



We proclaim a crucified Christ

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20 November 2025

To the Clergy and Faithful of the Archdiocese of Melbourne,

Dear Friends in Christ,

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

After months of prayer, preparation, and great hope across our Parishes, schools, and communities, we now stand only ten days away from welcoming to Melbourne **the Australian Catholic Youth Festival**. Very soon, 6,000 young people from right across Australia and the Pacific will be travelling to our city to celebrate their faith, deepen their discipleship, and encounter the living Christ in the heart of His Church.

Thanks be to God, the Festival has **reached full capacity**, an extraordinary sign of faith among our young people! Though all tickets are now sold out for the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (a gentle reminder that only ticketed participants will be admitted to the Centre, including for the Final Mass), our Archdiocese has a vital role to play. I warmly encourage everyone — Clergy, religious, parishioners, families, school communities, and movements — to celebrate Eucharist and prayer in their local communities and then join the gathering participants for the **Opening Melbourne Catholic Festa at St Patrick's Cathedral on Sunday, 30 November commencing at 1:00pm**, and to accompany our young pilgrims with prayer, support, and joyful presence along the pilgrimage route to the Festival site.

This will be a moment of grace for the whole Church in Melbourne: a time to welcome, a time to pray, and a time to bear witness to the hope that lies within us.

Opening Day – St Patrick's Cathedral – 30 November

I invite you to stand alongside our young people as they begin these days of joy and encounter. The program will be:

- **1:30 pm – Melbourne Catholic Festa:** A celebration of the beauty and diversity of our faith communities gathering on the Cathedral forecourt.
- **2:30 pm – Reception of the WYD Cross and Icon:** Powerful symbols that have strengthened young Catholics across the globe, calling us to renew faith and mission.
- **3:00 pm – Pilgrimage Walk:** A 5km journey from the Cathedral to the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, led by the Cross and Icon. (Please note: only ticketed pilgrims will enter the MCEC). A shorter return-path option is also available for those who wish to support part of the journey.

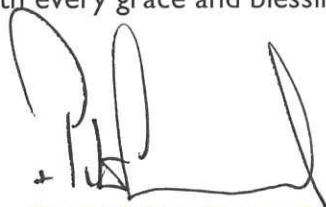
How You Can Support:

- **Join us in person** at the **Melbourne Catholic Festa**
- **Line the walking pilgrimage route** as a sign of encouragement and witness. Bring parish, school and community banners to show our unity and joy! (information on the Archdiocesan website)
- **Offer a warm Melbourne welcome** to all who travel to our city in faith, and
- **Pray intentionally** for our pilgrims, our youth ministers, our families, and our clergy during these coming days.

Further details will be sent to Parishes regarding information around the events – particularly the Pilgrimage walk.

As we draw near to this Festival and to the close of the Jubilee Year, may Christ renew our young people, strengthen our communities, and deepen our shared mission in Him.

With every grace and blessing in Christ Jesus,



Archbishop Peter A Comensoli
Archbishop of Melbourne