

FDZ 50TH ANNIVERSARY IN AUSTRALIA

28 February 2009: Daughters of Divine Zeal Convent, Richmond, Victoria, Australia

A reflection from Sr Tina Lubong, fdz



Every golden celebration is one of the significant events that marks one's life journey. Its preparation and its celebration makes a difference in the ordinariness of work. It involves creativity to make the event as best as possible. Some of the many things that the Richmond community did were: to produce a commemorative calendar and a brief history of our congregation published in brochure form. Pens, fans, calculators and some other things were made with the engraved words "fdz celebrating 50 years in Australia" given as a remembrance of this great jubilee event. A day of celebration was given to all the ex-alumnae of our orphanage including their own families. They shared their stories and experiences of their past years with us and a table of agape was served.

Being one of the 33 Sisters assigned within the 50 years as missionaries in this country, I feel blessed to be part of our mission in one way or the other, especially in the kindergarten and student hostel. This great celebration of our presence reflects to me the ever-loving presence of God to our congregation, the Church and the people of Australia in particular. Witnessing God's love to others makes the difference – it gives life and there is joy even in a simple smile.

The Eucharistic Celebration was indeed a great rejoicing and thanksgiving to God for His love and goodness. Bishop Christopher Prowse, the main celebrant, shared in his homily the meaning of zeal as he said: "but for the Sisters, it is DIVINE Zeal – it is an expression of divine love – it is a flame of love – that energetically burns up all falsity and pride and leaves only pure missionary holiness in a place." Many of the priests who concelebrated came from Melbourne, Shepparton, Sydney, and Italy including Fr Giorgio Nalin, the Father General of the Rogationists, Fr Fortunato Ceciliano and Fr Gabriel Flores. The residents of the Madre Nazarena Student's House played a great part in the celebrations – some as usherettes, offerers and members of the choir. They felt wonderful to be a part of the family and part of the celebrations. Michael Lapina was the soloist and conductor of the choir and Nancy Calo was the organist. A thanksgiving word was given by Sr Isabella Carlone on behalf of the Mother General, and a word of appreciation was offered by Fr Giorgio Nalin in Italian and translated into English by Fr Gabriel.

A significant program followed after Mass in the parish hall, hosted by Nelson and Phil with a slideshow, on an overhead projector, prepared by Helda. It showed some of the Sisters' photos and apostolates over the last 50 years, with instrumental music, witnessing and dances at intervals of the slideshow. A gorgeous dinner was served to all.

Thanks to all the Sisters, especially Sr Licia Capizzi, and all friends who made the event possible and also cheers to 'All' for their support and presence during the jubilee celebrations.

We now move forward towards our centennial year!