



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Some 5,000 Canadians enrolled in the 38th World Youth Day in Lisbon**

Montreal, July 12, 2023 - The next international edition of World Youth Day (WYD) will be held in Lisbon from July 26 to July 31. Some 5,000 young people from Canada will take part, with approximately 300 pilgrims from the Archdiocese of Montreal alone. A delegation from Montreal's Mission Jeunesse–Youth Ministry will include representatives from the following dioceses and eparchies: the Archdiocese of Saint-Boniface, the Archdiocese of Rimouski, the Diocese of Nicolet, the Diocese of Joliette, the Diocese of Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pocatière, the Archdiocese of Sherbrooke, the Eparchy for Melkite Greek Catholics, the Diocese of Saint-Hyacinthe, the Diocese of Saint-Jérôme–Mont-Laurier, the Eparchy of Saint Maron Canada, the Archdiocese of Quebec and the Archdiocese of Montreal.

“Participating in a WYD is an opportunity to experience an encounter with Christ together with Pope Francis and other young people from around the world, in a festive and prayerful environment,” said Archbishop Christian Lépine. “WYD is an ideal time to cast aside any sense of feeling alone in one’s faith, and to share one’s journey with other young people from across the continents,” he added.

WYD is a worldwide gathering of young people, accompanied by and celebrated with the Pope. It is held in a spirit of celebration, faith and culture, testifying to the vitality of the Church and of the Good News of Jesus’ message. “It is much more than an event. It is a time of deep spiritual renewal, the fruits of which benefit the whole of society” (Benedict XVI). WYD takes place every three years, the previous international edition having been held in Panama in January 2019.

The initiator and first promoter of WYD was Saint John Paul II, who started this movement as a way of enhancing the personal, life-changing encounter with Christ. Moreover, WYD promotes peace, unity, and fraternity among people and nations, commissioning the youth as ambassadors to embody this message. Lastly, WYD also encourages the development of innovative methods for the evangelization of the youth of today.

From its inception, many participants in WYD have lived the experience as a pilgrimage. The word “pilgrim” is derived from the Latin word “peregrinus,” meaning “traveler.” The term contains the notion of embarking on a journey and thereby leaving behind home, habits, daily life, friends and family, in order to engage in a period of respite and renewal. It is in a spirit of simplicity and fellowship that young people are called to live this experience of WYD - even their lodgings and meals are modest. Patience and solidarity often emerge as important aspects of the experience over the hours, sometimes long, that are spent together.

WYD is a multi-day celebration, with activities centred around two main groups of events. The first of these is “*Days in the Dioceses*,” in which participants will visit different dioceses in the host country and, on this particular occasion, in certain other Central European countries as well. During the days running up to WYD, pilgrims will interact with local families (the families hosting them), strengthening their faith as they take part in activities alongside the communities in these parishes. The second group of events is the “*Main Events*,” and comprises those activities planned to be held in the host city and including an opening Mass, greetings and welcome delivered by the



Pope, the Way of the Cross, the Vigil with the Holy Father and the concluding Mass. In addition, various other optional activities will be offered through which the young people may choose to enhance their WYD experience: a Youth Festival, catechesis sessions, a vocational centre and concerts, among other activities.

The Canadian delegation, whose members' average age is 27, is made up of 81% lay people, comprised of 58% women and 42% men.

For more information, please review the media kit [here](#).

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