

**World Youth Day 2008 – An Experience a Young Lady Will Never Forget**

The following letter was received by Father Joe Healey, a Maryknoll Missionary from Morristown who has written several books about his missionary efforts in Tanzania. The young lady who wrote the letter about her experience at World Youth Day in Australia was sponsored by the New Jersey area at the recommendation of Father Healey. She is a resident of Kenya where Father Healey is currently stationed. Father Healey is the brother of Tom Healey, KM, who is a member of the Federal Association – Tom's wife, Meg, is a Dame from the New Jersey area of the American Association.

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Hello, Fr. Healey,

It is with great excitement that I write you this mail. I arrived safely from Australia and all I can say is that World Youth Day 2008 was a life changing experience for me, seeing as it was my first time to attend the event.

I met and made many friends and they were all very happy to hear my stories about the Catholic faith in Africa. It is one event that will remain embedded in my memory bank for a very long time. I am very grateful to all those who supported me in my venture as a Pilgrim. The spiritual preparation before the trip ensured that I enjoyed the catechesis sessions, prayer meetings and Bible study that we had at St. Agatha Catholic Church at Pennant Hills.

Last Sunday, I went for Mass and my fellow youth were elated to see me. They were very happy with the good news I brought along. I talked to them about World Youth Day and how developed Australia is as a country. It is a great blessing that I attended the event.

We all received the Pope's message with excitement and despite the numerous demonstrations by Pro-abortionists, Gay communities and supporters of contraceptives and other groups, we were steadfast in our pilgrimage and I am happy that as a pilgrim I brought home the good news of Our Lord Jesus Christ and the strong will to serve God through prayer and petition as a youth in the Catholic Church. I am glad that this whole experience has changed my life in a big way and now I can confidently say that "I AM PROUDLY CATHOLIC."

Thank you for everything and God Bless!  
Sheila