CATHOLIC YOUTH
FOLLOW THE GOSPEL ROAD
I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you made me well, shut up in prison and you visited me. 

By David Garick, Editor

Our faith is not expressed inside the walls of our churches. Our faith must be demonstrated in all that we do, and we are called to witness to the world. It is exciting to be a part of the enthusiasm that is being displayed by a new generation of young people, especially here in the Diocese of Columbus. Our youth are going out into the community and spreading the Gospel through their actions.

In this issue of Catholic Times, you will read about how our teens and young adults are following the Gospel Road by devoting their time, energy, and love to providing service to the poor, the infirm, the elderly, and the community at large. This is something that brings them closer to Christ by demonstrating His love to people through doing loving works of service. You will also read about the extraordinaryoutreach of youthful devotion that was recently displayed to the whole planet during World Youth Day in Brazil. Several of our diocesan priests and youth made that journey to Rio and returned energized by the challenge laid before them by another Francis, the current Holy Father: “As you are leaving your home or your school, or your country, do not be afraid to be generous with Christ, to bear witness to His love to those nearest you. In ‘Christ’ you can change the world.”

Our faith is being brought to lives all over the world. We read in Matthew 28:18-20 of our Lord’s charge to His disciples: “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them...”

As you read through this issue, you will see some examples of this teaching. We will talk about how our teens and young adults are following the Gospel Road by devoting their time, energy, and love to providing service to the poor, the infirm, the elderly, and the community at large. This is something that brings them closer to Christ by demonstrating His love to people through doing loving works of service. You will also read about the extraordinary outreach of youthful devotion that was recently displayed to the whole planet during World Youth Day in Brazil. Several of our diocesan priests and youth made that journey to Rio and returned energized by the challenge laid before them by another Francis, the current Holy Father: “As you are leaving your home or your school, or your country, do not be afraid to be generous with Christ, to bear witness to His love to those nearest you. In ‘Christ’ you can change the world.”
Endurance

By Rick Jeric

Did you give some serious and prayerful consideration to the issues of religious liberty and freedom during the past two weeks? Of course, the immediate next step after consideration is action. If proactive action, we must be well-prepared to act. We cannot wait with our heads in the sand. These issues impact us and our children directly and privately, which makes them personal and urgent. We have allowed too much "progressive" nonsense to permeate our lives. I pray, and I feel that I am ready to fight. Is that enough? What have I done and what must I do? What can I do? The answer is: All of it - in a way that works best for us and our communities.

Reno concludes so well, "Over the long haul, religious faith has proven that one. What have we allowed to happen? Our rights, which are referred to as "unalienable" and given to us by our Creator, cannot be taken away. We have the duty to defend them." Without the endurance of religion, we have a system in which religious faith has proven itself to be the most powerful and enduring force in human history.

In my last column, we began to take a look at some thoughtful reflections by R.R. Reno, an American author, journalist, and public life. The subject of religious freedom and liberty continues. Is there anything we can do as individuals or in a united group to preserve further erosion of the importance and public influence of religion? There are three things. First, our religious liberty must be defended in our schools. As Reno puts it, "We live in a society governed by the rule of law. Let us obey the law, but let us not be afraid of it." Second, our religious liberty must be defended in our workplaces. As Reno points out, "The right to express our beliefs is threatened, and this is a threat to our freedom in general." Third, and I believe most important, our religious liberty must be defended in our personal lives. As Reno says, "We must meet the challenge by showing our commitment to our faith in whatever way we can to be sure that our faith in religion and the corresponding public respect is preserved."

The Catholic Foundation has hired A. Anzelm as vice president of development. Before joining the foundation, he was a staff attorney for the 10th Ohio District Court of Appeals. He graduated summa cum laude from Ohio University and has a juris doctorate from the University of Columbus College of Law. He is on the executive board and past president of the probate and the probate committee of the Columbus Bar Association. He is a past grand knight of Knights of Columbus Council 5/1, a member of the Reynoldsburg St. Pius X School advisory board, and a Rosarian of order affiliated with St. Michael Archangel.

