



**DICASTERIUM
PRO LAICIS, FAMILIA ET VITA**

**The 39th World Youth Day will be celebrated
on Sunday, 24 November, the Solemnity of Christ the King of the Universe**

*At the end of the celebration, the traditional handing over of WYD symbols
from Lisbon to Seoul*

The 39th World Youth Day will be celebrated on Sunday, 24 November 2024, the Solemnity of Christ the King of the Universe. This year, the Holy Father has chosen as its theme the passage from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah: *“Those who hope in the Lord will run and not be weary”* (cf. Is 40:31). World Youth Day will be observed worldwide at the level of particular churches and follows the 38th World Youth Day and the international edition held in Lisbon, Portugal, in August 2023.

As usual, the Holy Father Francis will preside over the Eucharistic celebration in St. Peter's Basilica at 9:30am. Following the Mass, the traditional passing of the World Youth Day symbols will take place, initiating their pilgrimage towards Seoul 2027.

The symbols of World Youth Day – the *Youth Cross* and the *Icon of Mary Salus populi romani* – will be handed over before the concluding rites by a delegation of young people of Portugal to a delegation of young people of Korea, accompanied by their pastors. The young people of Korea will thus be able to start the pilgrimage of the symbols in Korea and in various countries across Asia, taking them everywhere – to the cities, the countryside, among the suffering, the prisoners, the poor, especially to young people with no hope – to bring closeness and consolation to all. This pilgrimage is particularly significant since it will take place in predominantly non-Christian countries.

The hope is for many young people to become “tireless missionaries of joy” (cf. Pope Francis, Message for the 39th World Youth Day) and that even those who have never participated in a WYD, over the next three years embark on a journey – especially an inner journey – to come to bear courageous witness to Christ.

On 24 November, the following will be present in the Basilica: a delegation of about 100 young people of Portugal, accompanied by the Patriarch of Lisbon, H.E. Msgr. Rui Manuel

Sousa Valério, and the General Coordinator of World Youth Day Lisbon 2023, H.E. Card. Américo Manuel Alves Aguiar; a delegation of about 100 people of Korea, led by the Archbishop of Seoul, H.E. Msgr. Peter Chung Soon-taek, and the General Coordinator of World Youth Day Seoul 2027, H.E. Msgr. Paul Kyung Sang Lee; as well as young people from Rome, who will conclude the diocesan-level World Youth Day celebration with their Bishop, Pope Francis.

Reflecting the universality of the occasion, representatives from other parts of the world will proclaim the readings and lead the universal prayer of the faithful. Young Korean, Portuguese, Italian, English, French, Spanish, and Chinese native speakers will take turns during the liturgical celebration. Then, during the presentation of the gifts, young people from the five continents will be present. Through the lives and stories of these young people, the richness and diversity of their vocations are also represented, as there are young married, single, and religious people.

The history of WYD symbols

The *Youth Cross* was entrusted to the youth by St. John Paul II at the first Youth Gathering in 1984.

At the end of the Holy Year of the Redemption, after John Paul II had closed the Holy Door, he entrusted the Cross to the youth of the world. His words on that occasion were: “Carry it throughout the world as a symbol of Christ’s love for humanity, and announce to everyone that only in the death and resurrection of Christ can we find salvation and redemption.”

Since 2003, the Cross has been accompanied by the icon of Mary *Salus populi romani*, a sign of Mary's maternal affection and of the Church’s maternal concern for all humanity.

[All the stages of the Youth Cross and the Icon *Salus populi romani*, from 1984 to present, can be found here](#), on the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life’s website.

Pope Francis’ Message for the 39th World Youth Day is available at www.vatican.va

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