

Excited to be a WYD Pilgrim

I am honoured and beyond excited to be travelling to Lisbon for World Youth Day 2023 as a Ballarat Pilgrim with the Sandhurst Diocese. This being my first World Youth Day as well as my first time travelling overseas. I have had many things to prepare for and think about. Gathering at Shepparton and Bendigo with the Sandhurst Group has been very reassuring, knowing that we will all be in good company as fellow pilgrims.

Spending time researching about Lisbon and Fatima, where we will be spending a few days, as well as learning about the selected patron saints for the pilgrimage, has given me a lot more insight and context for Portugal's extensive history and significant contributions to the Church. As someone who is interested with geography, I am also looking forward to experiencing the different food, culture, architecture and landscapes that Portugal and Spain have to offer, as well as some much-needed warm weather. I am grateful to the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat Foundation for assisting with sponsorship to attend and being an active member of the Linton/Sebastopol Parish feel that this experience will be of great benefit to me both personally and spiritually.

John-Paul Walker

Image: I am pictured with the Sandhurst WYD group, in 2nd row from the front, 5th from the right

