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WYD Workcamps to outback Australia

Before World Youth Day in Sydney, two voluntary “workcamps” were conducted by centres of Opus Dei in Sydney. Both workcamps involved the completion of a small relief project and provided volunteers with the chance to prepare spiritually for World Youth Day 2008.

15/12/2008

During Easter Week, Warrane College (www.warrane.unsw.edu.au)

conducted a workcamp to Santa Teresa, an aboriginal community 80km south-east of Alice Springs.

The project involved the refurbishment of the community's swimming pool toilet block, which needed a good clean-out and brand new coats of paint inside and out. This building, like many others in the community, was in dire need of attention due to the harsh weather conditions, which includes intense dust storms.

During the visit, the participants were set back on a day's work due to one of these amazing storms.

Volunteers also joined members of the community in the Holy Week ceremonies. Workcamp director, Alex Perrottet, commented: "Coming to this remote part of Australia helped all of us to get back to basics. We worked hard, had time to pray and learned a lot from the people of

Santa Teresa. It was an ideal opportunity to prepare for World Youth Day”.

In April, a group of volunteers from **Nairana Study Centre** traveled to Broome in Western Australia.

They assisted the Diocese of Broome in the renovation of Loreto House, a Centacare project that provides employment assistance and support services to indigenous Australians.

The work project involved painting the outside of the building in temperatures of 35-40 degrees.

The group then traveled throughout the Kimberly region, visiting Catholic mission stations in Beagle Bay and Lombadina. They had the opportunity to meet with the Bishop of Broome, Most Rev. Christopher Saunders on Anzac Day, a national holiday that recognizes the

contribution of men and women in Australia's defence forces.

Both workcamps provided a learning experience for all volunteers – about the challenges facing indigenous Australians, life in remote Australia and about the universality of their faith.

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