

## FACT SHEET - WORLD YOUTH DAY INFORMATION SHEET

- This is the 16th international World Youth Day (WYD), a significant event in the life of the universal Catholic Church, which is celebrated every 3-4 years in a different host country.
- The theme chosen for WYD 2023 is **“Mary arose and went with haste”** (Lk 1:39)
- The origins of WYD can be traced back to 1984 when a gathering of over 250,000 young people flocked to the streets of Rome in response to the then-Pope, John Paul II’s invitation to young people to celebrate Palm Sunday during a special holy year. The following year, an even greater number turned out to celebrate with the Pope and so in 1986 the first official WYD was held. Since then, World Youth Day has been celebrated in 15 different countries and is now a week-long event of prayer, festivities and celebration for young people to gather together to share their faith in Jesus Christ.
- **World Youth Day Lisbon 2023** is set to be the largest ever event to be organised in Portugal (with a population of close to 10.3 million).
- More than 1 million young people expected to join Pope Francis for World Youth Day in Lisbon from 2-6 August 2023.
- WYD week will consist of a festival of activities including 290 concerts, 55 religious events, 38 conferences, six dance groups, ten plays, ten exhibitions, 15 films and a space for sports. The traditional WYD events include the Opening Mass, catechesis, Stations of the Cross, a Saturday Night Prayer Vigil which includes a sleep out under the stars and culminates with the Final Mass with Pope Francis on Sunday 6 August.
- This World Youth Day aims to be the most sustainable international WYD organised, in response to Pope Francis’ Laudato Si’, which calls for care of our common home. It has already reduced consumption of new plastics in all merchandising, avoiding plastic and even plastic packaging as much as possible.
- In collaboration with Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS), the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne is sending close to 600 pilgrims to World Youth Day, **making it the Archdiocese’s largest pilgrimage ever to an international World Youth Day.**
- There are four (4) different pilgrimage options enroute to Lisbon, Portugal (2x Italy, 1x Holy Land, 1x Direct to Lisbon), with the first group (Holy Land) scheduled to fly out on Wednesday 19 July.
- Pilgrims from Melbourne will be representing 134 parishes, schools and movements from across the Archdiocese.

<https://udisciple.melbournecatholic.org/wyd>

<https://www.lisboa2023.org/en>