



Media Release – November 27, 2008

Bishops approve post WYD youth ministry blueprint

The Catholic Bishops of Australia have approved a blueprint, received from the National Youth Leaders' Gathering, for the future coordination of youth ministry across the nation.

In approving the blueprint, the Bishops praised the post-WYD spirit of faith that was evident both at the National Gathering and also in the direction of the initiatives presented to them in the NYLG report.

The blueprint outlines three key areas for national co-ordination, while also leaving room for each diocese, religious order, school, group or movement to implement their own specific initiatives.

The three areas highlighted are: Formation for Young People; Support for Youth Ministry; and National Events.

Under Formation, the young people identified Catechesis as a key area, saying that it should be "vibrant; use multi-media, be age-specific and developmentally appropriate; include Scripture, prayer and liturgy, Church teaching and Tradition, the Sacraments, Social Teaching, and include mentoring and leadership". They also called for a strategic plan for faith formation for schools and universities, a consolidated database of human and material resources, and avenues for empowerment of young people in leadership and ministry.

The key areas identified under Support for Youth Ministry including the formation of a National Training Framework, a national website and national conditions of employment for Youth Ministry Workers. The young people also called for a new conversation on the nature of parishes and schools and their interrelationship. A renewed focus on the support and promotion of Catholic identity also formed part of the blueprint, as well as the development of youth ministry traineeships.

The report from the NYLG suggested a National Day for Youth, incorporating many of the most popular World Youth Day elements. Other suggestions included a National Youth Ministry Conference and a Bi-Annual Youth Leaders' Gathering.

Bishop Joseph Grech said the Bishops' enthusiastic support of the blueprint was a reflection of their commitment to building on the fruits of World Youth Day.

"It is a sign of confidence in the young people of the Church and in the Holy Spirit. In hosting the National Youth Leaders Gathering we said we wanted to hear from our young people, to listen to their experiences of WYD and to learn from them where they discern that the Spirit is leading youth ministry in this country," Bishop Grech said.

"This blueprint will help to guide us as we move forward and we are confident that it will generate abundant blessings on the Church for very many years to come."

A National Youth Projects Co-ordinator will be employed by the ACBC in the near future to co-ordinate many of the recommendations in the blueprint.

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