

World Youth Day in Sydney, Australia

On Monday July 14, after a 13 hour flight we arrived in Sydney!!!!
There are so many different groups from all over the world wearing their native colors and waving their nation's flags.

After a 25 minute bus ride we arrived at the very beautiful Crowne Plaza Hotel. We unpacked and got the opportunity to take a quick walk around Darling Harbor and get something to eat. We met back at the hotel and had Mass for the very first time with our entire Boston group. Fr. Ed Riley, Fr. Jose Borga, Fr. Mark Riley, Fr. Matt Williams, who are the priests on pilgrimage with us, and Deacon Jim Greer, lead us in prayer.

Afterwards we walked to Nick's Restaurant on Darling Harbor for dinner and Cardinal Sean joined us for the first time. After getting a couple of quick stops at the Cafe and Starbucks, we were ready for bed.

We woke up this morning (Tuesday) for a 6:30am breakfast (ugh), but it was fabulously intense. We tried Vegemite for the first time...not on our list of favorites right now.

We then jumped on a bus for a tour of Sydney in which we visited Bondi Beach and the Sydney Opera House. After lunch we went on a great harbor cruise. The first major World Youth Day event was next. 150,000 young people from all over the world crammed into an area on the harbor called Barangaroo, for a Mass with Cardinal Pell (the Archbishop of Sydney). There were so many different people!!!!

On Wednesday July 16th we had another intense breakfast, this time at 6am. We then hopped on the Australian subway to go to our catechetical site in Willoughsby for prayer, praise, catechesis, confession and Mass. Fr. Dan Hennessey from the Vocations office joined us. It was great to see him! We had lunch at the parish and then jumped on a bus picked us up and brought us back to Sydney.

The afternoon was free to shop and attend festivals. Some of us got to go out on a paddle boat. We met people from the Philippines and Australia and traded knickknacks, coins, and signed a kid's backpack.

Wednesday night we split up the boys and girls into separate groups. The boys went to a talk by Christopher West on the Theology of the Body, and the girls went to a talk for women about the Holy Spirit and relationships.

By the St. John the Evangelist, Winthrop Group
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