The Serra Club Pilgrimage

The Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Columbus is offering a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The pilgrimage will leave on Friday, Sept. 20. It will depart from the Bishop Flaget School. All contributions made are non-refundable. The pilgrimage includes all in-country medical expenses, but does not cover additional medical expenses. For further information, contact Elynn Delk at (614) 489-3770 or eddelk@bioweb.com.

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The Foundation wants to hear from anyone who has suffered the crime of sexual abuse of a minor at the hands of diocesan clergy or church employees, was established in memory of Father Charles Griffin, long-time associate pastor of Chillicothe St. Peter Church. Award criteria include school and church involvement, academic achievement, and community service. For more information or to apply, contact Elynn Delk at (614) 489-3770 or eddelk@bioweb.com.

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To contact the diocesan Victim's Assistance Coordinator, call:

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Q. At our parish, so much of the Mass is sung that the Mass lasts more than an hour. When, also, it comes to the readings, the lector walks all the way up from a pew in the congregation, and that creates further delay. Then there is a minute of silent reflective time after the readings, which I find unnecessary.

My husband and I (who are both of Social Security age) have no patience for such deliberate delays. Many parishes have complained, but the pastor has dismissed our voice.

What can we do, short of joining another parish? (Cherry Hill, N.J.)

A. Your question is a frequent one, reflecting the feelings of many parishes, especially older ones. Therefore, I think it merits a longer than usual response.

While I understand your concern and that it flows from a love of the liturgy, I am not sure that your pastor is being faithful to the thinking of the Church. The Church’s official position through the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) is that the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that homosexual people “must be accepted without any discrimination of any kind whatever on their part”, and that “condemnation, discrimination, orCALCULUS
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But the catechist also describes a “homosexual person” as “objectively” and “disordered” and homosexual acts as “intentionally disordered,” because sexuality is “innately ordered” toward procreation and the building of a family. Thus, there is nothing wrong with a homosexual person “in itself.”

The Church teaches that any sexual activity outside the bond of marriage is “utterly illicit.”

Pope Francis did not change or challenge that teaching.

Pope Francis made his comments about homosexuality during a news conference with reporters flying with him from Brazil to Rome.

The pope was asked about what has been described as a “gay lobby” in the Vatican, the powerful ring of priests and bishops who work at the Vatican and are “gay.”

The pope said that “homosexual acts and homosexual tendencies or orientation, it should be said, are not moral absolutes and do not assume all those with a homosexual orientation are morally flawed.”

Men “who practice homosexuality, present deep-hued homosexual tendencies or are homosexual are not to be admitted to the sacrosanct exercise of the ministry,” the pope declared, although it did not give a detailed explanation of what exactly constitutes “same-sex marriage.”

While excluding their suitability for ordination, the pope said Missionaries of Charity should be accepted with respect and sensitivity. “Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided.”

Q. Is there a number of Catholic parishes or priests who are actively seeking to establish a monastery in their own diocese? (Chicago, Ill.)

A. That is a difficult question to answer, particularly for a number of reasons. First, many monastic communities are not open to the public, and second, many parishes and priests are not aware of the possibilities of founding a monastery.

Q. I would like to know if there is a monastery in the Diocese of Seattle, Washington. (Seattle, Wash.)

A. The Diocese of Seattle has a number of monastic communities, including the Benedictine Monastery of the Holy Cross and the Beguine Monastery of St. Mary of the Angels. However, I am not aware of any plans to establish a new monastery in the diocese.

