

The e RECORD

NEWS FROM ACROSS THE ARCHDIOCESE OF PERTH



S P E C I A L R E P O R T

PINOY CATHOLICS CELEBRATE SANTO NIÑO FIESTA

By Matthew Lau

EXCLAMATIONS of “Viva Pit Señor, Santo Niño!” reverberated through St Mary’s Cathedral on 20 January to venerate the Holy Child Jesus.

Last Sunday was the first time a Sto Niño feast service had been held at the Cathedral, jointly organised by Damayang Filipino Inc and the Filipino Cathedral Core Group.

Sinulog-Santo Niño Festival is celebrated annually on the third Sunday of January, and is a major celebration for Filipinos worldwide.

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB officiated the Mass with concelebrants Fr Sean Fernandez, Fr Jeffrey Casabuena, Fr Conor Steadman, and Bunbury Diocese priest Fr Concord Bagaoisan OSJ.

Fr Casabuena proclaimed the Gospel of Luke (2:41-52) during his final Sunday Mass as Cathedral Assistant Priest, as he has this week commenced his new pastoral placement in Kalgoorlie.

The Prayers of the Faithful were verbalised in various Filipino dialects.

Speaking during his homily, Archbishop Costelloe noted that while Christians focus on the end of Jesus’ life, the feast of Child Jesus reminds us that *all* aspects of his life are significant.



ABOVE The Feast of Sto Niño is celebrated in the Philippines and by Filipino Catholics across the globe. TOP Archbishop Costelloe, concelebrating priests and the congregation process around St Mary’s Cathedral holding icons of Infant Jesus on 20 January 2019 after the Mass had ended. PHOTOS: MATTHEW LAU

“We know very little historically [about his childhood], but which, like all of us, must have been so important in terms of his growing understanding of himself and his relationship with God his Father,” Archbishop Costelloe highlighted.

“One of the things I admire very much about your own devotion to el Santo Niño, is that these celebrations really invite us to focus very strongly on the humanity of Jesus.

“What is more human than a 12-year-old boy full of enthusiasm for life and eager to experience everything around him, even to the point where in his enthusiasm he perhaps doesn’t realise that what he is doing might make his parents anxious?” Archbishop Costelloe asked.

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FLAME MINISTRIES CONGRESS A REMINDER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT'S POWER

By Amanda Murthy

“WE NEED to take the time to really discern which direction God wants us to take, and ask Him to send the Holy Spirit to empower, inspire and remove all fear so that we can go out and preach the Good News to all people.

“The Church in Australia is so fortunate to have the 2020 Plenary Council, where we can all gather together, pray, listen to one another’s thoughts as guided by the Holy Spirit, and use the information gathered to evangelise - Just as the disciples went out to preach after they had witnessed the power of the Holy Spirit in the upper room on Pentecost day.”

This was the message delivered by Fr Roy Pereira during his homily at the Flame Ministries International (FMI) 29th Annual Flame Congress Mass, where over 120 participants gathered for three days, inspired by the theme ‘They Shall be Baptised with Fire’.

The Congress, which took place from 18 to 20 January at the John XXIII College in Claremont, was accompanied with a statement written on the brochure that read, “The anointing that was upon Jesus is the same anointing upon you, and it is equipping you for the same work in this age.”

The program was packed with rallies, talks, prayers, as well as praise and worship sessions led by the FMI Music Ministry.

Congress speakers included FMI founder Eddie Russell, as well as members Kaye Rollings and Cyrus D’Souza, who took turns giving their experience about the work of the Holy Spirit, while making reference to passages of scripture.

Other speakers included Carlos Alberto Jardon from Mexico, via video conference, and Anne Marie Gatenby.

Giving an example of a bush fire that spreads rapidly and engulfs everything that is around it, Fr Pereira challenged those present to be like a burning bush fire - to share and spread the fire (of the Holy Spirit) burning within them with everyone they meet.

“Don’t keep that fire to yourself.

“Being inspired by God’s love and power is one thing, we cannot let our fears, doubts and worries stop us from actually going out there and being that example of Christ,” he said.

