

# Be Not Afraid

## *“In the Midst of a Miracle – World Youth Day 2011”*

by Bishop John M. LeVoir

World Youth Day (WYD) 2011 was held in Madrid, Spain, from Aug. 15 through Aug. 21. There were 12 pilgrims from the Diocese of New Ulm who made the journey to Madrid to meet with Pope Benedict XVI, to listen to his words, to pray with him, and to celebrate the Catholic faith with nearly two million young people from around the world.

This year was the 26th WYD. WYD was begun by Pope John Paul II so that he could meet with youth from around the world for the purpose of deepening and spreading the Catholic faith. “Planted and built up in Jesus Christ, firm in the faith” (cf. Col 2:7) was the theme for this year’s event.

From day to day in Madrid, I kept a little diary of each day’s events. The following are some of the highlights.

- Tuesday, Aug. 16: We arrived in Madrid and checked into the Melia Galgos Hotel. There were many bishops staying at the hotel. I found out later that there were some 1,000 bishops attending, with 80 of them being from the United States.

In the evening, we celebrated the Opening Mass at the Plaza de Cibeles. The main celebrant for the Mass was the Cardinal-Archbishop of Madrid, Antonio Maria Rouco Varela.

The temperature that day and the other days was near 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

- Wednesday, Aug. 17: Bishop Paul Sirba of Duluth and I went to the Parque Retiro (Retiro Park) where most of the pilgrims were gathered for various WYD events. The park was huge. There, by the Prado Museum, we met with the group from the Diocese of Duluth. We all ate lunch and enjoyed the afternoon together.

I was able to make contact with our young people from the Diocese of New Ulm (led by Margaret McHugh), and we set up a time and a place to meet the next day.

- Thursday, Aug. 18: Bishop Sirba and I met with the group from the Diocese of New Ulm. I was so happy to see our young people and their leaders. We were able to eat lunch together and to visit. We all shared the WYD experiences that we already had. We talked about the arrival of Pope Benedict, which happened later that day.

In the evening, everyone gathered at the Plaza de Cibeles to greet Pope Benedict and to pray with him. The crowd was very joyful and greeted him with cheers of “Benedicto.” The Holy Father was thrilled to see so many young people. Before he came to the stage, he rode through the crowds of cheering young people in the popemobile, waving and smiling as he went. We then had a prayer service and a talk by the Holy Father. He reminded us that we were at WYD for “friendship, prayer, and celebration.”

- Friday, Aug. 19: One of the things that I wanted to do in Madrid was to visit the Church of St. Isidore the Farmer, and to pray at his tomb and the tomb of his wife, St. Maria de la Cabeza. I went to the church this afternoon and prayed by the tombs of Saints Isidore and Maria for our diocese.

In the evening, everyone gathered in the Plaza de Cibeles to pray the Stations of the Cross with the Holy Father. Each of the 14 stations was from a different church in Spain. The artistry of each station was elegant. The stations were crafted from different periods of time, from the 16th through the 20th century.

Before the ceremony began, a little girl could not contain her excitement at seeing the pope and ran up to kiss his ring. The Holy Father lovingly patted her on the head.

- Saturday, Aug. 20: The bishops from the United States celebrated Mass for the young pilgrims from the United States at the "Love and Life Center" in Madrid. This center was sponsored by the Knights of Columbus and the Sisters of Life from New York. Cardinal Francis George of Chicago was the main celebrant for the Mass and Archbishop Timothy Dolan of New York gave the homily. Some 8,000 youth from the United States attended.

In the evening, there was a prayer vigil with Pope Benedict at Cuatro Vientos Airfield. There was an estimated two million youth present. After the vigil, they spent the night at the airfield, with adoration of the Blessed Sacrament taking place throughout the night.

The vigil was interrupted by a terrific thunderstorm with a driving wind and rain; yet the Holy Father was present throughout the storm, which lasted about an hour. He was asked twice whether or not he wanted to leave the scene. He replied both times: "No, I am staying. We are staying."

Seeing that the pope was staying with them, the young people cheered and cheered. It seemed that in the storm the devil was after us all, but led by the Holy Father and the protection of God, he was helpless. After the storm, Pope Benedict continued the vigil and we all adored the Blessed Sacrament.

