

SAM'S UNITY BLOG

SUNDAY, APRIL 6, 2008

Saints, Sinners & Stuff-ups

From the city that invented spaghetti bolognese, Bologna, greetings! This week didn't look particularly difficult on paper but I was certainly stretched a few times none-the-less. It was around 190km from Vienna to Bologna, but I'd only traveled 10km when, while talking to a parish priest, I realised that the top pocket on my backpack was wide open & my wallet had gone. I was a little, say we say, frenzied, & the poor priest, who didn't speak a word of english had no idea what the problem was but wanted to help somehow. Eventually I managed to stop stripping everything out of my bag to explain what had happened & he offered a simple gesture of, "Is it in your pockets?" I said no, & brushed my hand past my pocket... "Oh yes, it is!" It's so stressful being this dumb sometimes. So, oh I went praying my way to the city of Padua, a place had been organised for me to stay at in Padua (thanks Tony!) with a young couple in an ecumenical community. Enrique & Adele had very generously opened their home up without a moment's notice. I hadn't quite reached Padua by nightfall so they drove out & picked me up. The next day was a peaceful rest day & we spoke a great deal about many issues & opportunities within the movement towards Christian unity. After the rest day, Enrique dropped me back where he'd picked me up from & I completed the rest of the walk into Padua with the intention of then continuing with that days walk to a town 35km further on. While passing through the city centre I stopped in at St Anthony's Basilica but wasn't particularly hopeful of meeting anyone there. Five million people pass through it's doors each year so I figured it would be like all large places & I wouldn't get anywhere. The basilica has Vatican Guards throughout & I managed to get talking with one who spoke english. Thankfully, he was very interested in what I was doing & so reached out & stopped the St Anthony's Basilica Franciscan Friars Provincial who just happened to be walking past. He was like all Franciscans I've ever met, humble & generous, & quickly invited me to join him for lunch & explain more of what I was doing. Out through the back of the basilica we went, through guarded doors, a courtyard & a few more sets of private doors until we arrived in a mess-hall filled with 60 very loud and jovial Franciscans! I've never seen so

OPERA HOUSE FROM THE BRIDGE



MATT MAHER @ UNITY CONCERT



BARANGAROO FILLS UP!



MATT MAHER, SAM & KEMI



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VENICIAN SEAWEED



ABELE & ENRIQUE



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