Q. I am interested in establishing a monastery in the Diocese of Youngstown, Ohio. (Youngstown, Ohio)

A. Establishing a monastery is a complex and challenging process that involves many steps and considerations. I encourage you to contact the Diocese of Youngstown for more information on the process and requirements.
The gift I want to give back

I’m a dry-eyed gal most of the time, and I have always prided myself on that. I then started going to Mass. I think of those occasions when I was young, when I officially became Catholic. It was at the time, I was a tough, know-it-all college student. I hoped that I would be perfectly fine, but I couldn’t fake it in front of God and the people I cared for. Sometimes, it comes on me unexpectedly as I’m going on. I take deep breaths (a choir friend once told me that she has learned that you can either breathe or cry, not both—she’s mostly right).

But when I fight the tears and try to escape them, I feel like I’m losing something even more important than the embarrassment I feel when I wet my face and sniffle. I find myself once again reminded that I can give them to Mary, Mary. And perhaps even better, I can ask her to help me accept them as part of who and what I am made for.

Sarah Reinhard’s Edmund by corn field and kids as she享槍 one more mug of coffee from her home in central Ohio. She’s online at SteppingStrong.com.

St. Therese’s Retreat Center
1311 S. Hackley Ave.
Fremont, MI 49414

ST. THERESE’S RETREAT CENTER

The gift I want to give back is God and the people I care for. Sometimes, it comes on me unexpectedly as I’m going on. I take deep breaths (a choir friend once told me that she has learned that you can either breathe or cry, not both—she’s mostly right).

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Summertime means more than just a chance to take a break from school and relax for many young people in the Diocese of Columbus. For the past several years, dozens of youths from across the diocese have taken part in the diocesan Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry’s Gospel Road service project, living the Gospel message of love and concern and performing service activities at different locations in the 23-county diocese each year. In addition, individual parishes, including the Church of the Resurrection of New Albany, Sunbury St. John Neumann, and Westerville Sacred Heart, conduct their own Gospel Road weekends, going beyond the boundaries of their parish and even out of state, in addition to be- ing part of the diocesan project.

This year, the diocesan Gospel Road program marked its 10th anniversary, with participants based at Tuscarawas Central Cath- olic High School in New Philadelphia and taking part in projects at New Philadelphia Sacred Heart, Dover St. Joseph, and Tusca- rawas Immaculate Conception parishes from July 14-18. The New Albany and Sunbury churches combined for a program known as “Blessed Week Ever” from July 7-11 in Co- lumbus. The Church of the Resurrection also had a Gospel Road week from June 9-13 in Vinton County, while St. Paul’s parish Gospel Road took place from July 7-12 in Cranes Creek, Ky.

The programs allow youths to provide as- sistance to people in need and, perhaps more importantly, to learn through sharing with others how blessed their own lives are and how fulfilling it is to share their abundance with others. “One of the things I’ve learned from Gos- pel Road is that service is at the heart of our Catholic faith,” said Ronnie Wollett of Co- lumbus Immaculate Conception Church after her week in Tuscarawas County.

Prayer is important, but you also have to put your words into action if you want to be- live as Jesus did. One of the things my group did was to match the town, find hedges, and cut branches of a woman with polio who had great difficulty walking. Seeing how mean- ingful our work was for her made me feel as though my hands were being the hands of Je- sus,” said Wollett, who will be a sophomore at Columbus St. Charles Preparatory School this year.

Kathy Hamilton, religious education and youth ministry coordinator at Sacred Heart, coordinated work done by teams of four or five young people at a church-related activity each week of the Tuscarawas County pro- gram. She said the 150 available slots for par- ticipants all were filled, with about 145 young people involved in the projects.

About 125 of the youths were students en- rolling grades nine to 12 for the coming school year or were recent high school graduates. College-age students also could take part if they had been involved in a previous Gospel Road activity and fulfilled other diocesan re- quirements, including completion of the Pro- tecting God’s Children program required of all diocesan adults who take part in church-related activities involving children.

This was the second diocesan Gospel Road visit to Tuscarawas County. The program began in Portmouth in 2005 and contin- ued in 2006, 2007, and 2008, with about 40 young people involved in the projects. Tusca- rawas, which has the smallest population and one of the lowest average incomes of any Ohio county, they repaired three roofs, built two wheelchair ramps, repaired or replaced three porches, and replaced several exterior doors for residents.

