



**Message for World Youth Day
23 November 2025
His Eminence Frank Cardinal Leo
Metropolitan Archbishop of Toronto**

My Dear Brothers and Sisters, especially the Youth of the Archdiocese of Toronto,

May Jesus and Mary be in your soul.

I am writing to you on the occasion of the 40th World Youth Day, which is celebrated this year on November 23rd, the Solemnity of Christ the King. Many people don't realize that World Youth Day is an annual celebration that is observed locally. The larger international celebrations tend to draw more attention, with the next international gathering happening in Seoul Korea in 2027. Regardless of where World Youth Day happens, the invitation to pray, learn, serve, and celebrate our faith in Jesus Christ remains at the centre of all World Youth Days.

The 2025 World Youth Day's theme, drawn from the Gospel of St. John, "You also are my witnesses, because you have been with me" (Jn 15:27), highlights the importance of a **living encounter with Jesus, our King**. The dyad of *being with Jesus* and *giving witness to him* encapsulates the Christian life and reminds us that as Pilgrims of Hope, we journey with Christ the King into all spheres and sectors of life.

The Papal document inaugurating the Holy Year called *Spes non Confundit* (Hope Does Not Disappoint) draws special attention to some of the situations young people may find themselves in their daily life and walk of faith. For instance, we are told that in "the very embodiment of hope," young people often face very real struggles; the frustration of dreams, uncertain prospects after school, lack of employment, and the temptation to escape into harmful behaviors (*Spes non Confundit*, 12). As members of the Church, God's family of faith, we are called to draw close to adolescents, students, and young couples and reach out in accompaniment and support, restoring confidence and renewing hope that their dreams can be realized within God's plan (cf. *Spes non Confundit*, 12). The youth of the archdiocese play a special and crucial role in our proclamation of the Gospel because they witness among their peers in a way that only a friend is able. We look to our young people not as the Church of tomorrow but as witnesses of hope today.



The call to witness is not without challenge; it can be exhausting, discouraging and frustrating. Nevertheless, young people are called to give witness to God's love without fear, to lift up the weary, and to give testimony that Christ's kingdom is real, even amid times of struggle. To be a witness to God's love and hope is to stand with Christ in mission. The Solemnity of Christ the King reminds us that Jesus' reign is revealed in service and sacrifice. He is a King who washes feet (Jn 13:1–15), welcomes the poor (Mt 25:31–46), and forgives enemies (Lk 23:34). We have a great opportunity to mirror the Kingship of Jesus Christ in our lives - through courage in proclaiming our faith, consistency in living the Gospel, and perseverance in standing for justice and dignity (cf. *Christus Vivit*, 174–178).

Our celebration of World Youth Day during this special year of grace, the Jubilee, is more than a celebration; it is a **commissioning**. I am asking the youth of the Archdiocese of Toronto to bring the light of Christ into families, schools, workplaces, and the digital world. Be living and strong witnesses to hope in your realities. In dioceses around the world, young people will gather to reflect and pray, discovering anew that Jesus is alive in their midst, and that God's love knows no bounds. In the Archdiocese of Toronto, I invite our young people (18-39) to consider joining us on the weekend of November 21-23 to celebrate our faith during our annual [Renew Toronto Conference](#). Take seriously the call to be Pilgrims of Hope and heralds of a kingdom that is continually breaking into the world, to be sacramental symbols who are imbued with God's love and providential care.

My dear Young People, I want you to know how **precious** you are in the eyes of God and of our archdiocesan family; you are **blessed** in so many ways; you have been **gifted** in numerous manners; you have enormous **potential** inside of you; you are under the **gaze** of the Lord Jesus; you have a **mission** to accomplish; you have the **abundant life** to live; **you are loved**. And we are here for you, accompanying you, challenging you, teaching you, encouraging you, loving you and walking with you. You are not alone - we care for you so very much.

May the Blessed Ever Virgin Mary, through her intercession and love for you, help you come to know the beauty you possess inside and the awesome part you are called to play in bringing about Christ's reign in the hearts, minds and very lives of the people the Lord places in your path.