



# EPARCHY OF MISSISSAUGA

Prot. No. 125/2021

October 22, 2021

## Pastoral Letter

### WORLD YOUTH DAY 2021

Dear Rev. Fathers and Religious, Brothers and Sisters  
and most beloved Young People,

World Youth Day (WYD) is a worldwide encounter with the Pope celebrated about every three years in a different country. The most recent WYD was celebrated in Panama City, in January 2019 and the next World Youth Day will be held in Lisbon, Portugal in 2023.

WYD is open to all young people who want to take part in a festive encounter centered on Jesus Christ together with their peers. This event is an opportunity to personally experience the universality of the Catholic Church, and to share with the whole world the hope of many young people who are committing their lives to Christ and His Church. World Youth Day is a unique way to deepen your faith and grow closer to Christ, through prayer and the sacraments, together with hundreds of thousands of other young people who share your interests and ambitions.

From 1986 to 2020, the World Youth Day Celebrations in Eparchial level is occurred every year on Palm Sunday. They almost always included the Mass of Passion Sunday – when Jesus’ entry to Jerusalem in his final days is commemorated. However, on 22 November 2020, Pope Francis has moved the Eparchial Celebration of World Youth Day from Palm Sunday to the Sunday of the Solemnity of Christ the King starting in 2021. At the end of Mass for Christ the King on November 22, 2020, Pope Francis had some important reflections on World Youth Day (WYD).

“And as we prepare for the next intercontinental edition of WYD, I would also like to renew its celebration in the local Churches,” the Holy Father said. “Thirty-five years after the establishment of WYD, after listening to various opinions and consulting the Dicastery for the Laity, the Family and Life, which is responsible for youth ministry, I have decided, beginning next year, to transfer the diocesan celebration of WYD from Palm Sunday to Christ the King Sunday. The center of the celebration remains the Mystery of Jesus Christ the Redeemer of Man, as Saint John Paul II, the initiator and patron of WYD, always emphasized.”

As reminded by Pope Francis, this year, World Youth Day will be celebrated at the Eparchial level on November 21, the Solemnity of Christ the King. The theme is “Stand up. I appoint you as witness of what you have seen” (Acts 26:16). In his message on World Youth Day 2021, the Holy Father highlights the significance of young people in today’s Church and society:” Today too, God is saying to each one of you: ‘Arise!’ I fervently hope that this message may help us prepare for new times and a new page in the history of humanity. Yet we cannot begin anew without you, dear young people. If our world is to arise, it needs your strength, your enthusiasm, your passion.”

This year, the Office of the UN Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth will host the first fully virtual Youth Lead Innovation Festival, which highlights young people as innovators contributing solutions to the Sustainable Development Goals and COVID-19 response and recovery. The whole world celebrates young people’s efforts and contributions, big and small toward righting the world’s wrongs. Today’s youth are tomorrow’s leaders who know that nothing will change if they stand by; change only happens when they stand up. Therefore, we should recognize our goals.

### **Should not be Lost**

Jesus emphatically reminds us, “It is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should be lost” ( Mt. 18:14). But we should recognize an undeniable fact which the Holy Father indicates in his message: ”Whenever a young person falls, in some sense all humanity falls. Yet it is also true that when a young person rises, it is as if the whole world rises as well.” The Eparchy of Mississauga is blessed with vibrant young

people who seek to rise themselves and help others to rise. I gratefully recognize in this context, all the great initiatives of SMYM, National and International, in Eparchial, Forane and Parish levels; and various plans are underway. But let us admit, much to be done in this regard.

### **Engage All Young People**

We must engage more young people in Church activities. This is one of the major suggestions came forward in the survey during the St. Joseph Year/Family Year in many Syro-Malabar Eparchies. In this perspective I encourage everybody to prioritize Youth Apostolate in our pastoral ministries.

Dear Young people, you have great potential in your hands and great strength in your hearts. So, with Holy Father I urge you: Arise, testify joyfully that Christ is alive; and become the prophets of a new and hope-filled future! By preparing our hearts and mind let us look forward to the World Youth Day -2023 in Lisbon.

May Jesus Christ bless all of us!

**Mar Jose Kalluvilil**

Bishop of Mississauga

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NB: This pastoral letter could be read in all parishes and mission centers of Eparchy of Mississauga on Sunday November 14, 2021.