

## Vatican announces themes for upcoming World Youth Days

(Vatican Radio) The Dicastery for Laity, the Family, and Life issued a communiqué on Tuesday listing the themes for the next three World Youth Days (WYD).

The press release notes that the themes were chosen by Pope Francis “for the three-year World Youth Day journey that will culminate at the international celebration of the event to be held in Panama in 2019.” World Youth Day is celebrated at the diocesan level each year on Palm Sunday, with an international gathering every two to three years. The most recent international Day was celebrated in August, 2016, in Krakow, Poland.

The Blessed Virgin Mary is at the heart of the themes for the upcoming WYDs, which are taken from the Gospel of Saint Luke:

32<sup>nd</sup> World Youth Day, 2017: **“The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is His Name”** (Lk 1:49)

33<sup>rd</sup> World Youth Day, 2018: **“Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God”** (Lk 1:30)

34<sup>th</sup> World Youth Day, 2019: **“I am the servant of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word”** (Lk 1:38)

The themes are a continuation of the reflections begun by Pope Francis for the last three World Youth Days, which focused on the Beatitudes. The Dicastery’s press release recalled Pope Francis’ remarks at World Youth Day in Krakow, when he invited young people to have “memory of the past, courage for the present and to have/be hope for the future.” The themes “are intended to give a clear Marian tone to the spiritual journey of the next three WYDs” and at the same time “give a picture of young people on a journey between the past (2017), present (2018), and future (2019), inspired by the three theological virtues of faith, charity, and hope.”

The Dicastery noted that the “path that is being proposed to young people can also be seen to be in harmony with the reflection that Pope Francis has entrusted to the next Synod of Bishops: *Young People, Faith and Vocational Discernment*.”