

FOCUS ON YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

Nothing is more beautiful than seeing the enthusiasm, dedication, zeal and energy with which so many young people live their lives. When Jesus touches a young person's heart, he or she becomes capable of truly great things. Pope Francis said this at the Papal Welcome at Krakow, WYD 2016 and planning has already commenced for World Youth Day 2019 in Panama. Before then the next Australian Catholic Youth Festival will be held in Sydney 7-9 December 2017.

Just recently, in October, Diocesan Youth Ministry people from around Australia (pictured below) came together in Newcastle to share ideas, plans and information including about the upcoming 'big events':



Australian Catholic Youth Festival 2017

In 2017 Sydney is hosting the 3rd Australian Catholic Youth Festival following the successes of the Melbourne 2013 and Adelaide 2015 Festivals. Seventy-eight young people from the Ballarat Diocese attended in 2013 and one hundred and eleven made the journey from all around our Diocese to Adelaide. We hope to have a larger group going to Sydney, where organisers are preparing for 15,000 youth and young adults from Australia-wide. The Festival is for 15-25 year olds (leaders can be older!) and will be held in one dedicated central location just east of the city of Sydney. International and national musicians and speakers will be part of the huge range of different opportunities for young people to experience faith and make new connections and friends. More information will be

circulated as soon as it is available. The youth pages on the Diocesan website are updated weekly and will have the latest information. www.ballarat.catholic.org.au

Year of Youth 2018

At the end of the Youth Festival in Sydney there will be a Mass to launch the Year of Youth in Australia which starts at Advent 2017 and runs through 2018 to the Feast of Christ the King. Dioceses and parishes will be asked to focus on youth and young adults, reaching out to them and nurturing faith. We will have more about this in the early months of 2017.



World Youth Days 2017, 2018 and 2019

There's a World Youth Day every year (since 1986). Every third year it is held as an international gathering of pilgrims in a host country selected by the Pope. So in 2016 it was in Poland, in 2013 it was in Brazil. In the years in between, WYD is celebrated locally each year on (or near) Palm Sunday, in parishes and schools and wherever young people gather. So the next WYD is on 9 April 2017. World Youth Day 2019 will be the international gathering, to be held in February/March in Panama, Central America.

Pope Francis recently announced the themes for the upcoming three WYDs. All draw inspiration from Mary, the first disciple. The themes are chosen to "give a picture of young people on a journey between the past (2017), present (2018), and future (2019), all inspired by the three theological virtues of faith, charity, and hope."

WYD 2017: "The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is His Name" (Lk 1:49)

WYD 2018: "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God" (Lk 1:30)

WYD Panama 2019: "I am the servant of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word" (Lk 1:38)

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