

## World Youth Day pilgrimage dedicated to a much loved Bishop.

By Beth Doherty

22-year-old Tim Lougoon has one of the most interesting and challenging youth ministry jobs in Australia. On 10 December last year, he was appointed by Bishop Joe Grech of Sandhurst to lead the diocesan pilgrimage to World Youth Day in Madrid.

Two weeks later, the inspiring and charismatic Bishop Joe died suddenly in a Melbourne hospital of a blood disorder.

However, not to be disheartened, the enthusiastic Tim has committed to leading a large pilgrimage group in Bishop Joe's memory and as he stood up to speak at Bishop Joe's vigil celebration on January 5, 2011, he committed to trying to get 100 pilgrims from the Diocese to go to Madrid.

"Bishop Joe's wish was to have 100 young people from Sandhurst go to WYD this year. It is exceptionally hard to do it, but we really want to try", he said.

"Bishop Joe really wanted everyone to have an experience of the universal Church, and the opportunity to realise that you aren't the only person in the world that believes. He felt that being part of WYD helped young people to see the bigger picture. He wanted young people to experience the love that God has for each one of us", he said.

"I went to World Youth Day in Cologne in 2005, and I have no doubt that this is a large part of the reason I am working in Youth Ministry today", he said.

"I've been involved in youth ministry in the diocese for the last three or four years. I was part of the Journey of the Cross and Icon in Bendigo and then on the Youth reference group for the Diocese. I attended the youth leaders gathering and then the ACYMC at Bishop Joe's request."



Tim Lougoon has just completed an engineering degree and decided to take 12 months off from that work to focus on youth ministry.

"Bishop Joe appointed me on the 10<sup>th</sup> of December which was his birthday. He inspired me, and part of the reason I took the job as the Sandhurst Youth Ministry Worker was from listening to Bishop Joe's vision for young people in the diocese. He really wanted someone who related well to young people. He had such a great rapport with young people himself and was looking for a person who could get to know them on a personal level."

Following Bishop Joe's death, the diocesan preparations have had some challenges, but Tim pays tribute to the enthusiasm and support of the priests in the diocese.

"We are lucky in that many of the priests of the diocese are very supportive of WYD. We are in the process of selecting some chaplains and at least one priest from the diocese will come on the pilgrimage with us."

“Monsignor Frank Marriott, who is the Administrator of the Diocese, actually put a message out to all the pilgrims which is on our diocesan pilgrimage website. It explains that Bishop Joe was a tremendous advocate for WYD. We have decided to honour him by dedicating our pilgrimage to his memory.”

“As part of our pilgrimage, we’re going to Avila and a day trip to Segovia. Bishop Joe always had a deep love for Teresa of Avila and St John of the Cross. He had such a passion for those saints, and that is why we have chosen to go there. We will spend our days in the diocese in the Archdiocese of Toledo. We are also going to a post WYD retreat.”

“At the moment, we are fundraising around our parishes. Some of the things we are doing include chocolate sales, trivia and movie nights, barbeques after masses and supermarkets on the weekends. We also have some people in the diocese with amazing musical talent, so they are putting on concerts.”

Tim really believes that he still has the support of Bishop Joe, who mentored so many young people in the Diocese.

“We are not going to forget the impact that he has had on the young people of our diocese. In Sydney 2008, we had the 4<sup>th</sup> highest number of pilgrims coming from an Aussie diocese after Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane, and we are a small diocese! We put this down to Bishop Joe’s amazing passion”, he said.