



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

Youth leaders fly to Rome to plan Synod 2018 and World Youth Day 2019

Media Release
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Australian Catholic youth leaders will fly to Rome next month to help plan two major events for young people.

Ashleigh Green, a young woman from the Broken Bay Diocese and Malcolm Hart, Director of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Office for Youth, will head to Rome in the first week of April, to participate at an international meeting about World Youth Day (WYD) and the upcoming Synod on young people.

The five-day gathering will focus on the theme, *From Krakow to Panama – The Synod Journeying with Young People*. It will include an evaluation of WYD in Krakow during 2016 and will look ahead to WYD in Panama during 2019. Time will be spent on the pastoral and logistical preparations required. Members of both the Polish and Panamanian organising committees will be present.

Ashleigh Green was part of the Diocese of Broken Bay's WYD pilgrimage to Krakow.

Speaking to the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference ahead of the meeting, Ms Green said, "Since receiving the news of my selection, I have been overwhelmed, excited and proud to be representing not only Australia, but also the Diocese of Broken Bay. I feel incredibly blessed to be part of a strong community of believers and world changers."

Reflecting on WYD Krakow, Malcolm Hart said, "From an Australian perspective, WYD Krakow was a great success. Over 3,000 young people from Australia attended. We are all looking forward to WYD Panama in 2019 and the new experiences it will bring".

"A particular highlight of WYD Panama are the themes chosen by the Holy Father, which highlight the story and role of Mary. She is a wonderful example for young people."

During the meeting, the Bishops Conference representatives will have an opportunity to contribute to the next Synod of Bishops in October 2018. A day will be spent reviewing the theme that Pope Francis has chosen for the Synod; Young people, faith and vocational discernment.

"The Synod is a unique opportunity for young people to have their voices heard across the global Church, particularly given its significance during the Australian Bishops, *Year of Youth* throughout 2018," Mr Hart said.

"Along with young people from all over the world, Ashleigh will make a direct contribution to the preparations for the Synod during October 2018."

On Palm Sunday, 9 April, our Australian participants will join with Pope Francis in Rome to celebrate this year's World Youth Day. In Saint Peter's Square, the WYD Cross and Icon will be handed over from Polish youth to young people from Panama.

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