our place a better place for our next generation (zg).

A letter from Evi

Dear All,

When I was small, I had many big dreams. One of them was to see your



beautiful country Australia and its famous Kangaroo. Now, that dream was materialized, and it was materialized through your generosity and kindness. I thanked the good Lord for giving me such a great blessing through the good people like you are. That was certainly no ordinary event. I am deeply grateful that it was not only to see Australia and Kangaroo but also to see Benedict the 16th the head of our Catholic Church, the pope and principally a man of God. And to meet face-to-face many young men and women around the globe was indeed a life-time event so unique that I will always treasure in my heart.

I am personally touched by the kindness of Fr. John Fawles' in his project "Fly away to Heaven" to support many Timorese living in poverty and difficulties. I am also thankful to his family and his parishioners for having accommodated us and provided us care and support during our stay in Australia. I am particularly thankful for the warm welcome and support of our host-families.



They have left in us an everlasting hallmark of God's love that is shared among His children in Timor Leste and Australia. Thank you to Fr. Joel Wallace as well for making us feel at home.

There's nothing we can offer you but only our million thanks and simple prayer that God in Heaven may return your generosity a hundred fold. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Your sister in faith
Evi Sarmiento