



Holy Cross College, Ryde

Office of the Principal

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Dear Parents and Guardians of Year 9 students,

In December this year young people from across Australia will gather in Sydney for the third Australian Catholic Youth Festival; a celebration of the young heart of our Church. His Grace, Archbishop Anthony Fisher has requested that all school support this event. In keeping with this request Holy Cross College has made the decision that all Year 9 students will attend the festival on Thursday 7 and Friday 8 December. This letter aims to give an overview of the festival that will be accompanied by more precise information from your school community about its plans for the festival.

What is the Australian Catholic Festival? The Australian Catholic Youth Festival (ACYF) is an initiative of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC) and it began in Melbourne in December 2013 as an attempt to offer a “mini World Youth Day” experience in Australia every two years. The festival was then held in Adelaide in December 2015 and it is now coming to Sydney in December 2017. The festivals in Melbourne and Adelaide were heralded as great successes with high quality presenters and performers from overseas and across Australia engaging over 3,000 young people, including over 300 students from Sydney Catholic Schools. The Bishops and priests from across Australia also attended in significant numbers.

Sydney 2017: There is great excitement about the ACYF coming to Sydney. It will be a particularly special occasion for Sydney as the festival will launch the Australian Catholic Church’s **Year of Youth 2018**. The Year of Youth will mark ten years since Sydney hosted World Youth Day 2008. Therefore, the ACYF 2017 is a major priority of Archbishop Anthony Fisher, the Archdiocese of Sydney and Sydney Catholic Schools.

When and Where? The festival will take place from Thursday 7 December to Saturday 9 December with workshops and plenary sessions running between 9.30am - 8.30pm each day at Sydney Olympic Park, Homebush. *All Year 9 students will be registered by the College for the full three days. However, the students will only attend Thursday during school hours and Friday between 11am and 9pm as a school group.*

Students who wish to attend the festival on Saturday may do so individually by arrangement with their parents.

The festival will conclude with a final Mass on the evening of Saturday 9 December that will be open to the public, officially launching the Australian Catholic Church’s Year of Youth 2018.

More detailed arrangements about travel to the festival and the workshops available to students will be sent home during term 4.

Yours sincerely,

Phillip Stewart
PRINCIPAL