

ACYF



SANDHURST PILGRIMAGE

MELBOURNE 2025
29 NOVEMBER – 3 DECEMBER

EDITION #THREE
3 SEPTEMBER 2025

The information in this edition is correct at time of distribution.

Meet Our Pilgrimage Pastoral Leader



Archbishop-elect Shane Mackinlay is pleased to appoint Rev. Junray Rayna as the Pastoral Leader of the Sandhurst Pilgrimage to ACYF. Father Junray is the Administrator (priest) at St Kilian's Parish in Bendigo and is excited to accompany our young people on their Faith Journey to the Festival and beyond. Fr Junray enjoys getting to know people, inviting them to belong to a welcoming community and developing deep connections with Christ and with one another. He celebrates the wonder of God's creation through hiking and camping in the mountains and seldom misses his weekly surf in Torquay on his Monday 'day-off'. He is looking forward to spending time with the ACYF pilgrims in formation, prayer, and the many ways we can celebrate and share our Catholic Faith through the experience of pilgrimage.

Our Pilgrimage Chaplains

We are also pleased to announce that three Pilgrimage Chaplains have been appointed to accompany our pilgrims on their journey to ACYF and beyond.

[Rev. Adi Indra](#), [Rev. Nathan Verallo](#) and [Rev. Jackson Saunders](#)



Father Adi is the Assistant Priest in St Brendan's Parish in Shepparton and has a Licentiate in Canon Law from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. He enjoys being around young people, sharing faith, and creating space for real conversations. His own journey was shaped by the Stronger Youth movement, and he is passionate about helping others find their path. He also has a good sense of humour and, despite his time in Carlton, still he has not picked a particular AFL team. Father Adi brings a down-to-earth, approachable presence and a deep love for Jesus and the Church. He hopes to help young people encounter Christ in a real way, especially through the Eucharist, and to walk with them as they grow in faith, hope, and community. At this year's ACYF, he hopes to bring others into a deeper relationship with Jesus, especially among the young people from Sandhurst.



Father Nathan is the Parish Priest at Christ the King in Wangaratta and serves our Diocese as Vocations Director. He leads a vibrant parish community and walks alongside those discerning their vocation. As part of the ACYF Sandhurst Pilgrimage, he is one of the chaplains accompanying young people on this journey of faith. Father Nathan is a train enthusiast who loves the quiet reflection that comes with watching the world go by from a window seat. His deep faith was shaped early on by his uncle, who is now a bishop in the Philippines. In the upcoming ACYF, he hopes that young pilgrims will enjoy the excitement of the festival but, more importantly, discover meaning, purpose, and a personal encounter with Jesus. His desire is that they return home transformed and ready to bring Christ into their everyday lives and be instruments of His love in the world.



Father Jackson is the Assistant Priest in the Cathedral Cluster of Parishes in Bendigo. He was ordained in 2022 after training at Corpus Christi College in Carlton. Alongside his parish work, he is also passionate about journeying with young people in their faith. In 2023, he served as Chaplain for the Sandhurst Pilgrimage to World Youth Day in Portugal and now continues that role at ACYF. Father Jackson brings a unique mix of life experience. He has worked as a journalist, sports broadcaster, and youth worker, and still squeezes in sports commentary on Fresh FM in Bendigo. It is a hobby, but also a way he connects faith with everyday life. He sees events like ACYF not as tourism, but as real pilgrimages, having the opportunities to walk alongside others on the journey of discipleship. As a chaplain and fellow pilgrim, Father Jackson hopes to encourage, support, and share his story with young people as they grow in their relationship with Jesus.

Please pray for all our Pilgrimage leaders and co-ordinators.

REGISTRATIONS CLOSING



12 SEPTEMBER, 2025

Follow this link to register: <https://events.harvestjourneys.com/yf25-san>

Financial Assistance

It is important to note that finance should not be a factor that prevents a young person from this opportunity of pilgrimage. No payment is required to register. The priority is to **GET REGISTERED** and the Sandhurst Youth Ministry Team can then support pilgrims to access available funding.

Information and support to register was included in Edition II of this publication.

Safeguarding

The safety of all participants is the priority of the leadership and organisers of this pilgrimage. Our faith community is committed to all young people feeling safe and being safe all the time. Safeguarding is about ensuring that we are doing all that we can to ensure that we create an environment where our young people can flourish. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Safeguarding Induction

In order to meet our high standards of Diocesan safeguarding, all pilgrims who are over the age of 18 and are not employed by a Catholic School are required to:

- provide a valid Working with Children's Check;
- complete the ACYF Safeguarding Induction Module and agree to abide by the Code of Conduct for Adults attending the pilgrimage.

The ACYF Safeguarding induction module will be assigned via email to relevant adults on **Monday 15 September**. We ask that you set aside 90 minutes to complete this module by **Wednesday 17 September**.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding safeguarding, there will be a live **Safeguarding Q&A** session with Megan Gerrish (CESL Safeguarding Lead) online, **Wednesday 17 September at 6.30 pm**.

Small Group Leaders

The role of the small group leader is crucial to ensure the safety of all our pilgrims, especially those who are under 18 years of age. Small group leaders are responsible especially for the supervision and wellbeing of their group on the pilgrimage.

Further information regarding the role of the Small Group Leader will follow.

