



Pope asks young people to consider their legacy at World Youth Day final Mass

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[Images can be found by clicking this link](#)

Over 400,000 pilgrims gathered for the final World Youth Day Mass with the Holy Father in Randwick Racecourse today. The majority of the young people had slept out under the stars and many had kept vigil overnight to spend time in silent prayer and reflection. World Youth Days have often been cited as a pivotal moment in a young pilgrim's faith journey - there have been many marriages and vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life born out of these global gatherings.

In his homily at the Sunday Mass, having referred to those who had brought the faith to Australia through heroic sacrifice, Pope Benedict XVI then asked the young people: "What will you leave to the next generation? Are you building your lives on firm foundations, building something that will endure? Are you living your lives in a way that opens up space for the Spirit in the midst of a world that wants to forget God, or even rejects him in the name of a falsely-conceived freedom? How are you using the gifts you have been given, the "power" which the Holy Spirit is even now prepared to release within you? "

Andy de Castro from Jersey said: "In a world that's so busy it's important to base your life on the teachings of the Church. We are not sheep who blindly follow our shepherd - we ask questions and search for the truth. I would hope that I live out my life in a way that follows the teachings of the Church. I would like to enter a career in journalism and hope that I will always uphold the truth in my future profession".

Many of the young people had set off on their pilgrimage walk to the vigil with the Pope at dawn the previous day. They came equipped with sleeping bags, rucksacks and groundsheets for the long night ahead. Sleeping out in a racecourse in the middle of an Australian winter was quite an experience for the young pilgrims.

"It was cold - my feet were hanging out - they were cold", said Ben Watt, 17, from the South West. "But it was worth it - it was a brilliant experience".

"Such a unique celebration", said Ann-Marie Salgo from London.

The Chief Operating Officer for World Youth Day in Sydney, Danny Casey said that the week long celebration: "Has been a success for the host city and the Catholic Church in Australia?". "It was an extraordinary sight to see more than 400,000 people gather for Mass on a grey Sunday?. This is certainly the largest Catholic Mass ever celebrated in our country".

The Holy Father announced at the end of the final Mass that the next World Youth Day will take

place in Madrid, Spain in 2011.

To see the British pilgrims journey to Randwick Racecourse and exclusive footage from the evening vigil see the video link below:

<https://www.box.net/shared/static/hl4triccgw.mp4>

Note that the video material and above photographs can be used freely but please attribute to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

ENDS

UK Media enquiries about World Youth Day and about the English and Welsh pilgrimage to WYD can be directed to:

In Australia - 00 61 448083521

In UK - Catholic Communications Network:

e: ccn@cbcew.org.uk

t: 020 7901 4800

Professional video and photographic material from the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales will be available to download during the key World Youth Day events. Pilgrim video/audio and photographic material from English and Welsh pilgrims will also be available to download.

For professional photos and video, log onto the following FTP site:

<https://www.box.net/shared/kn3iq544k4>

Password: wyd08

For pilgrims? eye view amateur photos, video and audio:

<https://www.box.net/shared/75kqdwk084>

Password: wyd08

Check out the British pilgrims updates:

http://www.catholicchurch.org.uk/index.php/ccb/catholic_church/events/world_youth_day/info_for_uk_media/pilgrim_s_updates

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