



"MARY AROSE AND WENT WITH HASTE" (LK 1:39)

Letter from **Bishop Vincent**



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Dear friends and colleagues in ministry,

Pope Francis once again invites the young Church to join him at the 16th International World Youth Day in Lisbon, Portugal next August 2023. It is the third chapter in his Marian journey and features the theme; *"Mary arose and went with haste"* (LK 1:39)

There is no doubt that this enriching experience of pilgrimage for young people has a profound impact on their relationship with Jesus, their prayer life, their lived mission and their relationships with others.

I am continually inspired by the witness of faith and vocation in our past pilgrims - many of whom I regularly see in my own journey around the Diocese.

In this post-pandemic world, I see a great need for bringing young people intentionally together in formation and community towards this mountain-top experience knowing that its fruits are years in the making well beyond a return to their school, parish, professional and personal lives.

We are currently finalising a rigorous process to determine a Travel Partner for the Diocese of Parramatta to World Youth Day. Further information will be shared once this process is complete.

The Diocese of Parramatta will lead one pilgrimage to Portugal. I have appointed James Camden, Head Mission Engagement (Chancery) and Mark Smith, Head Mission (CEDP) to lead our team as joint Pilgrimage Co-ordinators.

Our encounter with Jesus, Mary and the Saints begins in France, travelling through Spain and onto Portugal before a time of retreat in Assisi, Italy. We anticipate our pilgrimage will total 22 days between **21 July - 11 August, 2023**.

I encourage each parish and school community over the coming month to consider how they might identify and support two to three young pilgrims attending WYD23. All fundraising will be the responsibility of each pilgrim in lieu of a Diocesan raffle.

Potential pilgrims, including clergy, aspiring group leaders and those interested in this significant youth engagement strategy are invited to attend the launch event with the team and I on **Thursday 18 August from 7pm** at **St John XXIII Catholic College, Stanhope Gardens**. More information and registration can be found at www.parrawyd.org

I pray that our young people, and those that accompany them on this journey, will be transformed by the lives of St Vincent de Paul, St Therese of Lisieux, Our Lady of Lourdes, St Ignatius of Loyola, St Teresa of Avila, Our Lady of Fatima, St Francis of Assisi and St Clare over our 12 month pilgrimage.

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