

Happiness and joy of young people is overwhelming

As I watched the World Youth Day celebration on television, I was overwhelmed by the happiness and the joy of so many young people represented by so many countries having the opportunity to give witness to their Catholic Faith and to be the guests of Pope Benedict XVI (CR, July 24). Who would have ever thought of witnessing our Holy Father sailing down Sydney Harbour, in a beautiful white yacht surrounded by many young pilgrims in their native dress holding the colorful and unfurling flags that represent their countries? As the yacht docks, all disembark, and thousands more join enthusiastically in greeting his holiness.

There was one special memory for me. As the Holy Father walked up to the ramp where the altar was located, he stopped, because in the distance could be heard a chanting, which slowly came closer. It was the Aborigines in native dress and dance coming up front and center to the Holy Father to offer their tribute - but to me it looked a little foreboding. The Vicar of Rome stood with good grace and a gentle smile and enjoyed every moment of this meaningful ceremony. He nodded his appreciation to them and continued up the ramp and was seated. His endeavor and his silence spoke volumes.