



We proclaim a crucified Christ

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11 December 2025

To the People of God in Melbourne – Parishioners, Families, and Staff,
my prayerful greetings to you in the Lord this Advent season.

With hearts full of gratitude and wonder, we give thanks for the remarkable grace that has flowed through our Archdiocese during the recent Australian Catholic Youth Festival (ACYF), held and hosted here in Melbourne. For those few unforgettable days, our Church came alive with the vibrant faith of over 6,000 young pilgrims — a radiant sign of Christ alive among us.

Throughout the Festival, we witnessed a Church deeply alive: young people singing with joy, kneeling in reverence, seeking God's mercy in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and uniting in the Eucharist with profound love. Their faces reflected hope, their hearts radiated faith, and their voices echoed the joy of knowing Christ. It was a living encounter — a testimony that the Church is young, and Christ is truly alive in the midst of His people.

To our parish communities, schools, families, teachers, and staff: thank you. Your support, encouragement, and faithful accompaniment opened the door for so many of our young people to walk this sacred journey. Whether you prayed from afar, volunteered, spread the word, or walked alongside our youth — your role mattered, and the fruits are already visible.

A special acknowledgment goes to the countless hands and hearts who made this Festival possible: to our clergy, volunteers, leaders, and organisers. Their efforts — most especially those of Festival Director Teresa Rhynehart and the Proclaim Team — bore witness to the unity, professionalism, and generosity that defines our Archdiocese.

To those who could not attend: seek out someone who did. Ask them what they saw, heard and felt. Let their stories renew your own faith.

As we look ahead to World Youth Day 2027, we carry with us the blessings sown during ACYF. May these seeds grow into deeper discipleship, vibrant vocations, renewed mission, and lasting holiness in every corner of our Church — in homes, schools, and parishes alike.

Let us continue to walk together, young and old, clergy and lay, rejoicing in what God is doing among us. May Mary, Help of Christians, accompany our young people always, and may the Holy Spirit fan into flame the gifts we have received.

Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus,

Most Rev Peter A Comensoli
Archbishop of Melbourne