

What is World Youth Day?

World Youth Day (WYD) is the gathering of young people from all over the world with the Pope. It is also a pilgrimage, a celebration of youth, an expression of the universal Church and an intense moment of evangelization for young adults. Although its Catholic identity is clearly evident, WYD opens its doors to everyone, no matter how close to or distant from the Church they are.

It is celebrated at the diocesan level on The Feast of Christ the King at the end of November each year, and every two, three or four years as an international gathering in a city chosen by the Pope, with the presence of the Holy Father. It brings together millions of young people to celebrate their faith and sense of belonging to the Catholic Church.

Since its first edition in Rome in 1984, World Youth Day has proven to be a laboratory of faith, a field of new friendships sown, a place of birth for vocations to marriage and consecrated life, and an instrument for the evangelization and transformation of the Church.

It aims to provide all participants with a universal Church experience, fostering a personal encounter with Jesus Christ. It is a new stimulus to the faith, hope and charity of the entire host country community. With young people as its protagonists, World Youth Day also seeks to promote peace, unity and fraternity among peoples and nations around the world.

What Happens?

Over the course of a week, young people from all over the world are welcomed, mainly in public (gymnasiums, schools, pavilions ...) and parish facilities or family homes. In addition to the moments of prayer, sharing and leisure, the young people enrolled in this celebration participate in various initiatives organized by the WYD team, in different locations across the host city. The highlights are the celebrations (central features) for which the Pope is present, such as the welcoming and opening ceremony, the Way of the Cross, the vigil and, on the last day, the closing Mass.