

## **The Church in Australia Secondary Classroom Exercise**

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You can open this exercise by drawing the students' attention to the poster of Pope Benedict included in this pack. Ask the class which country he is from (Germany).

Ask if any of your students know what World Youth Day is, and where it is being held (Sydney, Australia - July 2008). There may be posters around school.

When the Pope returned to Germany for the last World Youth Day in Cologne, his visit caused much excitement especially among the young Catholics of Germany. The Holy Father has a special place in his heart for young people and particularly prays that they may draw closer to Christ and discover what their vocation in life is. Vocation is a theme being developed by the World Youth Day organizers.

The quote from Pope Benedict on this year's poster is an extract from a homily he gave. Reflecting on the text of Matthew 9:37-38, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send labourers into his harvest.', the Pope points out that if we knock on God's door with this petition in prayer, then, with the same petition, God is reciprocally knocking on the doors of our own hearts. It is a two-way street.

Play the online movie on the front of the webpage for World Youth Day or the slide show from the photo gallery [www.wyd2008.org/index.php/en](http://www.wyd2008.org/index.php/en) (if you don't have Internet access, perhaps get a few photos from the site in advance to show the class).

Divide the class into two or more groups. Each group will do one of two exercises and need either internet access or some handouts you can prepare on

- A. The history of the Church in Australia
- B. Blessed Mary Mackillop. (see index for location of resources).

### Group A. The History of the Church in Australia

The task of this group is to create a short article in 'tourist brochure' style, to persuade young people to come out to Australia for World Youth Day. Instead of the usual tourist attractions their piece should mention things about Australia that a Catholic Pilgrim would find interesting as well as something about World Youth Day itself. Provide a list of things worth including on the instruction card; St. Mary's Cathedral Sydney, prominent Australian Catholics (including two Prime Ministers), history of the Church and the events of World Youth Day itself.

### Group B. Blessed Mary Mackillop - Australia's first Saint.

The task of this group is to prepare a short vocational biography of Blessed Mary MacKillop to present to the rest of the class. What was her 'calling in life'? What difficulties did she face in carrying out her work? How did her work touch the lives of others?

(You can prepare cards with 'pointers' for the students to give them an idea of what the biography should contain).

### **Possible Follow up Lessons**

- Follow-up from Blessed Mary MacKillop exercise: If there is 'teaching' order of religious sisters in your diocese, invite one or more of the sisters to come in and share their experiences of teaching in the past and some of the work they are involved in today.

### **Resources**

There is an excellent section on Blessed Mary MacKillop at [www.catholicaustralia.com.au/page.php?pg=prayer-marymckillop](http://www.catholicaustralia.com.au/page.php?pg=prayer-marymckillop)

You can either print sheets for handout or direct students to this site.

The History of the Church in Australia  
[www.catholicaustralia.com.au/page.php?pg=austchurch-index](http://www.catholicaustralia.com.au/page.php?pg=austchurch-index)

There is also a section on the Church in Australia on the World Youth Day website