



Dear High School and Youth Ministry Leaders,

In July 2016, an anticipated two million young adult pilgrims (ages 18-39), including 30,000 from the United States will gather with Pope Francis in Kraków, Poland, for the 31st World Youth Day. We believe that all young adults should have access to encountering Christ through an experience of our global Church regardless of their financial resources or ability to take time off work. Sharing in our mission, we ask you to support a historic stateside celebration of World Youth Day in Washington, D.C., *Kraków in the Capital* by inviting your alumni and rising college students to participate. As the millions of young adults gather in Kraków to worship, pray, and encounter Christ together, in Washington, DC, thousands more college students and young adults from across our country will join them and be transformed.

On July 30th, our communities will come together to host *Kraków in the Capital* as an experience of World Youth Day. This regional event will allow more young adults from our country to make a pilgrimage of the heart during the Year of Mercy and encounter Jesus through a dynamic stateside celebration in solidarity with international World Youth Day pilgrims.

During this event, we invite young adults (18-39) across our region to walk in the footsteps of Pope Francis during his recent visit to our country. We will gather at the National Year of Mercy Holy Door for this encounter at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, the site where Pope Francis canonized a great missionary to our country, Saint Junípero Serra. Together we will mirror the experiences of the international World Youth Day celebration, gathering for ethnic food, music, prayer, catechesis, Stations of the Cross, confession, and culminating with the celebration of the Eucharist with Cardinal Wuerl.

In his visit to the United States, Pope Francis encouraged our American church in our outreach to young adults saying, "one of the great challenges facing the Church in this generation is to foster in all the faithful a sense of personal responsibility for the Church's mission, and to enable them to fulfill that responsibility as missionary disciples." *We invite you to help make this stateside World Youth Day event possible through your day-of presence at the event and promotion and personal invitation to young adults in your community. Join us in our effort to help young adults encounter Jesus and live as missionary disciples.*

Thank you for your support of young adults in our local Church as we celebrate their faith, strengthen them as missionary disciples, and send them into their local communities as leaven. We look forward to seeing you at *Kraków in the Capital*.

Faithfully in Christ,

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Archdiocese of Washington

Craig Gould
Archdiocese of Baltimore

Brendan Gotta
Diocese of Arlington

Bob Perron
Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston

Fr. Jude DeAngelo O.F.M. Conv.
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