

than a half hour each way just to get a meal during much of their time in Toronto. They often sent scouting parties of three ahead to see what was available. Many of the meals were provided by Catholic families who had agreed to host some of the pilgrims.

On Saturday morning the pilgrims attended Mass at various Toronto churches, then began a walking pilgrimage to Toronto's Downsview Lands Airport with their camping equipment where the Pope would celebrate Sunday Mass. There was no way to get that many people in place Sunday morning, so all the pilgrims arrived at their designated locations Saturday afternoon. At 7:30 p.m. the pilgrims enjoyed a vigil with the Pope, with prayer, music, and personal testimonies. The Pope also gave a talk for the pilgrims. Then he left, and the pilgrims stayed overnight sleeping under the stars, awakened at 6 a.m. by a torrential downpour.

Sunday Mass began in wind and rain at 9:30 a.m., mostly in English but with some Latin, French and Greek, attended by 800,000 young people from 170 countries, an astonishing crowd for a city so expensive and with such limited road and airport capacity. The St. Michael's pilgrims got a good placement only about a half-mile from the Holy Father. Mass attendees extended farther back than the eye could see; only a television camera in a helicopter showed its full length. Distribution of Holy Communion to such a crowd reminds us of the miracle of the

loaves and fishes. The Mass ended in bright sunshine, reminding us of the miracle of Fátima and God's promise of everlasting life.

The St. Michael's pilgrims all wore red shirts for the Sunday Mass so the folks back home would be able to see them on television as the camera panned the crowd. For Catholics watching videotapes of the Sunday Mass, the St. Michael's pilgrims were in the center of the yellow section, slightly to the left of the main stage, right behind the purple section which was closest to the Holy Father.

After Sunday Mass the exhilarated and tired young pilgrims packed up their things, climbed into their rented, air-conditioned van, and headed for Niagara Falls to sightsee before starting the long trek home. The plan was to make it home in two days, in order to arrive in Cherokee Village on Wednesday in the early afternoon. The band pressed on into the night, finally collapsing at a motel just outside of Indianapolis. It was thought they could make it home the following day. However, the bus failed again 200 miles into the last leg of the journey. After camping for yet another night and overnighing carburetor parts, it was determined that this time the damage was permanent. A call was made to a benevolent member of the parish who had generously offered to come get the pilgrims in just such an event. The good parishioner arrived at the campground near Carbondale, Ill.,

around 6 pm to load all the luggage and passengers who were more than ready to go. They arrived in good order at 12:15 a.m. Thursday, greeted by many anxious and joyful parents.