

FIRST YOUTH MEETING OF THE KIDANE MHRET PARISH

On Thursday April 27, we had our first in the Parish. Between 20 to 25 people participated. In the dialogue that followed Fr. Vittorio's welcoming presentation, the following points were expressed by the participants:

1. A few of those present had participated to the WYD when the Pope visited Toronto. Even though they cannot remember specifically the message that was brought forward on that week long meeting, they still remember that how the Pope was trying to reach out to the youth.
2. Most agreed that THE YOUTH IS THE FUTURE, because they have potential, creativity and can be innovative;
3. It is good for the young Catholic Eritrean to come together and meet regularly because this will give them a chance to connect among themselves;
4. In their meetings they can have time to pray and celebrate together, they can organize their celebrations where they can do the readings, share some of their insights, lead the prayer and the singing. They could discuss about points of common interest, they could even organize themselves to go and visit places and have fun together.

Some of the common problems they mentioned in the meeting were:

1. Coming to the Eritrean Church they are confronted with the language barrier, people talk too fast for them to be able to follow. The Catholic services are long and boring. There are Churches with masses and services in English much closer to their places where they can go.
2. They are forced to come to Church by their parents, not because they want to. They feel that their parents do not consider them mature, and deprive them of their independence;
3. The theme that are tackled in the homilies are too general and evasive, they do not reflect the real world they live in. They do not want to invest time and energy in something that cannot give them much in return;
4. Asked how many of those present had not gone to Church the Sunday before, more than half of them raised their hands. Some of them in fact indicated they had not gone to Church for quite a long time;
5. They are too busy to have time for the meetings, projects and what have you: work, school and studies, gym practice, etc.

The meeting ended with

1. the selection of a committee of five people:
Sara Negassi, Senhit Derar, Chiara Michael, Sennay Mesgenna and Yodit Dawit who will be in charge of organizing the next meeting on May 8, 2005, at 3:30.
2. a commitment to say one Hail Mary a day for the success of the next meeting.
3. a pizza and coke, kindly offered by the Parish to conclude the evening.

Thanks to the young people who made the effort to be present at the first meeting, to the parents for accompanying their children and the organizers.