“When we have the courage to live out the Gospel of Christ, we will not only have a closer relationship with God, but we will inspire others to be closer to Him - And that my brothers and sisters in Christ, is very important in upholding God’s message,” Fr Pereira concluded.

FMI Music Director and organiser Patrick Carre said the response throughout the Congress was overwhelming and there were many participants who openly shared on how having the music helped them pray better.

“Being able to lift our hands, putting God first, and surrender everything to Him in through song in that space without worrying what the other person is thinking, was a beautiful thing for the band to witness through the praise and worship sessions,” Mr Carre said.

Mr Jardon spoke to the Congress via a three part video, talking about his faith journey and encounters with the “Baptism of the Holy Spirit”.

Encouraging participants to always trust in Jesus, Mr Jardon ended his message with a reflective hymn, urging all present to ask God to increase their trust in Him.

“We want to encourage you to take a step into the faith, raise your hand, and ask the Lord to accomplish His will.

“We need to have faith, that He will revive us,” he said. ●



TOP TO BOTTOM The FMI Band accompanied participants in praise and worship sessions throughout the Flame Ministries International (FMI) 29th Congress held from 18 to 20 January. • Fr Roy Pereira imparted his blessings on new FMI members during a Mass in conjunction with the Flame Ministries International (FMI) 29th Congress held from 18 to 20 January. • A participant being prayed over during the Flame Ministries International (FMI) 29th Congress which was themed ‘They Shall be Baptised with Fire’ held from 18 to 20 January.

PHOTOS: RICHARD AF COOKE



THE WA YOUNG SALESIANS CAMP CELEBRATES 30 YEARS



ABOVE Team building games and activities. TOP The Western Australian Young Salesian Camp has this year celebrated a monumental 30 year anniversary among some 100 youth who were present for the annual camp. PHOTOS: SUPPLIED

By Olivia Bunter

THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN Young Salesian Camp has this year celebrated a monumental 30 year anniversary among some 100 youth who were present for the annual camp.

In the first few weeks of January each year, the WA Young Salesian Summer Camp, which is held at the Nanga Bush Camp in Dwellingup, is a youth retreat filled with fun, games and activities for the like-minded youth from around the diocese.

This year the camp hosted some 100 campers between the ages of 12 and 15, who were accompanied by 10 Senior Campers and 21 leaders.

Over five days, the youth were able to disconnect from their smartphones and other technologies - something that Camp Coordinator, Graham Maher said he believes is a rarity for young people.

“Many begin the camp shy and reserved but as the days went by a transformation took place.”

Upon arrival, the youth are exposed to a comfortable and friendly environment where they can immerse themselves in a range of team building activities designed to encourage self-confidence and help build friendships.

Mr Maher explained to *The Record* that over the five days, youth came to see each other as part of a bigger family – the Don Bosco family.

“The camp integrates the mission of Don Bosco. To cater for youth by blending Christian living via the two Masses held during the week with fun, laughter and activities galore.”

Armadale Parish Priest, Fr Joseph Tran celebrated Mass on the Monday and Thursday afternoon, speaking about the Good Samaritan and Don Bosco, as well as being a good neighbour and showing love to others. ●

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A separate fundraising event on Saturday 8 December 2018 began with a Mass celebrated by Fr Jeffrey Casabuena, followed by a community dinner and entertainment at Mercedes College. PHOTO: RON TAN

“This is what we remember in today’s Gospel – it is mirrored in the experience of so many parents and their children.”

The Perth Archbishop explained that at the heart of Christmas lies an extraordinary truth: that God came among us as one of us, and “shared in every human reality from the inside”.

“In his own time and place, he went through the same range of human experiences that we all do. He understands us, as I say, from the inside – and it is because he understands us, that he knows us through and through, that he loves us.

“The one experience that Jesus did not have was an experience of personal sin,” Archbishop Costelloe added.

“That Jesus never committed sin does not make him a ‘super human’ – it makes him truly and deeply human. When we sin, as we all do, and excuse ourselves by saying: ‘Well, I’m only human after all’, we are not really speaking the truth.

“Sin does not make us human – it makes us less than fully human, because it makes us less than God has created us to be.”

