

Catholic Youth Today

CAPUCHIN YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRIES

SUMMER 2008



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

The Rapture: Separation of church and state. This humorous description of the return of Jesus came across my desk as I was thinking about Pope Benedict XVI, CYFM, and this column. When Jesus comes at the end, we will clearly see how different is his vision for us and our culture's vision for us.

Did you listen to what our Pope said to you when he came to speak in April at the Youth Rally? I saw a lot of the CYFM community there. Remember as he spoke of his own years as a teenager? He grew up in a time before everyone realized just how evil nazism was: "My own years as a teenager were marred by a sinister regime that thought it had all the answers; its influence grew – infiltrating schools and civic bodies, as well as politics and even religion – before it was fully recognized for the monster it was."

He spoke to us of this experience from his youth because he sees it happening again. Unless we stay focused on Jesus and His plan for us, we run the risk of being seduced into believing that much of what we are told by our society and culture is not only acceptable, but part of a

good Christian life of discipleship. First, note that he did not say our society and culture are all bad. "Let us thank God for all those who strive to ensure that you can grow up in an environment that nurtures what is beautiful, good, and true..."

Pope Benedict reminded us that God's plan is different than our society's plan. God's ways are not our culture's ways.

The Gospel calls us to live differently than what the media and society tell us. St. Paul's words to the Romans, are applicable to us today: "Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect." Romans 12:2

Recently, I sat with some young members of the CYFM community. We were having a frank conversation about alcohol in the lives of teenagers. Most agreed that their friends in school see it as no big thing. Those in the circle knew and voiced their belief that underage drinking is not part of the fullness of life to which God is calling us. One person said explicitly that she comes to CYFM to be among people who see things as God does and to find support for the life giving choices she makes daily.



CATHOLIC YOUTH TODAY

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CAPUCHIN YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRIES

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She counts on her CYFM community to be living according to God's plan, and not the world's.

Pope Benedict began his talk by holding up celebrities that we would do well to imitate. I noticed there weren't any that were the usual professional athletes, rock stars, and business tycoons that are on the list of society's admired. Rather the names were: Elizabeth Ann Seton, Frances Xavier Cabrini, Kateri Tekakwitha, Pierre Toussaint. I am grateful for Pope Benedict's reminder that our lives should be different; that we should feel a bit uncomfortable and out of step with what we see in the media and in many parts of our society.

I mention the use of alcohol, but Pope Benedict went on to talk about others: "...homelessness, poverty, racism, violence, and degradation—especially of girls and women." God says, 'I created all people in my image.' The world says, 'people are objects, a means to an end.' The pope also spoke of God's truth and the world's truth being different. Another glaring difference of which he spoke was the nature of freedom. He was not giving us an

exhaustive list, but reminding us that as Christians, we are called to be different.

So that is Pope Benedict and the rapture description. What of Capuchin Youth & Family Ministries? As my young friend told us in the conversation described above, others are relying on us to be a community of support, living the life giving way Jesus shows us in the Gospel. And then strengthened by our community, we live lives that quietly, but powerfully proclaim to everyone we meet, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, say the Lord." Isaiah 55:8

Pope Benedict proclaimed, "Christ Our Hope". His words to us were full of hope. They were also full of challenge. Each of us knows that we are 'people in whom and through whom Christ lives'. If Christ is our hope then we must both proclaim and be the hope we proclaim.

(You can find and read Pope Benedict XVI address at www.uspapaalvisit.org)

~ Tom Brinkmann

CAP CORPS PERSPECTIVE

For months people have been saying to us, "So your year is winding down, huh?" The truth is the year doesn't really wind down. First we heard, "The fall is a lot busier than the spring," then "We just have to get through January, then it will slow down." Later we heard "Once we get to Easter..." Then we realized that COP and CAM were just around the corner.

Nothing has slowed down, the year has flown by and it's hard to believe the end is here.

Looking back on my year many things come to mind, a hundred memories of laughter, smiling faces, and sunny days; but there is one that defines my year. I was sitting in our beloved chapel. It was morning. The sun was streaming in through the beautiful stained glass windows. I was facing the back wall and shifting my stare between the tabernacle and the stained glass window depicting the crucifixion, as I listened to the words of the gospel, "Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love." The words echoed in my head. God is love. Little did I know how this short verse would come to play such a large part in my time here.