They stayed during the week at the county fairgrounds and had evening faith and fun ac- tivities that included “crazy bingo” hosted by Ronnie Wollett of Columbus Immaculate Conception Church after her week in Tuscarawas County.

This year’s visit by St. Paul parishioners turned out to be an unexpectedly sad one be- cause it coincided with the death at age 77 of Becky Simpson, who with her husband, Bob, were co-founders of the Cranks Creek center and had dedicated their lives to it. Jim Keating, an adult leader from St. Paul, describes Simpson as “the Mother Teresa of Appalachia.” His and her husband, Eloise, visited on the day she died after a long struggle from cancer. He believes they were the last non-family members to see her alive.

Keating said that for a long time afterward, “We wondered why Eloise and I gave the privilege to be the representatives of so many who had worked for the center and its founders.” Finally, he decided that “it was God’s way of simply saying ‘thank you’ to all the people who had touched and been touched by the Simpson family.”

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The various Gospel Road programs have a tremendous impact on many of the people they help. For some, it’s their first real encounter with poverty or with people whose lives are far different than their own. For others, it’s the most extended opportunity they’ve ever had to put the lessons of faith they’ve learned into action, forming the basis on which that faith will be strengthened as they grow older.

Brendan Cunningham of Westerville described his fourth summer mission trip since 2010 as a progression. “The first year, I came to be with friends and have fun, but the conditions I saw changed the perspective on life.”

Another youth from St. Paul’s, Katie Lomeo, who was part of last year’s Cranks Creek trip, said she had full mis-

able about it until a woman hugged her and said how she appreciated the work Lomeo and other youths were doing in putting shingles on her roof.

It was a transformative moment for Lomeo. She cried, became determined to finish the roof, then cried again when it was done.

Until that point, “I was never aware of the tremendous feeling that helping others encompasses,” she wrote afterward.

“My wants and my needs felt so distant and unimportant. I was ecstatic to know that I helped make someone else’s life better for a change…. Since then, I have been inspired to continue to pass on the contagious joy volunteering brings.”

“Gospel Road continues to be a great oppor- tunity for young people to see the whole service dimension of the Gospel,” said Mike Hall, youth and young adult ministry director. “They’re reaching out to people, doing what Jesus did—this year, in weather that was really challenging (during the Tuscarawas County program) because it was in the 90s every day. It had a great impact on the community, and you could see the youths themselves really changed.”

“I’ve been part of all the diocesan Gospel Roads, and it makes me cry every time to watch the kids prove to the community what they can do,” Hamilton said.

“It’s a hard sell to get people to let kids into their homes, because they don’t see young people the way we do. They look at the negative things they’ve heard, but then they see what these young people are like, which we already know, and their attitude changes. Every year, I’m amazed by that.”

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“What is that attracts young people to Gospel Road mission trips?” asked Linda Hall, who is Mike Hall’s wife. She said it may be that they want to get away from everyday life, to meet new friends, to obtain service hours necessary for high school graduation, or to fulfill a desire to do something good for someone else.

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I suspect that in the coming days, weeks, months, and years will much be written about World Youth Day 2013 and the much difference Pope Francis and anyone can or may be leading up to this kind of usiness. September 11, 2001, is in some way a coordinated effort by those who don’t like religion in general and the Catholic Church in particular. Believe me, I could tell you stories.

However, I will just relate one to you. About 15 or 20 years ago, when I worked on Capitol Hill in Washington, I got to know a little bit about the inside of the House of Representatives. I’m old enough to be an in New York that there was calling them out for being a bunch of “Marys.”

He lamented that too many of them are not that we should be preaching the gospel. He lamented that too many of them are not that we should be preaching "Marys." They do so because as much as they try to believe me, I could tell you stories.