Formation

The Pilgrimage Journey begins well before we get to Melbourne, in fact it has already begun with the discernment of young people and leaders to take this journey of faith and hope.

Formation in preparation for the Festival and in follow up to the festival is crucial for participants to get the most out of the pilgrimage experience.

The Sandhurst ACYF Formation Team is developing a series of 4 formation modules. Each module will provide formation for small group leaders and resources for small group sessions, facilitated by small group leaders.

The modules are intended to assist in preparing pilgrims spiritually, personally, and communally through prayer, reflection, discussion, and engagement with the Festival theme. In this way, pilgrims are invited to deepen their faith and arrive ready to participate with openness, purpose and hope.

Sandhurst's formation modules will be released in fortnightly blocks with leader formation taking place early in the first week. It would be ideal for small group leaders to facilitate their small group session within the same fortnight as the leader's session.

1 September – 12 September: Formation Module 1

13 October – 24 October: Formation Module 2

27 October – 7 November: Formation Module 3

10 November – 21 November: Formation Module 4

Formation Resources and important dates will be available on the Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst Website and the Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd Schools' Portal and will be shared with all ACYF small group leader contacts.



Podcast

Catch the Flame: A Sandhurst Catholic Youth Ministry Podcast



Catch the Flame is a new podcast by Sandhurst Youth Ministry, created to spark faith and inspire young hearts across our Diocese. Season 1 supports youth as they prepare for their journey to ACYF, with episodes released fortnightly from 22 August.

Each episode explores what it means to be a young Catholic today – bold in faith, rooted in prayer, and alive with purpose. Topics include vocation, digital discipleship, the Eucharist, prayer, justice, and more – featuring voices from priests, sisters, youth leaders and young people.

The podcast complements formation and gives our pilgrims another way to engage with the pilgrimage journey and with each other.



ACYF 2025 Theme: Pilgrims of Hope

The theme for the Australian Catholic Youth Festival 2025 – Pilgrims of Hope – echoes the call of the universal Church to journey in hope during the Jubilee Year 2025, declared by Pope Francis. A Jubilee is a special time of grace, renewal, and pilgrimage – a reminder that we are a people on the move, walking together towards the fullness of life in Christ.

To be a pilgrim of hope means journeying with trust, even through difficulty, knowing that God walks with us. It is a call to hold onto the light of Christ in a world often marked by uncertainty, conflict and despair. This theme invites young people to rediscover the joy of faith, the strength of community, and the mission to bring hope to others.

As we journey through this Jubilee Year as pilgrims of hope, the Festival becomes a powerful moment of encounter: with God, with one another, and with the mission to live as hopeful witnesses to Jesus Christ in the world.

What to Expect at ACYF

All Sandhurst Pilgrims will gather at **Queen's College** at the University of Melbourne on the afternoon of Saturday 29 November. After settling in and finding our rooms, we will share a meal together and gather in celebration with opportunities to get to know each other. On Sunday morning we will celebrate Mass before joining with the other pilgrims from across Australia for the Festival events.

The Festival itself begins on Sunday 30 November in the afternoon, with a **Pilgrim Walk**, a public witness of faith where young people will walk together in prayer and song, from **St Patrick's Cathedral** through city streets to the **Melbourne Conference and Exhibition Centre** (MCEC).

At the heart of the Festival are the **Plenary sessions** at the MCEC on late Sunday, as well as Monday and Tuesday. These sessions will bring thousands of young people together for keynote speakers, prayer, fabulous music and powerful moments of encounter and dialogue.

The **Expo and Justice Centre** at the MCEC will provide a vibrant space to meet communities, movements and ministries, while also engaging with social justice initiatives and hands-on activities. Throughout the Festival, pilgrims can join **Workshops**, smaller sessions that go deeper into faith, mission, and life topics in interactive and practical ways.

A focal point of the Festival will be the **World Youth Day Cross and Icon**, symbols that unite young Catholics around the world in prayer and mission.

Pilgrims are also invited to celebrate the **Sacrament of Confession**, an opportunity to encounter God's mercy and healing in a personal way.

On Monday 1 December and Tuesday 2 December Festival events will begin at 8:30 am and conclude at 8:30 pm. Small groups will travel **via public transport** to the venue from our accommodation at Queens College.

Across the days, the atmosphere will be lifted with **Live Music**, creating a joyful space to celebrate, connect, and experience the energy of the wider Church.

The World Youth Day Cross and Icon

The World Youth Day Cross and Icon will be present at ACYF 2025. Pilgrims will have the opportunity to pray before the Cross and Icon during the Festival. The presence of the Cross and Icon represents a powerful opportunity to introduce young people to the global celebration of World Youth Day, which will next be held in Seoul, South Korea, in 2027. These symbols have accompanied every World Youth Day since their first pilgrimage across the world, inviting young people to gather around Christ and Mary, and to respond to the Church's missionary call. Their presence at ACYF helps young pilgrims glimpse the universal nature of the Church and invites them to consider participating in the next World Youth Day.



Workshops and Speakers

Find out more about the exciting line-up of speakers and workshops on offer at ACYF Website:

<https://acyf.org.au/speakers/>

<https://acyf.org.au/workshops/>

GET IN TOUCH



Follow Sandhurst Youth Ministry on Facebook and Instagram

Stay up to date by visiting the website: <https://www.sandhurst.catholic.org.au>

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