I have seen a lot of things this year. I have seen what happens when you put four strangers in a house together. I have seen what happens when you forget to mention the no cell phone policy on an 8th grade confirmation retreat. I have seen what happens when you put a bunch of youth

groups together and have them compete in the first ever God's TYM Olympics, but more than any of these things I have seen love. I have seen love all over the place, in letters I have received, in goofy pictures, in laughter, in the sharing of gifts and talents, in the plethora of notes people have left in my cubicle, in donated time, in countless shared meals, in billions of hugs, and in all the work that goes into making CYFM the home so many have found here.

I got to learn even more about love when I was lucky enough to be on team for DDA 205 in February with Sister Lany Jo Smith. I don't know if you've ever heard Sister Lany Jo speak, but she says some amazing things. One thing that she said was, "Love will never ever let you be the same." Turns out, Sister

Lany Jo knows a lot about love and she is right.

God is love. I have seen and felt love at CYFM. Love will never ever let me be the same, and CYFM will never ever let me be the same. As my year comes to an end, I am unbelievably sad about leaving, but at the same time, I am so extremely grateful for being here, getting to know so many amazing people, experiencing the extravagant love of God, and knowing that because of the love I have experienced here I will never be the same.

~ Emma O'Donnell



RADICAL MOVEMENT

A few weeks ago, Matt (one of our Cap Corps Volunteers) used Nickelback's "If Everyone Cared" video during one of our Junior Class high school retreats. This video highlights four ordinary people and their four ordinary beginnings. The song and video go on to tell the stories of Nelson Mandela, Bob Geldof, Betty Williams, and Peter Benenson. Each of them stood up for what they believed and gathered people together for what grew into worldwide movements: a freed South Africa, Live Aid, Community of Peace People, and Amnesty International.

A similar thing happened with St. Francis. From a simple, unnoticed beginning in the small medieval town of Assisi, Francis discovered the Gospel and desired to live it with his whole heart. His conversion led him into a deep, loving relationship with Christ. Francis rearranged his whole life around this experience of God's infinite and eternal love. His life was transformed. There was something new and different in how Francis went around in the world, yet something ancient and familiar.



The people of Assisi and neighboring towns became exceedingly curious in his new and radical way of life in Christ. They sensed a return to the ideals of the early disciples and an enlivened Church community. People were hungry for this kind of rich spiritual awakening. Very quickly people wanted to join him. Although Francis never intended to organize others, let alone be a founder of an Order, Francis quickly realized that something bigger than himself was happening. God was at work renewing the Church and the world.

Margaret Mead is often quoted, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." St. Francis started a revolutionary turn towards Christ. St. Francis' life in Christ inspired others to follow the same radical turn and the worldwide movement continues to today after nearly 800 years. No matter where we are in life, Christ invites us into a deeper, richer, fuller life in him. So what are you waiting for?!

~ Br. Lake

ASK THE PADRE

Did you ever wonder why we as Catholics are required to go to a priest for confession? Why we can't we go directly to God?

First, let's be clear that only God can forgive sins. But Jesus, the God-Man, entrusted His apostles with the "ministry of reconciliation" as we read in 2 Cor 5:18, "And all this is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and given us the ministry of reconciliation." To accomplish this ministry God gave them the power to forgive sins. In John 20:21-23, Jesus told the apostles that any person's sins they forgive are forgiven, and whoever's sins they retain are retained.

