

THE DAILY REDSHIRT



It's free, stupid...



THOUGHTS & REPORTS

(FEEL FREE TO SEND US STUFF, BY THE WAY!)

Lourdes Youth Service Group 2011

In this issue we focus on what it's like to arrive in Lourdes, especially from the perspective of those who have not been before...

Weekly Events

Sunday

Interested in a vocation...?

Meet at the statue of the crowned virgin at 10.30pm for a free drink and a chat with Fr. David.

Wednesday

The Redshirts Presentation

This is going to be at 2.30 in the Underground Basilica - not at 4.30 as it says in your booklets :)

Poetry by Fr. Rob

A bargain!!

Fr. Rob Esdaile, the Chaplain to the Redshirts has written a book of poetry. Copies are being sold this week in Lourdes. It is called 50/50. 2 Euros from each copy sold will go toward Lourdes charities.

THE REDSHIRTS SO FAR... THE PILGRIMAGE THROUGH OUR EYES

Bright and early at nine o'clock on Wednesday morning, all the redshirts gathered at St Bernadettes church in Crawley for a highly anticipated forth going mass. The first step onto the coach sent shivers up my spine like an electric current filled with adrenaline as I felt something big was about to happen.

Our first official duty as redshirts took place at the train station, where we welcomed in the tired pilgrims with smiles and waves. We had lots of jobs to do such as: unpacking, cleaning and organising the train and its baggage. We hope our enthusiasm lightened the mood of the station as we broke the silence at the tranquil station of Lourdes.

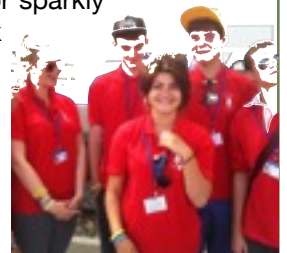
After all our singing and excitement, we hopped on the coach back to the hotel. As we stepped onto the hotel grounds, we were greeted with a large puff of smoke and a fit of laughter as coach driver Ken's bus broke down (hahaha!).

Some of us went to lunch and about ten of us went to the Accueil where we were assigned different jobs to

help out with the un-packing. Redshirts Andy P. and Bridie went around the rooms putting hand towels in each of the bathrooms. As we went into one of the rooms we were greeted by two smiley ladies getting ready for the week and sorting their beds to their liking. Andy and Bridie stayed and had a chat with them. They said **'Seeing the redshirts every year lightens up the mood! We really appreciate having them around, please don't stop what you're doing, you don't know how much of a difference you make'**. Andy and Bridie left the room with glowing smiles on their faces after the compliment they had just received. We then got back and had a late lunch.

We then had free time where some of us took the opportunity to rest, and others went into town for a bit of mood-lifting tacky shopping for sparkly Mary's and glow in the dark rosaries. When we got back, we had dinner which we all enjoy because we get a chance to catch up and meet new friends.

After dinner we went to the low



(cont'd from front...)

stations along the river. The marble sculptures were stunning and the mood within the group was so respectful and the reflections were relevant to our own lives. Everyone really enjoyed the time we spent as a whole group and our friendships blossomed as we wandered back to the hotel for night prayer.

We had a touching evening prayer and then headed up to our rooms for an early night to catch up on some well deserved sleep!

Saturday...

The day started with a brilliant carpet leading toward the pilgrimage photo. There were so many people waving. We met a few people who knew who we were. It was an insightful experience and a great chance to meet new pilgrims.

The Mass in the underground basilica was beautiful. I was surprised by how much people gave in the collection.

After lunch, we all went to different places. Groups went to the Accueil, the water walk, to sing at the baths, and to two different hotels (the Padoue and the Espagne)



The opening Mass at the Cote Grote on Friday afternoon...

LET'S ASK THE FIRST-TIMERS...

We asked for views and comments from members of the pilgrimage who are here for the first time...

"It's really great. It's really fun to meet new people and experience new things."

(Ellie, Redshirts)

Before supper we had a catechesis session on the theme of 'give us this day our daily bread' and reflected on the essentials in life vs. our wants.

Over the next few days we are looking forward to the anointing Mass, the Redshirt presentation and party night, the early high-stations, as well as many other things...

More in the next edition... this was prepared by four different members of the Redshirts writing at different times and giving an account of how we have seen it through our eyes.

"It's a really great experience. It's very moving. It's great to meet so many people who share the same faith, some of whom are not in the best of health, but we all come together and worship."

(Marie, Accueil)

"It's very pleasant. That's the word to use. It's spiritually uplifting in the Masses. Absolute joy and fun for the children."

(Elizabeth, Alba)

"I didn't have a clue what to expect, but I didn't expect this. It's so hard to explain. No word can describe it."

(Jade, Solitude)



Thought of the day - Sunday

"ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN"

In the 'Our Father', God teaches us that even though there is war and disaster on earth, the people can join together and unite with

God to be happy, peaceful and to find love in their lives. It teaches us that material objects are not always important, only the people in our lives can truly make a lasting difference.

We learn that in heaven there are no boundaries or divisions and God loves everyone equally.

'Lord, help people to find justice and peace throughout their lives to spread joy and happiness to everyone they meet'

Zoe Batchelor and Megan Elliott

"Awesome!" (Claire, Espagne)

"It's an amazing place. Something I've never experienced before. How on earth can you expect to experience what you experience when you come here?"

(Phillip, Solitude)

"Incredible!" (Tabby, Europe)

"I'm going to Ibiza next year. I've had enough of this." (Bishop Kieran)

(N.B. The last quote may not be entirely accurate.)