



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

Catholic Bishops of Australia Extend an Invitation to the Year of Youth 2018

**Media Release
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The Catholic Bishops of Australia invite Catholics across the country to join in celebrating a Year of Youth from the beginning of Advent 2017 to the end of 2018.

The Year of Youth celebrates ten years since World Youth Day was hosted in Sydney during 2008. It will focus on the theme, *'Open New Horizons for Spreading Joy: Young People, Faith and Vocational Discernment'*. The emphasis is on local discussion and dialogue in parishes, schools, youth groups and dioceses.

Delivering the invitation, Archbishop Denis Hart, President of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference said, 'In 2018, we want to engage with youth in new ways and they with us, helping young people to encounter God in Jesus Christ and his Church. Open your hearts to the life God intends for you and so make a real difference in the world'.

On behalf of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Archbishop Hart said, 'As Bishops we invite you, the youth of Australia, to open your hearts to Christ. You are deeply loved by Jesus and the Church. We appreciate your gifts and contributions, and we want to journey with you.

Young people have a great capacity to address injustice and create new opportunities for joy and hope. Today, many young people want to serve, and others are willing to take a chance to make the world a better place. Leaders and older members of the Church must continue to listen to and benefit from the many graces of youth, supporting them to discern their vocation and identify their call in the world, within communities where they are safe, nurtured and respected,' Archbishop Hart added.

The Year of Youth will be part of a journey of dialogue and discernment as the Church in Australia contributes to the next Synod of Bishops in Rome during 2018 with its focus on 'Young People, Faith and Vocational Discernment' and as preparations commence to host a Plenary Council in Australia during 2020.

Twelve months out from the Year of Youth, Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP, Australian Catholic Bishops Delegate for Youth said, 'To launch the Year of Youth, I invite young people across the country to the Australian Catholic Youth Festival, 7-9 December 2017 in Sydney. The Festival will bring your peers and Church leaders together to celebrate the young Church of Australia.'

Information about the Year of Youth is available on the official website, www.youth.catholic.org.au

**Media Contact:
Aoife Connors
0450 348 597
media@catholic.org.au**