- Sunday, Aug. 21: This day brought the Closing Mass with Pope Benedict at 9:30 in the morning. The Mass was held at Cuatro Vientos Airfield. Again, some two million pilgrims attended. The Mass was beautiful. During his homily, the Holy Father encouraged the youth to make Christ, the Son of God, the center of their lives and to be apostles of the 21st century.

During WYD, the pilgrims had the opportunity to attend daily Mass, to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation, to participate in catechesis, to adore the Blessed Sacrament, to meet pilgrims from other countries, to visit the world famous Prado Museum (which houses numerous works of classic Christian art), and to attend many other events.

Being a part of WYD 2011 was a powerful religious experience for me. It will forever remain in my memory. With the outpouring of grace that the participants experienced, we were definitely in the midst of a miracle.

The next WYD is scheduled for Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2013.

(Sept. 2011)

## No Tengas Miedo

### *En medio de un Milagro – Jornada Mundial de la Juventud 2011*

por Obispo John M. LeVoir

La Jornada Mundial de la Juventud (JMJ) se llevó a cabo del 15 al 21 de Agosto en la ciudad de Madrid, España. 12 peregrinos de la Diócesis de New Ulm hicieron el viaje a Madrid para conocer al Papa Benedicto XVI, escuchar sus palabras, rezar con él y celebrar la fe Católica con aproximadamente dos millones de jóvenes de todo el mundo.

El Papa Juan Pablo II inició la JMJ con el propósito de reunirse con todos los jóvenes del mundo para profundizar y difundir la fe católica. El lema de este año "con profundas raíces en él, firmemente basados en él por la fe" (Col 2:7).

Desde que llegué a Madrid hice un pequeño diario de los acontecimientos acontecidos y aquí los más destacados.

Martes, 16 de Agosto: Al llegar a Madrid nos hospedamos en el hotel Melia Galgos. Muchos Obispos se hospedaron en este hotel también. Más adelante me enteré que 1,000 obispos asistieron al evento y 80 de ellos de los Estados Unidos.

Jueves, 18 de Agosto: Obispo Sirba y yo nos reunimos con el grupo de la Diócesis de New Ulm. Yo estaba tan feliz de ver a nuestros jóvenes y sus líderes. Tuvimos la oportunidad de comer juntos y platicar sobre las experiencias de la JMJ. Conversamos sobre la llegada del Papa Benedicto XVI que tuvo lugar más tarde.

Por la noche, todos se reunieron en la Plaza de Cibeles para saludar al Papa Benedicto XVI para orar con él. La multitud estaba muy alegre y lo saludó con una ovación diciendo "Benedicto." El Santo Padre se emocionó al ver millones de jóvenes y antes de llegar al altar desde su papamovil él sonreía y saludaba a la multitud. Luego tuvimos un servicio de oración y una plática por el Santo Padre. El nos recordó que estábamos en la JMJ por la "Amistad, oración y celebración."

Sábado, 20 de Agosto: Los Obispos de los Estados Unidos celebraron la Misa para los jóvenes peregrinos procedentes de los Estados Unidos en el "Love and Life Center" en Madrid. Alrededor de 25,000 jóvenes estadounidenses asistieron a la Misa.

Por la noche, hubo una vigilia con el Papa Benedicto XVI en el aeródromo de Cuatro Vientos y alrededor de dos millones asistieron al evento. Después de la Vigilia, pasaron la noche en el aeródromo, con una adoración Eucarística.

Domingo, 21 de Agosto: La Misa de Clausura se llevó a cabo en el aeródromo de Cuatro Vientos a las 9:30 a.m. Alrededor de dos millones de peregrinos se reunieron para despedir al Santo Padre. Durante su homilía, el Santo Padre animó a los jóvenes hacer de Cristo, Hijo de Dios, el centro de sus vidas y ser apóstoles del siglo XXI.

Durante la JMJ, los peregrinos tuvieron la oportunidad de asistir a la Misa todos los días, celebrar el Sacramento de la Reconciliación, participar de la catequesis, adorar al Santísimo Sacramento, conocer a peregrinos de otros países y asistir a diversos eventos.

Formar parte de la JMJ 2011 fue una experiencia religiosa bastante intensa que permanecerán en mi memoria para siempre. Sin duda, la gracia que los participantes experimentaron, estábamos en medio de un milagro. (La próxima JMJ está programada para el 2013 en Rio de Janeiro, Brasil).