

## **The Diary of the V European Franciscan Youth Congress**

### **The 2nd day**

Alarm clocks ring one after another. It's hard to believe that the night is over. It seems to be. It's time to wake up and to make world happy. Despite being very sleepy, pilgrims gather to morning's prayer. After that we are late to breakfast so we are eating rapidly. At 10 a.m. we must be at Bernardinai church and the very kind kitcheners ensure that Holy Mass won't be delayed because of us. We are nodding heads, but also thinking that congress opening Holy Mass would be very strange without participants and important priests. We finish our breakfast in about twenty minutes and start footing to the bus stop. After diving into two massive groups, the busses have been stormed. It starts raining but our guests are not so warmly dressed. Organizers hope that no one will catch Lithuanian flue.

Fortunately, we reach the Church in time. We are happy that there are some parishioners praying too. Brother Astijus who is leading Holy Mass asks for more new young priests and encourages living Gospel life. Nowadays this world needs no hired priests who just do orders. It needs warriors who could give their lives for faith, Church and the Word of God. Today world's disorder is time of God's will. Jesus awakes his children from comfortable laziness and encourages going to the world and evangelizing people. This is not easy neither convenient, neither pleasant, but it is much needed.

After Holy Mass delegates are greeted by General Minister of Lithuanian Secular Franciscan Order Algimantas Andziulis who is happy that Jesus is among us because "Where two or three are gathered in my name I am between them".

Later on, delegates listen to the first Congress conference presented by Brother Algis who talks about the meaning of martyrdom in Church.

After lunch delegates visit lofts and cellars of spectacular Bernardinai ensemble and listen to volunteer stories about them. After these excursions Brother Ivan presents the second conference in Bernardinai Church. He starts this conference with fiery glorification, which had wakened up even the sleepest participants of the congress. Lithuanian Youfra receives a lot of compliments for its superb settlement and much work in last seven years. Ukrainian and Byelorussian representatives, who participate in such Congress for the first time, are encouraged to take Lithuanian YouFra as example and try to create their own Youfra in towns and smaller villages.

After the compliments we hear good insights by brother Ivan about Saint Francis life. Saint Francis had “died whole life for himself” so Jesus could work in his heart. Saint Francis teaches how we should meet another person and what is most important, to see Jesus in that person. Everyone should be greeted as grace from God, although it could be very hard to do it.

A short break and vigil prayers starts. We sing, read story about San Damian cross, who talked to Saint Francis and encouraged to go and rebuild churches because even today they are quite broken-down. What is more, we bring candles to the cross with our prayers, thoughts and thanksgivings. We take the Cross, the flags and walk out with psalms heading to the symbol of Franciscan martyrdom called The Hill of Three Crosses. For sure, it is much easier to go by forests and fields than by city parks, where you can see a lot of staring, even condemning eyes. Despite all inconveniences we sing even more louder and with more energy. One hundred steps and we are on the top of the hill. We pray for Vilnius, sing and take pictures of all the participants.

The almost last step from the day program includes going by buses to Trinapolis with songs in many languages. Finally we are at home.

After supper, we gathered to the evening of nations. So much has been done here! Everyone could see human pyramid with Spanish people, very nice polka with Croatian guys and tasty sweets from French people and lots of more. After all, it was just enough to say that the program starts at 6 p.m. next day. So everybody went to their rooms soon.

There were just silence and dreams of participants walking in Trinapolis' corridors.

Inga Nemiega

Translated by Donatas Minkevičius