



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

Bishops Commission for Pastoral Life

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Names National WYD 2013 Pilgrimage Tour Provider Media Release 8 February, 2012

In preparation for Australia's pilgrimage to World Youth Day (WYD) in Rio de Janeiro in July 2013, the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC) has named Harvest Pilgrimages as their official Tour Operator for the Conference's National Pilgrimage of Australian groups attending this universal event.

"I am happy to see Harvest Pilgrimages partner with us again for WYD Rio de Janeiro" said Bishop Christopher Prowse, Bishops Commission for Pastoral Life (BCPL) Delegate for Youth.

"Harvest Pilgrimages' experience and knowledge of WYD provide an important framework for cost effective and powerful pilgrimage experiences for young people. I encourage all groups considering making the pilgrimage to WYD 2013 to contact Harvest to begin preparations", said Bishop Prowse.

Harvest Pilgrimages has been the official Tour Operator for the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference's national pilgrimages to World Youth Day since the year 2000. Building upon the success of coordinating over 3000 Australian pilgrims who travelled to WYD 2011 in Madrid, Harvest Pilgrimages will use its unique experiences and knowledge to prepare for WYD 2013.

"I am honoured that our company has been asked again to play such an important role in this next chapter of Australia's journey to World Youth Day in Rio" said Philip Ryall, Managing Director of Harvest Pilgrimages.

"We are committed to working with Australian Bishops and communities to provide pilgrimage programmes for young Australians. South America holds a unique appeal that will draw our youth into a deeper encounter with the people, faith and cultural realities that they experience. Whether it is rebuilding a church in a poor area of Lima, praying at the Jesuit missions of Posadas or witnessing God's creation at the Iguazu Falls, all roads will lead to the one sacred highpoint in Rio where the Holy Father will join with hundreds of thousands of youth from every tribe and nation," Mr Ryall said.

The BCPL is again providing national support and resources to enhance the Australian pilgrimage and a support structure for pilgrimage groups.

"WYD is an encounter with the risen Christ through an experience of the Universal Church. It is critical that group leaders are supported to make the most of this opportunity for their groups who attend WYD", said Malcolm Hart, BCPL Senior Youth Ministry Projects Officer.

"The BCPL will work with Harvest Pilgrimages, Pilgrimage Group Coordinators, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the WYD 2013 Organising Committee to support a powerful experience for Australian pilgrims.

Harvest Pilgrimages has recently visited South America and will be offering a familiarisation tour to Rio de Janeiro for Pilgrimage Group Coordinators midyear. To contact Harvest Pilgrimages visit www.wydtours.org or call 1800 819 156.

For further information about this article please contact Malcolm Hart on 0419 951 417 or Harvest Pilgrimages on the number above.