Second, when I am in the quiet of my room and ask God's forgiveness for my sins I don't hear a voice saying: "Your sins are forgiven you!" If I did I'd probably never sin again. But in the Sacrament of Reconciliation we do hear a voice, the voice of a priest who has been given the power to forgive by God. Hearing that voice is a good thing for us as human beings. A number of years ago a survey taken of Catholics discovered that



an equal percentage of Catholics who stopped going to confession started to go to psychiatrists and psychologists. What that says is that as human beings we need to get what is troubling us off our chests by sharing it with another and to hear the other say your sins are forgiven. It is good for our well-being as humans. Of course, in the Sacrament of Reconciliation the voice we hear is the voice of a priest who has been designated for this ministry by Jesus, Himself the God-Man. And because we are celebrating a Sacrament Jesus is present. It is really God forgiving our sins through the voice of the priest. So the answer as to why go to a priest for forgiveness is that it is good for us both spiritually and mentally, body and soul, and it is Jesus who gave us this Sacrament, Jesus, who knows us and what is good for us better than we know ourselves.

In Christ's love and forgiveness,

~ Friar Fred

WOMEN'S RETREAT

Be still... Calm your mind... Just be... That is how I felt on the April Women of the Water weekend.

What a gift to be able to just be. How many times have you said to yourself, "I wish that I had the time to just be?" Well, let me say that I said that to myself a million times. I KNEW that I had to be on this weekend to save my own peace of mind... and save myself I did.

These Women of the Water... what a blessing! They created space.

They created time. They created a place to just be... be with my God. They taught me how to be the Mary. How to love the Martha... and honor her... but to be the Mary. So many



of the other women on the weekend shared stories of their busy lives, of their trials and daily battles. In this sharing came the realization that we are not alone. God is always there if we take the time to be still... and listen... like Mary.

I thank God for CYFM and the many things that are offered there. I thank God for the gift and the grace to know these

Women of the Water. Be still... just be.

~ JoAnn Caruso

DDA LEADERSHIP

DDA Leadership was a very rewarding experience. I came away from this weekend with so much more than I could have imagined. The weekend taught me not only the skills to be a better leader, but a stronger and more faithful follower of Christ. Through all the wonderful leaders on this retreat, I drew inspiration of what it is like to truly set a good example for others.

On Leadership, I was also able to create bonds with people who helped me realize why I



wanted to be a leader on a future DDA or for other CYFM events. There were many activities which helped me grow in faith. This has been an experience that has had a great impact on the way I view myself as well as others. I intend to use what I've learned to become a role model and a faith-filled leader.

~ Catherine Lupi



WHERE ARE THEY NOW

**Interview with former Lay Assistant,
Theresa Donnelly**



Where are you in the world?

Marrero, Louisiana

What are you doing there?

Anything Franciscan?

I am teaching religion at Academy of Our Lady, an all girl's Salesian high school. The Franciscans will always be in my heart though....

Looking back on your experience as a Lay Assistant, how has a year of service helped you in your career or ministry?

Before I was a lay assistant, I would never have seen myself as a high school teacher. Working with high school kids at CYFM led me to a job that I enjoy very much and have fun doing.

Do you miss anything about CYFM?

I miss many things about CYFM!!! I miss helping in the kitchen, being on team for DDA, seeing my CYFM family on a regular basis! Mass in the gym and the chapel. I also miss meeting the newcomers to CYFM and being a part of the current CYFM community.

What is your fondest memory of your LA year?

Having Tania to go through it all with me. There were many great things about our year and many difficult things that only she and I can fully appreciate.

What is the biggest secret that can now be told about your year at CYFM?

I will never tell.

Have you done anything exciting since you left CYFM?

I moved across the country- that's been pretty exciting.

Are you planning on taking any vows in the near future to any one person or community?

Care to give us the scoop?

God hasn't filled me in on that one yet....

Do you have any fun fact about post-CYFM life?

No matter how far you go from CYFM, your CYFM community is still praying for you and loving you.



Do you have any message for the community?

I miss you! I pray for you all the time! Thank you for being a part of my life!

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GoodSearch

My Experience on DDA #206

Where is the one place you can find Chuck Norris jokes, Arnold Schwarzenegger impressions, Boogie Wonderland, the manliest candles you will ever smell, dodge ball, “deep” conversations, Fr. Fred (the coolest Capuchin ever), music, and God in the middle of it all? Well, the answer can only be one place: CYFM - more specifically the DDA I was lucky enough to be a part of, DDA #206. Seriously, this was possibly the most fun I have ever had in my life. I mean, sure, I got hit in the head about seven or eight times with a rubber ball, but aside from that, it was awesome!

