

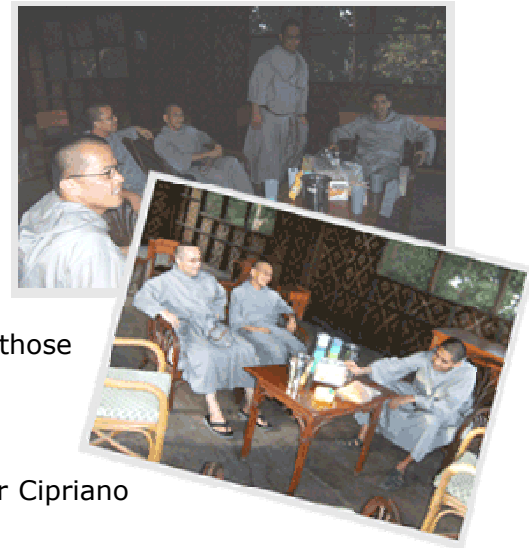


# THE MISSION OF THE ST JOHN BROTHERS IN CEBU



**Dear friends I hope this new year finds you well.**

Once again we write to you to inform you of the different things that have occurred this past year. The Saint John Center as you know is finished. For now our Contemplative sisters are living in it until they are able to construct their convent. Their presence has given the Center a spiritual and prayerful dimension. Nevertheless, the Center is still used for our activities: formation to those who wish to grow in their Christian and human lives, a meeting place for youth activities, of course daily mass, not so long ago the poor children of Carbon (the market area of Cebu city) had their Christmas party there, spiritual direction for those who wish, bible sharing, a classical music concert was held there, etc...



One of the highlights of this year was the priestly ordination of brother Cipriano and the diaconate ordination of brother Justin in June.

Another of the highlights of the year was that some brothers and sisters took some youth to Australia for the World Youth Day with Pope Benedict the XVI. It was a great spiritual experience (in the Christian and human sense of the word) for them all.

The brothers and sisters continue their effort to spread the Kingdom of God in this world in different ways: youth and children camps, Campus ministry activities, Catechism, teaching in the Seminaries, the Scholarship program, organizing basketball tournaments for the youth, etc.



We continue to rely on your prayers so that we can continue to be faithful in our mission. Be sure that we pray for all of you. We wish you a very holy and blessed new year.

**Br. Jesus csj.  
Prior**



## WORLD YOUTH DAY, SYDNEY: 12-22 JULY, 2008

We were 21: 13 youth, and 8 brothers and sisters: a little Cebu family in the big international family of St John, 600 youth representing priories from eight different countries. It is the first time that our priory successfully mounted a delegation for the WYD, and the monthly ACTiV8 formation since June 2007 prepared us all for this encounter of the Universal Church.

Now I give the floor to ... our Cebu St John delegates:

In Sydney, wherever we went, we did evangelization to youth, to people – Aussies or not, to beggars and drunkards, and yes, even to non-believers. Nothing could stop the blazing Spirit of Joy from being manifested in dances, songs and smiles. We shared the joy that is deeply rooted in our Christian heart. It's beautiful that, with Mary, the Holy Spirit makes us witnesses. **Juncor, 21**



A pilgrimage is so simple: The providence of Jesus sent us good people to give us shelter and food like our Australian foster families and even the Filipina passerby (Tita Ester) who approached us to say hello and then asked us what we need...the next day she came with a real Filipino meal with rice for us all. Isn't this beautiful? We were invited to be poor so that the Spirit of Christ can make us rich. **Ramon, 26**

The WYD pilgrimage was a very humbling experience for me. I discovered my imperfections, my weaknesses that up until then were always hidden from my eyes.... And it is a grace because these things remind us that we cannot depend on ourselves, but only on God's grace alone. I pray that He'll continue teach us to take the Blessed Mother's hand...She who guides us in our daily pilgrimage to Jesus. **Thea, 19**

On our return, at Sydney airport, the check-in hostess asked me about the slogan at the back of our WYD jackets: "**What does 'Follow the Lamb'** mean?"

Our real apostolic pilgrimage starts only now: **RECEIVE THE POWER!** Amen.

Br Justin



In communion with the WYD 2008 in Sydney, the Community of St John celebrated its Cebu Festival,

## ACTIV8 ON FIRE

**Why "ACTIV8"?** The theme of the WYD08 is taken from ACTS 1 v.8: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses."

**When and where?** 2pm, July 19 to 2pm, July 20 (simultaneous with Sydney WYD), at the Priory

**Who took part?** Over 100 youth from various schools or walks of life in Cebu



## SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The Saint John Scholarship Program is envisioned to uplift the economic, social, and spiritual condition of the people living in Banawa, Cebu City where the St. John priory is located. It gives scholarships to indigent elementary, high school and college students who are not necessarily academically intelligent but have the extreme desire to study. Started by the Brothers of the Congregation of St. John in May, 1997 with 13 scholars, it was registered in the Security and Exchange Commission (SEC) on July 17, 2003. At present the program has 58 scholars.

Services are in the form of financial and tutorial assistance for educational needs and spiritual guidance and teachings for the scholars' spiritual life.

Now on its 11 years of service, it has produced 50 college graduates who finished a four to five year degree courses, 7 of whom finished short technical courses ranging from 6 months to 2 years.

The financial aspect is sustained by the benefactors of *Enfant du Mekong* (France) and relatives and friends of the Brothers of St. John Community.



# NOVITIATE



For many years now, the priory of Cebu welcomes vocations of young Filipinos who desire to follow Jesus in the way of John the Beloved. Finally, after much longing, we have the joy of starting a Novitiate here in Cebu. Young people from the Philippines and other places of Asia will have their first years of religious life in Cebu. This is really a blessing from the Lord. And like all blessings, we know it is also a great responsibility. Our priory is starting to take the shape of a Novitiate. It

requires from us to rediscover the particular grace of our community in order to hand it on to the new ones. Old rusty brothers come back to the time when they were in the Novitiate of Saint Jodard in France by a renewal into fervor, silence, study, night vigils, etc. We entrust to you in your prayer this new stage of the life of the priory of Cebu. May the Lord allow the young ones who join, to persevere in the Lord and to keep this fervor in them. Saint John Climacus, as an old monk of the sixth century after Christ, used to say:

***"A young novice who is fervent, it is normal;  
an old monk who is fervent, that is holiness."***

A **Gazibo** has been built in the garden of the St. John Center to provide more protected space from the rain and the sun; this will allow us to do more bible sharing, exhibit, talks and encounter. The Gazibo has been generously offered by a good friend -canadian- who lives in Cebu with his family.



## **Our Needs:**

**Priory life.** We only live on foreign donations. Since its foundation, the priory of Cebu has never been autonomous. The average monthly cost of a brother in Cebu is **300 euros** (food, insurance, gas...).

**Mass Intentions.** It is difficult in a country of mission to find mass offerings. You would be of a great help if offering us one, two... mass intentions per month in the year. Thank you! **1 mass intention: 10 euros**

**You can contact us :** [cebu@stjean.com](mailto:cebu@stjean.com)

**Visit our web site :** [www.stjean.com/cebu](http://www.stjean.com/cebu)

Checks to the order of : **Congrégation St Jean Cebu**

**Economat general. ND Rimont 71239 Fley.**

**Crédit Agricole Buxy (71)**

**Compte euros : 66426195000**

**Metrobank. Cebu City. Philippines.**

**Euros: 041-2-04160020-3**

**Dollars: 398-2-39800086-7**

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