Sto Niño devotion in Western Australia began in Albany in 1975 when Ted and Florita Cue arrived as migrants.

After moving to Perth in 1987, the Cue family initially fêted the festival in their own home. However, as the number of devotees increased, St Joachim’s Church became the venue with the blessing of then-Archbishop William Foley.

As Victoria Park Parish was later utilised as the Pro-Cathedral during the renovations of St Mary’s, the Filipino services moved to Redemptorist Monastery Church.

Mrs Cue was pleased that the service took place at the Cathedral for the first time.

“Once we pass away, hopefully the next generations will continue to celebrate this fiesta,” she said.

Last month, the Filipino Catholic community congregated on 8 December for a dinner gathering in the Mercedes College Hall to fundraise \$7495 for the Cathedral’s needs. ●

ETG '18 PARTICIPANTS JOURNEY TOGETHER WITH YOUTHFUL FERVOUR

Two young people of God share their experience of what was an invigorating 2018 Embrace the Grace (ETG) youth conference.

By Matthew Lau

ANNA DEPIAZZI AND CARL ALVARES joined more than 100 young Catholics in Australia's only monastic town of New Norcia for the most recent ETG from 5 to 9 December.

This was Anna's second ETG faith exploration – her first back in 2016 was the pinnacle of her faith journey at the time, she said.

The 18-year-old Murdoch University student had no hesitation when it came to registering again for 2018, where she was able to meet more Catholics around her age.

"I found the feeling and atmosphere more engaging and more comfortable this time around. Everyone seemed to get along well; there was a lot of mixing between everyone, with no-one forming any cliques as such," Anna recalled.

The Bayswater parishioner aspires to return for the next ETG, scheduled for 2020, as a share group leader.

"The talks we heard were always enlightening and strengthening us, offering food for thought on things that we may have not thought about in the past.

"I think ETG has definitely helped me find a new way of talking to God with the Sacrament of Penance and Adoration."

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament on 7 December allowed ETG attendees to examine their relationship with God.

"It was a very emotional time, to sit in silence and be with God in His presence is not something I always get the opportunity to do," Anna added.

"To have the opportunity to do that was



Anna and Carl enjoy themselves at the 2018 Embrace the Grace dinner-dance on 8 December.

PHOTO: MATT LIM PHOTOGRAPHY

definitely a highlight of this conference."

Anna believes she gained the most out of her ETG journeys by "not being afraid or apprehensive" and by "jumping in wholeheartedly".

Carl Alvares, 16, was one of seven vibrant pilgrims from Aquinas College to join ETG '18.

He found out about the youth conference through Paul Kelly, Head of Religion at Aquinas, who was one of the guest speakers during the five-day retreat.

This was the first ETG for Carl and his Aquinas buddies, who, having just finished Year 11, desired ways of broadening his faith formation during the holiday period.

"The talks were very informative and in-depth, I discovered more about my faith and felt it strengthened," he said.

"People say they pray the Novena and God answers their prayers at the end or guide them, and I wasn't sure how that works, like how do they know if God is guiding them to do that or if they're convincing themselves?"

Carl was part of the Saint Joseph themed community group that won the overall "Fr John O'Reilly mini-Olympics", voted for performing the best pre-games skit/chant.

The dinner-dance on the Saturday evening was another highlight of the week for the Canning Vale parishioner.

Carl paid tribute to his community group leaders, whose guidance was of great value to the young participants.

"It was very important because you can relate to them more as they're not too much older than you, and hence are better role models and can guide you," he explained.

"My faith has definitely been strengthened because of ETG. Recently, I have felt as though my faith has been weakening. Although we go to Church every week obligatorily, the evidence of the Catholic Church in recent times is not something that is elaborated on often.

"My experiences at ETG taught me of the host actually changing into the blood and body of Jesus Christ. Even though faith is believing in the unseen, sometimes you need that little bit of 'seen' to strengthen it."

Coming together for meals and staying in dorms, Carl said, gave ETG a "family-feel" of connection.

"I am looking forward to the next ETG in two years' time," he avowed. ●

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