

STACEY TO LEAD PILGRIMAGE

Stacey Atkins from Warrnambool has been appointed as the Pilgrimage Leader of one of the four Victorian World Youth Day pilgrimages in 2016. Stacey will be leading the *John Paul II Trail* pilgrimage, which starts in Rome and travels via Assisi then to Poland to visit key places associated with St Pope John Paul II and Poland's rich and challenging history. The pilgrims then join up with the other three Victorian pilgrimages for the week of WYD events in Krakow culminating in an outdoor Mass with Pope Francis and 4-5 million pilgrims from round the world.



Stacey has just completed her Masters in Educational Leadership and she is a teacher at St John's Primary School, Dennington and previously at St Colman Primary School, Mortlake. She will be performing the WYD role in a voluntary capacity. Stacey is well-known to many from previous World Youth Days and from her work in Diocesan Youth Ministry. Stacey said she is thrilled to be part of the leadership team to WYD Krakow 2016. "It is a privilege to be given this unique opportunity to lead some of the young pilgrims from Victoria. Not only is the 'JP II Trail' a chance to visit some very special religious sites, it is an opportunity to continue to learn about and develop my own faith and to help others to do the same."

In 2013 as part of the Ballarat Diocese contingent to WYD Rio de Janeiro, Catholic Education Ballarat supported a group of teachers to be pilgrims to South America. Stacey was part of this group and says that it was an unforgettable experience that helped her to connect in a meaningful way with the universal Church through the mission experience in Chile as well as make life long friendships with other young teachers.



CEO Ballarat is again sponsoring a group of early-career teachers to go to WYD, in 2016 to Poland. They will participate in the Poland diocesan immersion pilgrimage: *Poland Encounter*. Applications for places are due by the end of this term and information has been sent to all schools. The Victorian WYD 2016 Pilgrimage comprises all the Victorian dioceses travelling together and around 300 pilgrims are expected to participate. The Ballarat Diocese congratulates Stacey on her appointment as one of the Pilgrimage leaders. Go well Stacey!

More WYD information is on the Diocesan Youth and Young Adult webpage www.ballarat.catholic.org.au (link on front page) or email youth@ballarat.catholic.org.au