On a more serious note, though, this was not only a fun weekend, but it was also the most enlightening and spiritual weekend of my life. I met some really cool guys that were candidates, like me.



I am positive we had the best team and adult coordinators of all time on this weekend. There was a real sense of community that made any nervousness I had beforehand disappear. During the weekend, I could feel my relationship with God strengthening, and afterwards, I felt ready to go and live out my life as a Christian. I would recommend going on a DDA to anybody, because it is honestly an amazing, powerful, and incredible experience.

~ Justyn Trella



DDA #207

When Tom Brinkmann came to visit my church’s youth group (St. Aedan/St. Brendan) and spoke to us about CYFM and its many retreats, such as DDA, I was a little skeptical. Don’t get me wrong; I like retreats for the most part and since I go to an all-girls high school, I was fine with the “no boys” part. I was, however, a little wary about spending four days and three nights in the middle of nowhere with people I don’t know.

My brother had gone to DDA 206 in February and he kept pushing me to go to DDA 207 in April. I decided to take a leap and signed up to go. I was cautious about the whole experience, but I knew that even if I didn’t learn as much as my brother did on his DDA weekend, I would have at least gotten four days and three nights away from my family. I expected the weekend to be a little awkward, but what I did not expect was that I would be welcomed, changed, and loved every second of those short four days and three nights.



The theme was Feel the Love and I felt the love the moment I walked up the steps of CYFM and was besieged by smiling team leaders. Love was in every face, behind every door, and tucked into every corner of CYFM. I didn’t know what to do with myself in the midst of such love and faith, and the crazy singing and dancing of the fabulous team members did not help to soothe my uneasiness. So I did the only thing I could do in such a situation: I joined them.

When there was clapping, I clapped; when there was dancing, I danced; when there was laughter, I laughed. I learned more about faith and love from those crazy team members than I ever did at school. They showed me that I should never be ashamed of my faith and instead I should proclaim it, live it, and share it. I now find myself opening the Bible just to read it, praying because I want to, and singing those fabulous songs (“Every Move I Make,” anyone?).

Going on DDA 207 was one of the best decisions I ever made and I found a family immersed in faith and love. The girls I met at DDA will never be forgotten and the lessons I learned will always be lived out.

~ Nia Mote



DDA REUNION

The friends, the laughter, the love, and of course the inside jokes. All of this came back to me in an instant as soon as I walked into that familiar chapel. It was like a blast from the past each time an old friend opened the door to join the DDA reunion. The brothers that I had left behind that Sunday long ago and sisters that I was meeting for the first time came together like one big happy family.

It started off with Mass. Our brothers and sisters from leadership were already there awaiting us. After Mass the singing began! Once that started it was as if no time at all had passed since our awesome DDAs. After singing loudly BE BOLD, DAY by DAY and PRINCE of PEACE the brothers and sisters of DDAs from throughout the year met in the dining room to do what we CYFMers do best, and by that I mean eat, sing, hug, and take pictures together. This reunion helped re-spark the light of Christ



within me and I was very sad when it came time to leave. I wish only the best for my brothers and sisters in their fourth day. Good luck and God bless.

~ Dennis Mazzuca

PAPAL YOUTH RALLY

A typical Saturday for most teens usually consists of sleeping in, often not arising until the early afternoon to start the day. Normally, most of us teens would be unhappy to sacrifice this much needed sleep on a Saturday morning. However, the day of April 19th was different. On that day, thousands of young Catholics from across the country were to get up early and travel all the way to St. Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers, New York for a once in a lifetime experience, a chance to see The Holy Father.

To join the thousands, a group of about 15 teens from CYFM joined the parish of Our Lady of Loretto in Cold Spring, New York. As we boarded the two buses headed for the grounds, you could feel the excitement building among us as we knew we were in for a great day. Everyone was talking about the artists who would be performing, people who they knew were attending, and what it just may feel like to see the pope in person. As we arrived and walked onto the field where the rally was being held, you could see the thousands of young Catholics as well as a vast number of priests and nuns all packed in to witness the historic event. It was amazing to see so many people so excited to express their faith. To start the day, several well known artists such as Third Day, Matt Maher, TobyMac, and Kelly Clarkson all performed, giving a great amount of life to the crowd. Each artist noted how honored they were to be playing at a rally for the pope and how great it felt to be performing for such an excited and faithful crowd. These acts set the stage for the real star of the event, Pope Benedict XVI.



