



May 18, 2022
Press Release

Patrons of WYD Lisbon 2023

The preparation of each World Youth Day, its realization and the dynamism that is imprinted on the meeting of young people from all over the world with the Pope is entrusted to patrons, that is, to canonized saints or in the process of canonization. For WYD Lisbon 2023, the Local Organizing Committee has proposed 13 patrons, women, men and young people who, as the Cardinal Patriarch affirms, "have shown that life in Christ fills and saves the youth of all times". These patrons, who were born in the city hosting WYD or come from other countries, are models for young people.

The Patrons of WYD Lisbon 2023 are presented by Archbishop Manuel Clemente, Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon, who points out the main historical references of each one, as well as their pastoral and spiritual importance for the preparation and celebration of the next World Youth Day.

Presentation of the Patrons of WYD Lisbon 2023 by Fr. Manuel Clemente, Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon

*The patroness par excellence of the next World Youth Day is the **Virgin Mary**, the young woman who accepted to be the mother of the incarnate Son of God. She, who arose and went in haste to the mountain to meet her cousin Elizabeth, bringing her the Jesus she had conceived. In this way, she teaches the young people of every time and place to bring Jesus to others who are waiting for Him, now as then!*

***St. John Paul II** is also our patron saint. It is to him that we owe the initiative of the World Youth Days, which have brought together and encouraged millions of young people from the five continents.*

*The patron saints are all those who have dedicated themselves to the service of youth, especially **St. John Bosco**, whom St. John Paul II declared "Father and Teacher of Youth". To the formators he proposed his "preventive system", which is always up to date: "Accompany the young, avoid sin through reason, religion and goodness. Become saints, educators of saints. May our young people feel that they are loved".*



We also count on the protection of **St. Vincent**, deacon and martyr of the fourth century. He, as patron of the diocese, will welcome and strengthen everyone with his charity and evangelical witness.

By being celebrated in Lisbon, the World Youth Days will have the heavenly support of some Lisbon saints who left Lisbon to proclaim Christ. For example, **St. Anthony** - born around 1190 - who as a Franciscan would go first to Morocco, then to Italy and then to the south of France before returning to Italy, converting many people to the Gospel that he lived and preached. He died in Padua in 1231 and so sure they were of his holiness that he was canonized only a year later. Pope Leo XIII called him "the saint of the whole world".

Centuries later, **St. Bartholomew of the Martyrs**, a Dominican and Archbishop of Braga, was also from Lisbon. He went to Trent to participate in the last phase (1562-63) of the Council that wanted to reform the Church by bringing the shepherds closer to the sheep, as the Gospel demands and as Pope Francis insists so much. St. Bartholomew, at the Council and also afterwards, was decisive in this sense and still motivates us all today.

A century later, another young man from Lisbon, **St. John de Brito**, a Jesuit, left for India to proclaim Christ. Unstoppable in his proclamation and in his difficult journeys, he dressed and spoke thinking of reaching all groups and social classes. He was martyred in Oriur in 1693.

We are also accompanied by some blessed (beatified), also from Lisbon. The first, **Joana of Portugal**, daughter of King Alfonso V, who could have been queen of several kingdoms of Europe, but preferred to be united to Christ and his Passion, leaving for the cloister at the age of nineteen. She died in Aveiro, in the convent of the Dominican nuns, in 1490. We call her Saint Joan the Princess and she urges us to make radical decisions.

In 1570, **João Fernandes**, a young Jesuit, was martyred off the coast of the Canary Islands while on his way to Brazil as a missionary. He was one of the forty martyrs of the time, a group led by Blessed Inácio de Azevedo. They had departed in response to his missionary call and certainly contributed in this way in Heaven to the mission they were unable to fulfil on earth.

Later, **Maria Clara del Niño Jesus** - a young aristocrat born on the outskirts of the capital - was soon orphaned, but decided to become a "mother" to the destitute. At a time when this was officially forbidden, she managed to found a religious congregation dedicated to this cause (Franciscan Hospitallers of the Immaculate Conception). Until her death in 1899, she overcame all opposition, repeating: "Where there is good to be done, let it be done!"

These young Lisboners who "set out" like the Mother of Jesus - both in the geography of the world and in the geography of the soul to bring Christ to many



others - are joined by Patron Saints of other origins, but from the same Kingdom. Like Blessed **Pedro Jorge Frassati** who, until his death in Turin in 1925 at the age of 24, touched everyone with the dynamism, joy and charity with which he lived the Gospel, both climbing the Alps and serving the poor. St. John Paul II called him "the man of the eight beatitudes".

With the same youth and generosity we have Blessed **Marcel Callo**, born in Rennes and who died in the Mauthausen concentration camp in 1945. He was a scout and then a Jocista (Catholic Youth Worker) and when, at the age of 22, he was called to do compulsory work in Germany, he left there with the firm intention of continuing the apostolate in this very hard condition. For this reason he was later taken to the concentration camp where he died.

We also count on the protection of two blessed young people who also "departed," even when illness immobilized their bodies, but not their hearts, like Christ nailed to the cross, who then went to the Father and saved us all with the life he gave. Blessed **Chiara Badano**, a young focolarina, identified with Christ abandoned on the cross when she was 16 years old and was struck down by an illness. She died two years later, in 1990, always radiating a luminous joy that confirmed the name "Luce" that Chiara Lubich had given her.

The following year, 1991, Blessed **Carlo Acutis** was born, who died of leukemia in Monza at the age of 15. His short life was filled with a great devotion to Mary and the Eucharist, which his computer skills enabled him to spread, even during his illness. He made of his suffering an offering and went away happy.

Each in their own time, the Patrons of WYD Lisbon 2023 have shown that the life of Christ fills and saves young people of all times. We count on them, we leave with them!

Mr. Manuel Clemente
Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon

Diocesan Patrons

For the first time, the preparation for WYD Lisbon 2023, which is being carried out in all the dioceses of Portugal thanks to the dynamism of the Diocesan Organizing Committees, is also entrusted to the diocesan patrons of World Youth Day. Thus, each diocese has chosen the saints who are a reference for each diocesan reality and who, with their example and protection, will help in the journey towards WYD Lisbon 2023.

About WYD Lisbon 2023



Lisbon is the city chosen by Pope Francis for the next international edition of World Youth Day, which will take place between August 1 and 6, 2023.

The international editions of WYD are a religious and cultural event that brings together hundreds of thousands of young people from all over the world for about a week.

The WYD was born on the initiative of Pope John Paul II, after the success of the meeting promoted in 1985 in Rome, during the International Youth Year.

The first edition took place in 1986 in Rome. WYD has already taken place in the following cities: Buenos Aires (1987), Santiago de Compostela (1989), Czestochowa (1991), Denver (1993), Manila (1995), Paris (1997), Rome (2000), Toronto (2002), Cologne (2005), Sydney (2008), Madrid (2011), Rio de Janeiro (2013), Krakow (2016) and Panama (2019).

For more information:
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