

**World Youth Day 2011
Catechetical Introduction Session**



**Office of Youth Evangelization
The Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton**

World Youth Day 2011

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Introduction for Leaders

World Youth Day is both a wonderful gift and a challenge, as we work with young people to prepare their hearts. These spiritual preparation packages will help take some of the load off of you, the faithful youth worker, while still giving your group a chance to get their hearts ready for the journey.

This catechesis program was originally designed by Ms. Susan Suttie of the Calgary Diocese and, with her permission, has been modified for our own use. We encourage all groups using this program to do the same.... make minor changes to make it appropriate for your own use.

Each session has the same format:

- **Icebreaker** (often chosen to help introduce the topic)
- **Opening Prayer** (Designed to help participants begin to prayerfully reflect on the topic)
- **Topic** (Involves a variety of activities to help participants realize a personal understanding of the topic)
- **Prayer Journals** (Designed to help participants track their journey as they prepare for WYD)
- **Closing Comments** (This is a scheduled time to discuss upcoming events, details about the trip, and any other issues particular to your group. There is a separate section dealing with the possible topics to discuss during this time.)
- **Closing Prayer** (Designed to help participants get used to community prayer, and opening up to one another)

Sessions can be prepared and led by the group leader, or can be given to young adult members to prepare and lead.

Although this program is designed to begin in September 2010 and conclude in June 2011, you can choose the date that works best for you. Keep in mind that you may want a couple meetings to be just for administrative issues near the end when it is getting close to leaving for WYD.

If you have any questions or comments about this program, please contact the Archdiocesan WYD 2011 office at 469-1010 or email wyd2011@caedm.ca .

Topics for Closing Comment

During each session, there is a scheduled time under Closing Comments for dealing with administrative items. The topics for these administrative items will be outlined here, and you can use them at your discretion, depending on the needs of your group.

Topic A: What is WYD?

1. What can pilgrims expect at WYD?

Include some of the history of WYD and a basic breakdown of the schedule (all available at www.madridwyd2011.org or our own site www.caedm.ca/wyd2011)

2. What is expected of pilgrims during this time of preparation, and at WYD?

Address behavioral expectations, attendance at meetings and fundraisers, participation in meetings and fundraisers (i.e. planning, leading, etc.) Give pilgrims an idea of the meeting and fundraiser schedule, so they have lots of advance notice with which to adjust their calendars.

3. Cost and Fundraising

How much will the trip cost? What monies are the pilgrims responsible for, and what will fundraising cover? How will money from fundraisers be split up among the group?

4. Travel Considerations

- Passports are necessary! See www.ppt.gc.ca/passports/how_obtain_e.asp for information on where to get a passport, how much it will cost, and how long it will take.
- Travel insurance – in addition to what is covered by registrations
- Permanent Resident ID Cards for those without Canadian citizenship: See <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/pr-card/index.html> or contact your nearest Canadian visa office to apply for this card.
- Health Care information

Topic B: Physical Fitness (to be shared in Packing for the Journey Session)

A pilgrimage is primarily a physical event. Traditionally, pilgrimages involved walking to and from the pilgrimage site, with the journey being just as important as the destination. Though we don't necessarily walk to the WYD site, there is a physical element to WYD. The amount of walking, standing and traveling pilgrims do is well outside of most peoples' normal activity level, and they will need to prepare for this.

WYD involves A LOT of walking! Make sure to explain that they will be walking every day, so they will need good shoes. Encourage the group to engage in physical fitness activities such as hiking and walking before the trip to increase their stamina and to break in those shoes. Wearing a backpack on these excursions is recommended to help them get used to the weight. Choosing some fitness activities to do as a group may be a wise and fun choice.

They also need to expect that the physical conditions will be less comfortable than they are used to. Sleeping arrangements will most likely involve a floor and a sleeping bag, showers will most likely not be totally private, and bathrooms could be few and far between.

In terms of weather, the Madrid region tends to be very hot and humid during the month of July. Participants will need to be prepared for sun exposure as well as the possibility of some wet weather. Good rain gear will be a necessity.

Some tips:

- If your feet are getting blisters, wear two pairs of socks!
- Bring baby powder to keep your feet dry.
- Make sure to break in your shoes before you go and possible bring two pairs!

Topic C: Packing List (to be shared in Packing for the Journey Session)

Personal Items:

Backpack and day pack

Good walking shoes (buy them now and use them so they are broke in!!!)

Sandals

Hat (with brim, preferably bucket hat)

Sleeping bag

Floor mat for sleeping (encourage them to bring lightweight, less bulky ones)

Pillow (optional- must be small)

Basic toiletries: shampoo, soap, deodorant, toothbrush, toothpaste, shaving needs (discourage blow-dryers, etc. Remember basic accommodation)

Electrical outlet converter (if any razors or blow-dryers require it)

Pants (2)

Shorts (3)

Short-sleeved tops (5)

Long- sleeved tops or over-shirts (2)

Socks (12)

Underwear

Water bottle

Sunscreen

Towel

Waterproof jacket with hood (pants optional)

Money belt to hold important documents (to be worn at all times!)

Small 4X6 Photo album (Pictures of family, home, snow, friends, activities you like what it looks like where you live and holiday. This is an incredible icebreaker when meeting someone new!!!)

Group Items:

First Aid kit

Pins for trading

Documentation (ABHC numbers, itinerary, etc.)

Hand sanitizer

Toilet paper

Dress Code Recommendations (to be shared in Packing for the Journey Session)

As WYD is held during the warm months of summer, the issue of inappropriate clothing may arise. Pilgrims are not only representing their parishes and Archdiocese, they are there to concentrate on deepening their faith. Inappropriate dress will be a detriment to both of these ideals. In some cases, it will also increase their risk of sun exposure. Some things to consider mentioning are: no midriffs showing, shoulders and back must be covered, skirts must be to mid-thigh, no negative slogans.

Topic D: Leadership

The theme for WYD 2011 offers a unique challenge to young adults to develop leadership skills within their communities. We are all called to set out to find Jesus in our lives. WYD 2011 calls young adults to be open to the power of the Holy Spirit and follow His example as they set out on a journey of faith. It calls them to leave behind what they know, and go searching for a greater truth. A call to leadership can be acted upon in many different ways, and the preparation time for WYD gives them abundant time to experiment with their gifts and find out how they can best use these in their communities.

Asking young adults to serve in positions of leadership in your group can be the first step to empowering them to go out and continue to be a leader. Some possible areas for them to lead are:

- prayer leader
- leading a meeting
- tour guide in Spain
- song/music leaders
- travel/ supply coordinators
- translators
- fundraising coordinators
- parish liaisons

Calling the young people to leadership gives them ownership of their WYD experience, and allows them to feel the call of Jesus to walk with Him as a disciple as it applies to their life and skills.