



## AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

### **World Youth Day Registration Extended to meet Demand around Australia Media Release 21 April, 2011**

Registration for World Youth Day (WYD) Madrid 2011 has been extended to May 15th to cope with the number of Australian Pilgrims eager to be a part of this global faith phenomenon.

Several thousand Aussie pilgrims, hundreds of priests and 23 Australian Catholic Bishops will join young people from around the world to celebrate WYD in Madrid in August this year.

WYD Madrid 2011 celebrates the universality of the Catholic Church today. Globally, young people will come together for one week to share their faith and be rejuvenated to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ in their homelands.

Philip Ryall, Managing Director of the Official Tour operator Harvest Pilgrimages said he was not surprised by the level of enthusiasm of the those Aussie pilgrims flooding into his office.

“The memories of WYD Sydney in 2008 are well and truly alive in the hearts of young people. For many, the journey must continue on to Madrid where they will join two million others as the week builds up to an epic Vigil sleep out and final Mass with Pope Benedict XVI”, he said.

“We have approached our key airline partners who are willing to allow latecomers another three week window to come on board to avoid missing out altogether. It really is a case of “final call for Madrid!”

While many tours have reached capacity, group organisers have been keen to make way for more young people to join the several thousand Australians that have already come on board.

Archbishop Mark Coleridge of the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn is one of the Bishops who will accompany young people from his Diocese on the “*Shores of Galilee Pilgrimage*”.

“For me, World Youth Day is a real privilege, a chance to see the young Church in action and be part of it. The pilgrimage we will go on is to the Holy Land and the “Shores of Galilee”. We are going right to the source and we will be walking in the footsteps of Jesus. We already have lots of young people registered, and I really encourage young people of the Diocese to consider joining us – you are all so welcome!” he said.

Harvest pilgrimage staff are currently working very hard to finalise the travel arrangements of young people from parishes, schools, communities and movements who are signing up to be a part of the largest ever Australian movement of pilgrims to attend an international WYD.

National WYD Projects officer Bernadette Kreutzer said the event aims to be as inclusive as possible.

“The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference welcomes pilgrims on the WYD journey. With just over four months until two million people converge on the celebration young people should not wait any longer to commit to this life-changing opportunity. WYD Madrid will be an amazing grace and no one will regret their attendance”, she said.

**For further information visit Harvest Pilgrimages website at [www.wydtours.com](http://www.wydtours.com) or contact Bernadette Kreutzer, National WYD Projects Officer on 07 3109 6807 or [wyd@catholic.org.au](mailto:wyd@catholic.org.au)**