I think we can say that it has probably gotten worse in the last 20 or 20 years. They aren’t trying to twist his words and change his message. They are trying to attack the Church, the he’s the author of “The Catholic Tide Continues to Turn” and a former teacher and administrator for the diocese.

Hartline is the author of “The Catholic Tide Continues to Turn” and a former teacher and administrator for the diocese.

Since last September, the center has offered free workshops, radio spots, and professional and weekend retreats and private quiet days and to continue to expand pro-grams, and our partnerships,” Davidson said.

For more information about the center and its plans, visit www.batiscan.org. You can also contact the center at (614) 487-0580 or by phone at (614) 940-4870. Tickets are $105 per person.

A Place of Peace in the Heart of the City

When the rectory at Corpus Christi Church on Columbus’ south side became vacant in 2010, Father Lemke approached the leadership of the Church about how it might be used. His vision was that it became a spiritual house, a place where people could come, a place that might revitalize the parish and serve as the fulcrum of the needs of the surrounding community. Three years later, that vision has become a reality at the Corpus Christi Center of Peace.

A Place of Peace in the Heart of the City

A Place of Peace in the Heart of the City

A Place of Peace in the Heart of the City
Send obituaries to: tpuet@colsdioc.org
Pope commissions young people to be missionaries without borders

By Cindy Woodson

Catholic News Service

Pope Francis commissioned three million young people to join forces and form what could be called Missionaries Without Borders.

“Where does Jesus send us?” he asked World Youth Day pilgrims on July 28. “There are no borders, no limits. He sends us to everyone.”

On the white sand of Copacabana Beach — under partly sunny skies, a relief after days of rain in Rio — Pope Francis celebrated the Mass that opened the July 23-28 celebration of World Youth Day. Although retired Pope Benedict XVI had been unable to attend for the gathering — “Go and make disciples of all nations” — it was tailor-made for Pope Francis, who continually tells Catholics, “Go out. Go for-ward. Keep going.”

“Sharing the experience of faith, bearing witness to the faith, proclaiming the Gos- pel: this is a command that the Lord entrusts to the whole church, and that includes you,” the pope told the faithful on July 27 as he was leaving Rio’s St. Sebastian Cathedral and headed to participate in the Mass. Under Brazil’s abortion laws, the pope said, “the Lord entrusts to the whole church, and that includes you,” the pope said. “The welcoming Christ did not repel the spirits of the World Youth Day pilgrims,” he told his beachfront congre-gation, which included hun-dreds of thousands who had spent the night on the sand, sleeping or not. Long journeys, days of rain, and sometimes improvised ac-commodations did not dampen the spirits of the World Youth Day pilgrims, who accompanied their young pil- grimage was just one step on the grimage was just one step on the

strongly.”

Jesus did not tell his disciples to share the Gospel “if you would like it, if you have the time,” the pope said. Instead he commanded them to proclaim the Good News to the world. Sharing the love and mercy of God and the salvation offered by Christ through the church is not from a desire for domination or power, but from the force of love,” the pope told the young pilgrims, who were joined on the beach by tens of thousands of Rio residents and other Latin Americans, including Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff, Argentinian President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner, Bolivian President Evo Morales, and Suriname’s President Desi Bouterse. “It is arising from a flame that was burning — a common faith among religions, his thoughts, his actions.”

“The life of Jesus is a life for others,” the pope said. “It is a life of service.”

The pope did not mince words in his youth audience, telling them, “Evangelizing means bear-ing personal witness to the love of God. It is overcoming our selfish-ness. It is serving by bending down to wash the feet of our brethren, as Jesus did.”

Pope Francis said he knows how daunting it can be to recognize that sharing the Gospel bears personal respon-sibility for sharing the Gospel with his or her actions and words. But added that Jesus told the first disciples and tells disciples today: “Be not afraid.”

“Jesus does not leave us alone. He never leaves you alone,” the pope said.

