



WYD MADRID 2011

The Salesian Youth Movement at the feast of faith

by Gian Francesco Romano



The WYD kind of scene is just made for a situation like the Salesian Youth Movement (SYM), a movement which grew out of Don Bosco's educational style and has always integrated enthusiasm and devotion, festivity and prayer, the pro-activity of youth and confidence in their pastors and teachers. The SYM found Madrid to be a natural habitat, and in the encounters with the national delegations, seeing the circumstances of other young people and movements, listening to key figures of the Movement such as Fr Pascual Chávez and Mother Yvonne Reungoat, and of the Church in the Pope and the bishops, the SYM found new stimulus and strength for the challenges ahead.

There were some very special moments for the Salesian Youth Movement at this year's World Youth Day. The 'Steadfast in Faith' Vigil and Festival was certainly one of them. Salesian Youth Ministry in Spain, which includes the Salesian Sisters, started working on it two years in advance: two years of work for an event which lasted, all up, for about 8 hours. That might seem a huge investment of resources – human, time and of course money – but it was aiming for incalculable results. And it left the 7,000 young people who thronged the huge courtyard at Atocha with a heartfelt conviction, a sense of family and unity, and something to remember forever: that it is wonderful to be involved as young Catholics working for the salvation of other young people, and that the journey, if you are in the company of a group of friends as vast as the world is vast, is both joyful and exciting.

The goal was achieved. During the afternoon Festival the youth witnessed the beauty of

