

BACKGROUND

April 2008

GENERAL INFORMATION

What is World Youth Day?

World Youth Day is the largest youth event in the world. It is a six-day celebration hosted and organised by the Catholic Church with the support of the NSW and Commonwealth governments. Events will start on Tuesday 15 and finish on Sunday 20 July. The official name of the event is World Youth Day 2008 (WYD08). A program of events will include the first visit by Pope Benedict XVI to Australia. Sydney will be the only city the Pope visits while in Australia.

A list of events and more detailed information is available from the event organisers at www.wyd2008.org

How many young people are coming?

People who register to attend these celebrations are called pilgrims. WYD08 event organisers are planning for 225,000 registered pilgrims including 100,000 Australians. Up to 500,000 pilgrims and members of the public are expected for the Final Mass celebrated by the Pope at Randwick Racecourse and Centennial Park. At Centennial Park, people can watch the Mass live on big screens.

Why is it being held in Sydney?

The Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney, supported by the NSW and Commonwealth governments, bid for and won the opportunity to host the event in Sydney. WYD08 will put Sydney on the global stage and showcase Sydney and NSW to the world. Once again, Sydney will demonstrate its world class reputation as a major international event city. The NSW Department of State and Regional Development forecasts World Youth Day 2008 will generate \$150 million gross revenue to the State. Hotels, restaurants and tourist attractions are expected to benefit from the international and Australian visitors attending.

Will Sydney look different to APEC?

Yes. World Youth Day is a major youth event open to the public. It is a week long celebration. The Pope requires a certain amount of security but only what is normally provided when an international dignitary visits Australia. The fences that will be in place at events are necessary to manage access and pedestrian flow.