The church does not leave any of world people, it is, evangelizing for the good of the church. ‘One of you go,’ but ‘All of you go.’ We are sent together,” the pope said.

“Be creative. Be audacious,” he said. “Do not be afraid.”

Pope Francis described the hundreds of bishops and thousands of priests who accompanied their young pil-grims to Rio, but told them the pilgrimage was just one step in the young people’s journey of faith.

“Continue to accompany them with generosity; show them how to become actively engaged in the church. Never let them down,” he said.

He gave the younger generation a final instruction: “As you return to your homes, do not be afraid to be witness to the Gospel, share your witness to your Gospel.”

It can change the world, he said. “Bringing the Gospel is bringing God’s power to those who suffer, to bring down evil and violence, to destroy and overthrow the barriers of selfishness, intolerance, and hatred,” the pope said.

No borders, no limits. He sends us to everyone.”

The first day, meeting the parents walked up to the pope wearing shirts with a Portuguese message on the back: “Stop wearing shirts with a Portuguese word Brazil’s abortion laws, the couple said. “The welcoming Christ did not repel the spirits of the World Youth Day pilgrims,” he told his beachfront congre-gation, which included hun-dreds of thousands who had spent the night on the sand, sleeping or not. Long journeys, days of rain, and sometimes improvised ac-commodations did not dampen the spirits of the World Youth Day pilgrims, who accompanied their young pil-grim was just one step on the
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World Youth Day 2013

Pope commissions young people to be missionaries without borders

By Cindy Woodson

Catholic News Service

Pope Francis commissioned three million young people to join forces and form what could be called Missionaries Without Borders.

“Where does Jesus send us?” he asked World Youth Day pil-igrims on July 28. “There are no borders, no limits. He sends us to everyone.”

On the white sand of Copacabana Beach — under partly sunny skies, a relief after days of rain in Rio — Pope Francis celebrated the Mass that opened the July 23-28 celebration of World Youth Day. Although retired Pope Benedict XVI had been unable to attend for the gathering — “Go and make disciples of all nations” — it was tailor-made for Pope Francis, who continually tells Catholics, “Go out. Go forward. Keep going.”

“Sharing the experience of faith, bearing witness to the faith, proclaiming the Gospel: this is a command that the Lord entrusts to the whole church, and that includes you,” the pope told the faithful on July 27 as he was leaving Rio’s St. Sebastian Cathedral and headed to participate in the Mass. Under Brazil’s abortion laws, the pope said, “the Lord entrusts to the whole church, and that includes you,” the pope said. “The welcoming Christ did not repel the spirits of the World Youth Day pilgrims,” he told his beachfront congregation, which included hundreds of thousands who had spent the night on the sand, sleeping or not. Long journeys, days of rain, and sometimes improvised accommodations did not dampen the spirits of the World Youth Day pilgrims, who accompanied their young pilgrimage was just one step on the...
OHIOANS JOIN WYD IN RIO

BY TIM PUET

The scene at the closing Mass of World Youth Day provided a modern-day example of the fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham in the Book of Genesis, said one of three area priests who were in Rio de Janeiro for the international gathering.

“God told Abraham his descendents would be as numerous as the sands of the seashore. At that final Mass, while I was part of a crowd of three million people that stretched as far as the eye could see on Copacabana beach, I couldn’t help but think of all of us as being three million descendants of Abraham,” said Father Jonathan Wilson, pastor of Newark Blessed Sacrament Church.

Father Wilson, along with Father James Csaszar, pastor of the Perry County Consortium of Catholic Parishes, and Father Dan Dury, pastor of Columbus St. Catharine Church, were part of a group organized by Father Csaszar which went to Rio in late July and saw Pope Benedict speak to pilgrims from around the world at four major events on the beach from July 25-28. The group also included diocesan seminarians Anthony Davis and Sean Dooley and six young people from Perry County.

