

EMBARGOED UNTIL TIME OF DELIVERY

Notes for HE George Cardinal Pell (15b)

Archbishop of Sydney

Address at Conclusion of Mass

Closing Mass for WYD

Randwick Racecourse

20 July 2008

MOST HOLY FATHER:

In the name of all the pilgrims here present, and those many more united to us by television, radio and internet, I give profound thanks to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit for the graces of World Youth Day. May it bear much spiritual fruit in Australia and in the Church universal.

As Archbishop of Sydney, I have seen for three years the immense efforts that have been required to host this World Youth Day. I thank Cardinal Stanislaw Rylko and the Pontifical Council for the Laity for their wise guidance. I thank my brother Australian bishops for their unflagging support in making this a truly national endeavour. All Australian Catholics are grateful for the generous support of our Commonwealth and State and local governments. A special reward in heaven must be reserved for our local World Youth Day team, led by the cheerful and formidable Bishop Anthony Fisher and Mr. Danny Casey – my heartfelt thanks to them all.

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To all the pilgrims, we are grateful that you came to help us strengthen our faith. We hope in turn that you will carry home fond memories not only of our hospitality, but of our Christian witness. Australia is a vast country and it not easy to travel to Sydney, particularly from overseas. I know that many of you made great sacrifices to share these days with us. You have honoured Australia with your presence and your enthusiasm. We are humbled and grateful. We assure you that your witness here will not be forgotten. You have planted a seed here in Great South Land that will, please God, yield a hundredfold harvest.

Your Holiness, the World Youth Days were the invention of Pope John Paul the Great. The World Youth Day in Cologne was already announced before your election. You decided to continue the World Youth Days and to hold this one in Sydney. We are profoundly grateful for this decision, indicating that the World Youth Days do not belong to one pope, or even one generation, but are now an ordinary part of the life of the Church. The John Paul II generation – young and old alike – is proud to be faithful sons and daughters of Pope Benedict.

Thank you Holy Father!