

## **Welcome to the Australian Catholic Youth Festival 2019, Perth**

The Australian Catholic Youth Festival (ACYF) is a national gathering of Catholic young people that has been established by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC).

It exists to provide young people with opportunities to deepen their relationship with Jesus and to be empowered to be disciples in the world today and to encounter and celebrate the vitality of the church in Australia.

The Festival will use the scripture focus of the 2020 Plenary Council by adopting the theme: "Listen to what the Spirit is saying" Rev 2:7

The Perth Archdiocese is hosting this event from December 8 – 10 in the Perth Convention Centre close to the scenic Swan River

Excitement is building up and so is a movement around Australia for the "Word" has been passed around. Young people are travelling as Pilgrims to Perth's Holy Ground. They'll cross Bass Strait and fly over the Nullarbor, and be warmly welcomed by the Youth of WA

They have heard the whisperings of the Holy Spirit and God has touched their hearts.

In 1868 when 26-year-old Mary MacKillop wrote to her Mother Flora, she said: "Believe in the whispering in your own heart". Mary's word rings true to the young people of today as they listen to what the Spirit is saying in their hearts.

In his letter to the youth of the world, "Christus Vivit", Pope Francis writes: "The young are in my heart."

He challenges them to "Stand up and make your voices known today." He reminds the young about how important it is for them to have an active role in the Church today. and calls them to take risks in following in the footsteps of Jesus with the words:

*"Have you heard the voice? Have you felt the urge to undertake this journey ... even when the journey is uncertain, and you fall? God in His rich mercy will extend His hand and pick you up. Christus Vivit.*

### **Australian Catholic Youth Festival Expo 2019**

The Encounter Expo will be such a hive of activity at the Festival that the participants will be sure to return to again and again. It will be an interactive and dynamic space in which they will be invited to encounter the breath of the Catholic Church in Australia in new and unexpected ways.

There will be more than 80 separate stalls at ACYF Expo 2019. Participating Catholic agencies, organisations, religious orders, ecclesial movements and numerous other Catholic groups from across Australia will offer a range of interactive and experiential activities through which to explore the variety of ways by which the Church's mission in Australia is being carried out.

Highly engaging, informative and fun – the EXPO will be the PLACE to be.

## **Australian Catholic Youth Festival Song**

“Listen to the Spirit” is the official theme song for ACYF 2019

The words of this song build upon and break open the spiritual focus and theme of the Festival.

“Listen to the Spirit” has been used by youth groups as they prepare spiritually for the ACYF experience. They will hear it a number of times during the Festival and, from having practised it often in their Parish Youth groups, they will be able raise their voices in praise at the Festival.

“Listen to the Spirit” The Lyrics are to found at: <https://YOUTU.BE/1IGPFNoZTHc>

Words and lyrics by Fr Rob Galea, Gary Pinto and Bradley Pinto, copyright 2019

See below Lyrics for the new song

Lead us to the desert  
Where we can hear You speak  
Here within the silence  
Where redemption meets defeat

### **Pre Chorus**

Can you hear all the angels and the saints?  
Hallelujah together we will sing

### **CHORUS**

Open up your heart  
Open up your soul  
Open up your ears  
Listen to the Spirit speaking (times x 2)

Do you see him in the broken?  
In the outcast in the lost  
The homeless and the hungry  
Do you see him on the cross?

### **BRIDGE**

Can you hear the earth tremble?  
Can you see the oceans roar?  
Can you feel the Spirit moving?  
Speak Lord.

The Spirit draws us out to into the desert to speak to His beloved. “Therefore, I am now going to allure her; I will lead her into the wilderness and speak tenderly to her” Hosea 2: 14

As we listen the Spirit leads the church to worship. 1 Chronicles 16:13-31

Listening to the Spirit we are led to seek and serve the poor, the lost, the outcast and the poor.

Pope Francis is asking us to listen to the Spirit’s call to us to look after the earth and all of creation.

### **Presenters and Performers:**

The ACYF highlights top Australian Catholic presenters and performers supported by international speakers and artists.

Our speakers will be addressing many of the current issues facing all of us.

A few weeks ago, Sister Maura and I were approached and asked if we would be available to facilitate a Prayer session during the ACYF. Naturally we were delighted to be involved. Our Theme is "Living with a Contemplative Heart in a busy world."

We have chosen the Taize style of Prayer as it is close to our hearts and we have experienced living with the Taize community on two different occasions - spending a week each time.

Our experience was beyond our imagination. When we arrived in the village of Taize we saw hundreds of buses with young people dragging their bags and cases as they searched for where they would be camping for the week. It was unbelievable, we were told by the Brother in charge that 10,000 young people were expected from across the globe during that particular week. They arrived with excited anticipation and keenness to participate.

We know that young people will respond well to the form of prayer outlined below.

e.g. Bells of Taize, Chant- brief instructions about the prayer:

Chants- Scripture passage read- Silence –

Chant- Intercessions –

Chant- The Singing of distinctive and much-repeated chants during candlelit prayer services is one of its trademarks. Taize music highlights simple phrases, usually lines from psalms or other pieces of scripture, repeated and sung by the praying community. This repetition is designed to help meditation and prayer.

Taize Prayer Service –An encounter with Christ in Song and Silent Meditation

[https://youtu.be/4hyZV\\_abfO](https://youtu.be/4hyZV_abfO)

We will also be including Christian Meditation. In recent years this way of praying has been introduced to many young people within our Catholic Schools around Australia.

Both styles are easily adapted to a busy life style. We know from our experience that young people love the bond of praying silently together. See: [www.christianmeditationaustralia.org](http://www.christianmeditationaustralia.org)

### YOU TUBE VIDEOS

Silence in the City – Young Christian Meditators' Stories (Christian Meditation)

TAIZE: Trailer about the Taize Community: [www.taize.fr](http://www.taize.fr)

<https://youthfestival.catholic.org.au>

Reference-Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation – Christus Vivit: of the Holy Father – Francis, to Young People and to the entire people of God