

The Power of WYD 1997 – April 6, 2005
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As the Coordinator of Youth and Young Adult Ministry at St. Hugo of the Hills Parish during the Pope's visit to Paris, France, I witnessed many new revelations of faith among the fourteen young participants. I thought this story was worth sharing:

The constituency from St. Hugo's included youth all along the spectrum of faith and practice of faith. One young man was brought up in a very faith-filled traditional home and one other on the other end of the continuum seldom attended Mass and was from a very distressed home situation. After witnessing up close the motorcade slowly pass and being only about 100 feet from the pope, the two boys responded this way:

The more traditional young man said, "Wow, I realized the pope is human! He's a small man and he's just a man - I hadn't realized I had elevated him to superhuman. I feel more respect for him now that I realize he is just like us, but exceptionally faithful and responsible for so much!"

The young man who didn't attend Church much said, "I was awestruck. What an amazing presence to be in the midst of. It really hit me hard that faith is a serious thing and that his role is very significant in our world and in faith."

It seems Pope John Paul's presence became for each what they needed to glean and learn to enrich and strengthen their faith.

His acknowledgement of the youth of the Church will surely have positive effects for years to come!