



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

International Catholic megastar confirmed for Australian Catholic Youth Festival

Media release

17 May 2017

Matt Maher is arguably the biggest Catholic name in global contemporary Christian music and the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference is delighted to announce he will be coming to Sydney for the Australian Catholic Youth Festival from 7-9 December 2017.

The internationally acclaimed Canadian songwriter and worship leader is heading to Australia with his band to join with 15,000 young people at the biggest Festival of its kind to be held in the country. He will perform, lead worship and provide engaging input on each day of the three-day Festival at Sydney Olympic Park including Sydney Showgrounds, Qudos Bank Arena and The Domain.

Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP, Archbishop of Sydney and the Australian Catholic Bishops Delegate for Youth made the announcement today.

'Matt Maher's music is a powerful tool to reach young people and we're so pleased to be welcoming this highly acclaimed artist for the ACYF,' Archbishop Fisher said.

'His strong faith and courageous witness right in the heart of contemporary culture is an encouragement to all young people to use their gifts and youthful energy in service of the Gospel.'

Matt Maher expressed his excitement to be visiting Sydney again. 'There is a lot happening down under and I can't wait to get to Sydney with my band for ACYF to celebrate with the young heart of the Church,' he said.

Maher was in Sydney for the World Youth Day in 2008 and at the same time made his major recording label debut with the album *Empty and Beautiful*. Since then, Maher has become a staple in the artistic and song writing community.

Maher was awarded the Songwriter of the Year at the 2015 Gospel Music Association Dove Awards, has been named iTunes Best Christian & Gospel Single and is an eight time Grammy nominee. He has garnered multiple radio successes writing and recording songs like "Lord, I Need You," "Alive Again," "Hold Us Together," "Christ Is Risen," "All The People Said Amen" and "Your Grace Is Enough", and released his eighth and latest album entitled, *Saints and Sinners*.

Maher has penned songs recorded by Chris Tomlin, Crowder, Third Day, Matt Redman, Hillsong, Passion and Meredith Andrews, among others. He continues to perform and speak as a part of global high-profile events, including performing on stage with Pope Francis in front of more than 3 million people at World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro, and at the World Meeting of Families, marking Pope Francis' first visit to the US in 2015. Many Australian WYD pilgrims remember Maher's performances at World Youth Day as a particular highlight including at World Youth Day 2016, which took place in Krakow, Poland.

The Festival is a youthful and energetic celebration hosted by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference in partnership with the Archdiocese of Sydney. It will be held from 7-9 December 2017. For more information or to register visit, www.acyf.org.au.

Media queries, please contact Aoife Connors on 0450 348 597 or media@catholic.org.au