As the pope arrived in his Popemobile, the crowd became electric with enthusiasm. Cheering and screaming for the pope could be heard from all across the field. As Benedict moved to the stage, the cheer "Christ our hope, Benedict our pope!" was being chanted by the thousands who were in attendance. As the ceremony began, the pope was presented with gifts from parishes across the community as several young people were able to greet the pope face to face. Next, Benedict XVI talked to the crowd, encouraging all of us to stay active in the Church and work towards living more faithful lives in this changing world. He also encouraged many to consider joining the priesthood or other religious life and offered his blessing to those who had already decided to pursue a vocation to the religious life. Last, he offered a blessing over the youth as he left to an even more excited crowd than the one which greeted him.

Inspired and exhausted, we all left St. Joseph's with a new passion for our faith. Simply being in the presence of The Holy Father left an incredible feeling and was an incredible experience none of us will ever forget. So incredible, in fact, that despite the early morning and very long day, I heard no complaints.

~ Steve Traditi



SENIOR AWARDS RECOGNITION AND DINNER DANCE

Recipients of the Fr. Gary McAuley Christian Service Award:

Maggie Lucas
Emma Smith
Lindsey Pezzo
Jordan Thoma

The Joan Penny Memorial Scholarship was awarded to
Dennis Mazzuca
for exceptional service to CYFM.

congratulations to the class of 2008!



This year's dinner dance took on a new tradition of recognizing all the seniors who have been a part of our CYFM community. The graduating seniors pictured here are: (front row) Carolyn Moore, Grace Pfisterer, Gillian Kelley, Emma Smith; (back row) David Puswald, Dennis Mazzuca, Drew Martin, D'Andre Fontanelle, Maggie Lucas, and Jordan Thoma.



Jason Sclafani was honored with the Solanus Casey Award for continuing to inspire young people by his devotion to God and through his dedication to the youth and families of CYFM and their parishes.



Kathleen Alonzo was honored with the Bonaventura Award for her dedication as a leader in Religious Education and Spiritual Development of youth in the Archdiocese of New York.



Denis O'Sullivan was honored with the Franciscan Award for sharing his loving generosity and compassionate service with the youth and families of CYFM.

FAMILY FESTIVA AND GOD'S TYM OLYMPICS!

As a new innovation to a long standing tradition, the annual Family Festiva event was followed up by a competition pitting the different parishes of CYFM and their youth groups against each other in a mentally and physically challenging extravaganza!

To start off the day, Fr. Fred was main celebrant for a beautiful mass in the outdoor chapel, followed by the tradition of the seniors planting a tree to symbolize their continued growth as they move on in life. Then Family Festiva commenced as the grills were fired up and booths were assembled for the little kids.



As old friends were reunited and new friendships were made, a plethora of matching shirts appeared and cheers were sung as the second half of the day, the first annual God's TYM Olympics commenced and the Golden Tau was displayed for the first time.



After a series of events, testing both power and finesse, religious and scholarly knowledge, the panel of judges, both religious and lay, had pooled their points together, and they announced the winner.

In the runner-up position was the God's TYM from St. Joseph's in New Paltz. The recipients of the first Golden Tau, to be taken back to display at their home parish with bragging rights for the year was...SCI! The team, compiled of mostly girls (and Dennis McCormack) that weren't affiliated with any one parish, used their creativity and fortitude and were able to come out on top. All in

all, in traditional CYFM fashion, everyone there was

brought together with good food, God, and fun, and I look forward to being able to participate in the God's

TYM Olympics next year.



~ Chris Weber



Be In "Constant Contact" with Us

If you would like to receive E-mail announcements and reminders about upcoming events here at the center, go to our website (www.cyfm.org); scroll to the bottom of our homepage; type your e-mail address in the box indicated and click on "Go".

