

YOUTH PASTORAL BULLETIN

Salesians of Don Bosco - AFM
Vice Province Michael Rua

PO Box 2335, Southdale 2135

Email: ypt@salesians.org.za

Fax: 011 680 5803

Tel: 011 680 1235

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SYM EASTER CAMP IN SWAZILAND

From the YPT Office



Fr Jonathan T. Daniels SDB

Blessings to all of you from the Youth and Social Communications Desks! The past year has been a real busy period, moving house and trying to settle into a new Community. But wait; let me start from the beginning. My appointment as Youth Delegate took effect on the 1st January 2009. I was meant to be in office at the Provincial House in Booyens from this time but had to stay in Swaziland to complete a few tasks that were hanging. Thanks to the patience and generosity of the Provincial, I only moved to Booyens after Easter 2009.

After arriving at the Provincial House I found myself somewhat lost – moving house can be a real traumatic experience. However, thanks to the kindness of the Johannesburg Community, I soon found myself settled in and relaxed. The Provincial, himself a Youth Delegate of yester-year, got me going. We still have a weekly meeting whereby we try and plan and evaluate our service to the Province. I am truly indebted to him for helping me ‘see the light’ in this job. With this first Issue, and subsequent ones, we hope to keep the Province and our friends informed with the goings on in the Province. We look forward to your feedback on this matter. The news letter will serve as a communication platform among us as well as distributing news from the regions. We invite each region to send us news and encourage young people to send us letters and questions. Please make this news letter available to all the youth in your parish/Community. Further, encourage the young to subscribe to the news letter by sending us their email addresses to ypt@salesians.org.za

In this first edition, we give a report about the SYM Easter Camp that took place in Swaziland on 2nd – 4th April 2010. It was successful but we missed those who could not make it. The next Provincial SYM gathering will be next year at Bosco Youth Centre, to celebrate the World Youth Day. Start preparing now. We look forward to another thrilling world youth day.

The Lord is Risen, Alleluia!

2010 SYM GATHERING - Easter Camp, Swaziland

After months of preparation and meetings, the SYM finally happened. A total of 115 participants partook in this event. We were happy to have twelve participants from Lesotho, inclusive of our four aspirants and Bro. John Thusi. Bro. Clarence Watts brought seven of the Bosco Volunteers with him. The rest of the number was made up of pupils from Waterford School, youth from St. Joseph's, the Cathedral Parish, St. John Bosco (Malkerns) and Salesian High. Breven Clarke and Charl Dimingo were both exceptional in the contributions they made to the SYM.



After a warm welcome by the pupils of Waterford and a short introduction, the festivities started with supper. The Mass of the Lord's Supper was celebrated later that evening. The Mass was splendidly animated by the little ones who normally attend Mass at Waterford with their parents. After Mass we had the procession to the altar of repose or the *Garden of Gethsemane*. This first part of our Triduum ended with the abrupt removal of Jesus from the garden, symbolizing his arrest.

Friday was a *Fast Day*! All participants joined in the fast; bread and tea for breakfast, veggie soup and a bread roll for lunch and fish and chips for supper. The Bosco team lead us in prayer around the grounds of Waterford by animating the Stations of the Cross. The afternoon services happened in three distinct places. Communion was given at the *Tomb*. It was truly inspiring to see so many of the youth reflecting quietly by themselves around the tomb and in other quiet places. Reconciliation happened around a Pieta prayer service, ending in sin being nailed to a cross and set alight.



Saturday was a tomb day dedicated to relative silence and preparations for the Easter Vigil. The day ended early in the evening with a beautiful service around the Chaplet of Divine Mercy.

Sunday morning started at 4am with the blessing of Easter fire, the singing of the *Exsultet*, followed by the seven Old Testament readings, acted out by the youth in various spots around the grounds. As sunrise occurred we made our way into the final stage and place of our Easter worship where the Gloria was boisterously sung by all. Wow! What jubilation. The rest of the Easter Mass continued indoors.



At the end of Mass, while the final hymn was being sung, Easter eggs were distributed together with lovely home made fudge, complements of dear old Mrs. Shields. As the exit hymn came to an end, the next SYM gathering was announced on the big screen... **BOSCO HOUSE**, Jo'burg 2011.

In joyful mood the crowd made its way to the dining room for a sumptuous Easter breakfast. After breakfast an evaluation of the SYM took place, see commends below:

1. What did you enjoy the most?

*The interacting of different groups and having heard what they say on their beliefs and the singing in the different languages
That the youth were in charge of the preparations, and the songs in all the languages
Meeting different personalities and getting out of my comfort zone to get to know other people
I enjoyed the different languages the music was played in
I enjoyed how the liturgy was organised, especially the readings
The Masses and the different reflective periods
I enjoyed meeting new people from the other different youth groups. I also enjoyed the Good Friday service and the walk/procession to the tomb. I also enjoyed the sports very much
I enjoyed meeting new people and made new friends who were charming and we talked about everything we thought of. I enjoyed the freedom I had.
The mass and the services
The group preparations and the Good Friday service*

2. What did you enjoy the least?

*I did not like the way people behaved
Some people were very disrespectful in some activities
The discrimination that was implemented on other people based on their personalities
I did not like the manner people sometimes behaved badly by making noise when they were expected to be silent
Nothing specifically but the noise, chit chat that never ended was very distracting
I did not enjoy the way people laughed and talked during services/masses
Some of the people were not friendly at all, they stayed in their own groups and I could not actually get to know them
The separate group preparation for the services
People did not sleep and made noise and waking up at 4am in the cold...*

3. What did you learn about your faith and God over this weekend?

*I learnt that it is important to believe in something
I learnt about all the sequences of events that happened in Easter until the resurrection
God works in very mysterious ways and every single thing is according to His plan
I understood more about the mercy of our God than before
The Paschal journey is one event that happens over three days
I discovered something new about my faith about God
This was the first time to have a Paschal meal
I understood more about what it means to be a Catholic
I learnt that the whole weekend is one event of the Paschal journey
All sins can be forgiven and there is no sin great enough not to deserve forgiveness*



Evaluation from old faithful Mr Shields:
I was inspired by the faith of the young people. The symbolism involved in the sacrament of reconciliation was powerful for me.



Writing down our sins before pinning them to a cross and burning them

Finally, the bishop of Manzini humorously calls them *nuns without vows* but Don Bosco would refer to them as benefactors or co-operators – Alice Russo and Royal Eizenburg. A humungous word of thanks to both of them for always being available to help the SYM.



Photo Gallery



Washing Each other's feet on Thursday Mass



Mr & Mrs Shields sharing light during the Paschal Mass.



Eucharist at the Tomb



Nailing our sins on a cross before putting them on fire



A tree on which Christ was crucified for our sins



.A playground was another ..place to meet God & have fun



Silence and personal prayer at the Tomb on Friday



Veneration of the Cross



Our sins on fire