“You could tell how much the pope was enjoying the experience,” Father Csaszar said. “It started with his arrival in Rio on Monday (July 22), when his popemobile made a wrong turn and people swarmed it. He was delighted and didn’t appear to be concerned in the least about the crowd. At the Eucharistic vigal on Saturday, he obviously was in no hurry to leave, but stayed and prayed.”

Besides hearing the pope at an opening ceremony Thursday, during Stations of the Cross on Friday, and at the Saturday vigal and the Sunday Mass, the three area priests also were invited to celebrate Mass with him and other bishops and priests on Saturday morning at Rio’s St. Sebastian Cathedral.

“We were about 20 pews away from him, which is closer than I ever thought we’d be,” Father Csaszar said.

“One of the things I think I’ll remember most is how people erupted in applause at the cathedral when he addressed the priests and urged them to become closer to the people they serve,” he said. “The pope’s message was that the best way to evangelize young person is with another young person. He really was calling us to do what he’s been doing from the start of his papacy. His message wasn’t just for priests, but for all the young people in Rio and for everyone – that you are the best evangelizer to the people with whom you come in contact.”

Also in Rio was Maria Damo of Worthington St. Michael Church, who will be entering her sophomore year at Xavier University in Cincinnati. “The pope had a very simple message at the Sunday Mass: Go, do not be afraid, and serve. The Gospel passage to go and make disciples of all nations was the theme of the week, and that was the message I heard – the whole idea that it’s not as hard as you would think to be an evangelizer,” said Damo, who attended with a group from St. Michael Church in Flint, Mich.

All the major events on the program took place on Copacabana beach. The original program called for the vigil and the closing Mass to be in a field 30 miles outside of the city, but three days of heavy rain had turned it into a field of mud.

“The weather didn’t dampen our joy, and I think it turned out to be a great blessing to have the Mass and vigil on the beach,” Father Wilson said. “It was a better location because Rio is used to having huge crowds on the beach every year for its Carnival celebration in the days before Ash Wednesday. It also provided another biblical reference, for Jesus spent a lot of time along the seashore, teaching crowds from a boat on the Sea of Galilee and meeting his disciples on the shore after his resurrection.”

Besides the events which brought people together on the beach, World Youth Day included gatherings of various language and ethnic groups at sites throughout Rio. English-speaking pilgrims met for catechesis at the Vivo Rio convention center, hearing from speakers including Cardinal Timothy Dolan of New York and Cardinal Sean O’Malley of Boston.

“Cardinal Dolan gave a great teaching on faith on Wednesday, and Cardinal O’Malley talked about faith on Friday,” Father Csaszar said. “I remember one phrase in Cardinal O’Malley’s talk in particular: ‘We say we should keep the faith, but we can’t just keep it. We need to give it away.’”

The Perry County group also had a chance to have its picture taken in front of the cross that has been part of the event since the first World Youth Day in 1984 and the icon which has accompanied it since 2003. The cross was displayed at the Basilica of the Holy Cross of the Military, which was built in 1811 on the site of what once was a fort occupied by the Portuguese colonial army.

“The cross was a focal point for the entire celebration, as it has been for past World Youth Days. It was a moving experience to think about the millions of people who have prayed in front of that cross, and now we were doing the same,” Father Wilson said.

The three Columbus-area priests were among 11,000 priests concelebrating the final Mass on the beach, all of whom received a white chasuble as a memento of the event.

Trading of smaller keepsakes was a frequent part of the week’s activities. “Our group from Michigan brought a lot of rosaries to trade, and now I have about 10 new rosaries,” Damo said. “One of the personal things that I remember most was how one of the people I traded with asked me to use the rosary he gave me and to pray my first rosary with it for him.”

“I also have buttons, handcraft- ed keychains from Peru, and slips of paper with Bible verses on them. They may be small items, but you could tell people spent a lot of time making them or that these were things of their own which meant something to them. Giving them to others wasn’t something they were doing just for fun, but with a real sense of purpose and passing their faith experience on to someone else.”