

WYD Experience

The trip to Lisbon this summer has truly been a one-of-a-kind experience that will stay with me for a long time. Not only was this my first trip to World Youth Day but it was also my first pilgrimage.

A feeling that I felt throughout the week wherever we went was the sense of unity. No matter what we did, whether it be full of joy or hardship, we knew we weren't alone, and this experience was shared with everyone around us.

As we got to know one another within our diocese group, we were able to share our moments of happiness together but also with all the other people that we met from many different countries in events like the Opening Mass and the Opening Ceremony.



Being able to see Pope Francis with our own eyes so close to us and hearing his speeches directly was a unique opportunity and his words for us young Catholics, were encouraging as we share and continue our journey of faith together.

Another moment when I felt this sense of unity was when we attended a concert full of worship and praise through the songs we sang altogether. The stadium we were in for the concert was filled with so many people singing together and the lights shining through the dark made that night even more special.

I also enjoyed the Rise Up Encounters which were catechism sessions allowing us to reflect in silence, peace and togetherness. Within moments, the atmosphere went from cheerful, animated and full of music to peaceful and calmness as we all listened and reflected together.

The journey to and from the Vigil site was more challenging as we walked under the hot sun with our bags and crowds all around us but through this occasion, we were still able to overcome the hardships faced and only made us stronger.

Through this opportunity, I was able to experience this gathering of over a million young Catholics from all over the world whilst celebrating our faith and sharing our emotions together. With all the people from our group and our unique diocese flag, I felt like we were also bringing part of St Boniface and the other parishes with us along



with all the prayers and support we have received. I am very grateful to have partaken in this pilgrimage and to have had a truly blessed week.