

10 August 2026

Dear Students and Parents/Guardians

We're excited to share an opportunity for students who will be in Year 10 or Year 11 in 2027: World Youth Day, taking place in Seoul, South Korea, preceded by a pilgrimage through Japan. This will be the first time our school has sent students to World Youth Day.

What is World Youth Day?

World Youth Day is a major international Catholic gathering held every 2–4 years, bringing together young people from all over the world with the Pope himself. It was started by Pope John Paul II and has drawn millions of participants since. At its heart, WYD exists to strengthen young people's faith with an encounter of Christ through the universal Church and build friendships across schools, cultures and continents. For many who attend, it becomes a defining moment in their faith journey – part pilgrimage, part cultural exchange, and part once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Why we're travelling there

We're taking students on this journey not just to attend WYD itself, but to walk the path that leads there. Before Seoul, we'll spend time in Japan tracing the story of the Catholic Church there – from its arrival with the Jesuit missionary Francis Xavier in 1549, through the courage of the Nagasaki martyrs, many of whom were Jesuits, to the quiet endurance of the hidden Christians who kept their faith alive in secret for over two centuries. Walking through these places of courage and sacrifice is designed to prepare our students' hearts before they join hundreds of thousands of young Catholics in Seoul – fitting, given this WYD's theme: "Take Courage, I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

Trip Overview

- Departure: Monday, 26 July 2027 (arriving Osaka, Japan)
- Return: Wednesday, 11 August 2027 (departing Korea for Australia)
- Duration: 17 days total
- Estimated cost: \$7,600–\$8,100 per person (full coach group), covering international airfare, accommodation, most meals, touring, entry fees, and WYD registration. Not included: travel insurance, passport/visa costs, some meals, drinks, and personal items.

Our itinerary takes us on a pilgrimage through significant Catholic sites in Japan before joining World Youth Day in Seoul for its full week of events, concluding with the Papal Mass.

The Catholic Church in Japan and Korea

Both countries have remarkable, and quite different, Christian histories worth knowing before we go. In Japan, Christianity arrived with Francis Xavier in 1549, spread widely, then faced brutal persecution – 26 Christians were crucified in Nagasaki in 1597, and thousands more preserved their faith in secret for generations. In Korea, the story is unique: Catholicism wasn't brought by missionaries at first but took root through Korean scholars who encountered Catholic texts brought back from Beijing in the late 1700s – a rare example of a lay-founded Church. Seoul 2027 will be the first time World Youth Day has ever been held in South Korea, and only the second time in Asia since Manila in 1995.

Registering your interest

We're asking students who may be interested to submit a non-binding Expression of Interest (EOI). This is not a commitment – it simply lets us gauge numbers and ensure everyone who's curious receives full details, including a parent information session.

As part of your EOI, we'd like each student to respond briefly to the following in using [THIS FORM](#):

1. What draws you to attend World Youth Day 2027, and what do you hope to take away from the experience?
2. What personal qualities do you feel you'd bring – for yourself and as part of our community?

There's no need to overthink these – a few honest sentences for each will be plenty.

Submitting an EOI will be followed by a selection process. We will share more detail on how this will run once we've seen the level of interest, but it will consider each student's responses above as well as their suitability to represent our school on a pilgrimage of this nature.

Deadline to register interest: Friday, 21 August 2026

Mr John Gilles and Mr Michael Dela Cruz