That's all you have to do to be in constant contact with CYFM!!!!!!



Reception into the Catholic Church

Capuchin friars, Frederick Nickle and Lake Herman joined along with other members of the CYFM community, on Holy Saturday, 22 March 2008 at St. Paul's Church in West Haven, CT., to celebrate the reception into the Catholic Church four members of CYFM: Cassie Gee, D'Andre Fontenelle, Tania Gee, and Carlos Soto.



Nurturing Faith • Taking Action • Serving God

From L to R in the second row are catechumens: Cassie Gee (Saints for Youth 08), D'Andre Fontenelle (DDA 201, Team 206, Appalachia 2007, Saints for Youth 2008), Tania Gee (DDA 200 & Team 207, COP 2007, Saints for Youth 07 & 08), [skip Jamie Lucas], Carlos Soto (younger brother of Pedro Soto - received into the Church last year (DDA 199, Team 204, 206, COP 2006 & 2007, Saints for Youth 2007).

CAP CORP Send-Off
Thursday, July 24th
7:00 pm in the CYFM gym

Come say farewell to this year's Cap Corps Volunteers,
 Emma, Matt, and Jenn...

And bring them dessert!



THANK YOU DONORS FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

CYFM is blessed by the many individuals and families who generously supported our recent fundraising endeavors.

General Donations (\$1756.00)

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Thomas Greaven	Mr. & Mrs. John Zurell

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Please remember us in your will:

“Capuchin Youth & Family Ministries,” a ministry of the Capuchin Franciscans of the Province of St. Mary of the Capuchin Order, a not-for-profit religious institution having its principal office at St. Conrad Friary, 30 Gedney Park Drive, White Plains, New York 10605.

For more information, please call our development office at 845-424-3609.

CYFM UPCOMING EVENTS

- June 26–July 3**Capuchin Outreach Program (COP)
- July 12-20**Capuchin Appalachia Mission (CAM)
- July 24**Cap Corps Volunteers Send Off
- Aug 17**Cap Corps Volunteers Arrive (Welcome)
- Aug 22-24**Growing In Faith Together (G.I.F.T.)
- Aug 29-31**CYFM Renew and Refresh (R & R)
- Aug 31**Cap Corps Volunteers Commissioning
- Sept 4**Women's Faith Sharing (7:00-9:00pm)
- Sept 13**God's TYM Training
 (Using Story Telling to Share Biblical Stories)

- Oct 2**Women's Faith Sharing (7:00-9:00pm)
- Oct 9-12**Girls' DDA Weekend – 208
- Oct 24-25**7th & 8th Grade Overnight
 (Bring It On – The Lowdown on Prayer)
- Oct 30-31**CYFM High School Retreat
- Nov 6**Women's Faith Sharing (7:00-9:00pm)
- Nov 13-16**Boys' DDA Weekend – 209
- Dec 4**Women's Faith Sharing (7:00-9:00pm)
- Dec 11**Advent Evening of Reflection
- Dec 19**Volunteer Christmas Party

PLEASE NOTE that these dates and activities are subject to change.

ALWAYS DOUBLE CHECK before you plan! www.CYFM.org

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

DEATHS

Feb. 22, 2008 – Sigmund Mackowska,
father of JoAnn Caruso

BIRTHS

Feb. 4, 2008 – A son, Beckett Toolan,
born to Greg & Gannon Toolan
(grandparents Michael Toolan and the
late Regina Toolan)

April 17, 2008 - A daughter,
Emma McCabe Andriello, born to
Thomas (LA 99-00) & Maggie Andriello
(grandparents Ron & Rita Andriello)

MARRIAGE

April 12, 2008 – Matthew Fergarsky &
Michelle Ley. Matt was very active
at CYFM during high school
(DDA, Leadership & Appalachia)

June 28, 2008 - Fran Bauer (DDA team
143, 200, 203) and Jason Poniatowski

ENGAGEMENT

Becky Prial (DDA 174) and Joe Fullam
(DDA 176)

Kerry Durkin (LA 03-04) and Jason
Sclafani (LA 03-04)

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