

Messages of WYD from Campion College.

“Our world has grown weary of greed, exploitation and division, of the tedium of false idols and the pain of false promises”

Benedict XVI, Papal arrival speech.

Campion College, as the only Catholic Liberal Arts College in Australia, participated fully in the events of World Youth Day and indeed shaped many of the words and images for people across Australia and the world.

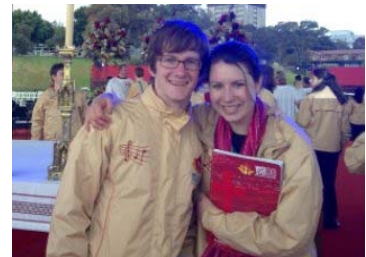
The Pope has now left our shores, at the ends of the earth as it were, but he left behind a generation filled with a passion for Christ. Everywhere Benedict went, crowds of young happy pilgrims hung on his every word. A media hostile to his visit before his arrival were turned around in one week, from hostility and accusation to almost a fawning regard for what had been achieved.

Why did this occur? Not necessarily due to the visit of Benedict XVI although he played his part but because of the enormous good will generated by happy pilgrims who revelled in their faith. On buses and trains and in the streets, pilgrims sang and chanted leaving a lasting impression on Sydneysiders.

The beautiful Sydney backdrop also played its part. The Stations of the Cross played out in the magnificent winter sunset, the glorious Sydney day which God granted us allowed pictures of a beaming Benedict in the middle of one of the most beautiful harbours in the world. And the scenes of the final Mass, of the candlelight vigil and the awe of being with His Holiness at the final Mass, were simply breathtaking.

And where did Campion make its impact.

- Ruth Russell, our first year student, was in the media on three of the five days discussing chastity. Ruth appeared nationwide on Good Morning Australia as well as other programs, including some hostile interviews where the interviewer tried to paint her as somehow deviant because she did not support pre marital sex.
- Our schola made up of both staff and students, was part of the choirs in all of the events, with Bernard Kirkpatrick, Campion’s musical director, the official organist for the events.
- Student Stephen Woodnutt was shown live to a world wide audience playing the part of a Roman soldier leading Jesus to his death and Camillus O Kane, a former Campion student played an apostle at the last supper in the Stations of the Cross.
- Our debating team won the Papal Plate Debating competition beating a team of Oxford University pilgrims by taking the negative to the topic “That God is dead.” The Papal Plate soccer and debating competitions were sponsored by Campion College as was Carnivale Christi, the gathering of university students at WYD.
- President Rev Dr John Fleming recorded a series of 13 episodes for EWTN called Catholic Lives which showcased the lives of Australians who publicly embraced their Faith. The series will go to air in the United States and around the world in April 2009
- Other Campion pilgrims assisted at the vocations expo, encouraging young people to take up vocations and live a catholic life, as well as encouraging them to consider Campion College.
- Students Symeon Thompson, Jeremy Klysz and Campion’s Boston student Molly Healy all featured in an article in The Australian reporting on the Mass and Vigil.
- One year old Claire Hill, sister of Campion student Sarah, was singled out for a blessing and kiss by His Holiness. The Hills have 11 children. Sarah appeared with Claire on the nightly news across Australia and in newspapers the next day.
- Our American college students who have been at Campion on a summer school and on study abroad have made the most of their time in Australia. Even though some do not come from



orthodox catholic colleges, their exposure to the faith at Campion and during WYD has been a revelation to them.

Campion students, like the other 500,000 participants, listen to the Holy Father's messages; of deliverance from shallowness and apathy, of encouraging students to be prophets of a new age and of the need for church renewal through the young. His messages of entrusting the young custodianship of earth where there are "scars which marked the surface of the earth, erosion, deforestation, the squandering of the world's mineral and ocean resources in order to fuel an insatiable consumption" struck home to a young audience.

But most of all pilgrims were struck by messages of hope and joy, translating them into joyful partying and well behaved crowds. Police officers comment that despite 500,000 people partying in Sydney, they had nothing to do. What an example to the world of the young of the Catholic Faith.

In the words of the Holy Father "Our hearts and minds are yearning for a vision of life where love endures, where gifts are shared, where unity is built, where freedom finds meaning in truth and where identity is found in respectful communion. Let this be the message you bring from Sydney to the world"

