



Vox Populi
02 August 2023

Our Broken Bay pilgrims are now all in Lisbon, Portugal where they have joined hundreds of thousands of other young people from nearly 200 countries for World Youth Day '23.

On Monday the 169 students, young adults, teachers, leaders and coordinators, seminarians, priests and Bishop Anthony attended the opening WYD Mass in a huge park near the waterfront along with around 400,000 other pilgrims - and the crowds keep growing. The opening Mass was celebrated by Cardinal Manuel Clemente, the patriarch of Lisbon who wished all pilgrims a "happy and inspiring World Youth Day". Bishop Anthony was one of the 700 concelebrating bishops from around the world which he said was a spiritually powerful experience.

Prior to the Mass, most of the 3,000 pilgrims from around Australia gathered for the traditional Australian prayer, reflection and musical celebration. Broken Bay was asked to lead one of the segments with the Broken Bay pilgrimage song 'Magnify' a highlight.

However the week really moved up a notch when the Holy Father, Pope Francis flew in on Wednesday. Pope Francis met with Portugal's President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa but his first message was to all European leaders - invest in young people rather than weapons.

He said the fact that hundreds of thousands of young people have come from around the

globe this week to encounter each other offers an antidote to today's societal ills.

As the Pope was driven into the city, a number of our excited pilgrims saw the official motorcade and Pope Francis who smiled and returned their waves.

Tomorrow will be the Welcome Mass with the Holy Father followed the next day with Stations of the Cross. The Vigil on Saturday with Pope Francis includes Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament followed by the pilgrim sleep-out. Organisers believe around one million people could attend the Missioning Mass on Sunday morning with Pope Francis. This marks the end of WYD23 and is when the city that will hold the next World Youth Day in three years is announced.

Following the arrival of Pope Francis in Lisbon, Bishop Anthony said the Holy Spirit is clearly alive and active in the swelling crowd of people gathering from all parts of the world.

"These next few days will engage us in catechisms, prayer, reconciliation, adoration, evangelisation, convivium, and worship," Bishop Anthony said.

"I have already been overwhelmed by our young pilgrims. Their ability and capacity to ponder life questions in the context of their faith is inspirational.

"Please continue to pray for them as we walk together this pilgrimage of faith."