



PRESS RELEASE

Opening of the Second Preparatory Meeting for World Youth Day Panama 2019

Panama City, June 7th, 2018. The Second Preparatory Meeting for World Youth Day in Panama 2019 began with the participation of delegates from 83 countries from 5 continents.

The Dicastery for the Laity, Family, and Life (DLFL), a part of the Roman Curia, which has the responsibility of organizing World Youth Day initiated this meeting.

The objective of the meeting is for delegates from different countries to know how Panama is preparing for WYD in terms of organization, accommodation, registration, communication, logistics, security, as well as getting to know the host country to better guide pilgrims of their respective countries.

The working day - which depends on simultaneous interpretation in the five official languages of WYD: Spanish, English, Portuguese, French, and Italian - had its starting point with a multilingual prayer and a video reviewing the journey since July 31st, 2016, when Pope Francis announced that the host country would be Panama, to the present.

At the outset, Father Alexandre Awi Mello, ISP, invited those present to fulfill the mission entrusted by the Pope to be the bridge between the organization of WYD and the countries that will participate. "Embrace the mission to be a bridge, never be a wall," he said.

For his part, Monsignor José Domingo Ulloa Mendieta referred to the great responsibility that Panama has as the host country. "We can say without fear that we will be protagonists and witnesses of a historic moment for the Church and the world, in which ministries catered to youth and young adults will wear the trousers, creating new spaces for communication and dialogue with the youth of the world," he said.

Monsignor Ulloa stressed: "In Central America we make pilgrimages as a poor Church, and for that reason we know how to open our doors as a sign of hospitality and we receive pilgrims as one of our own... Welcome!"

Father Alexandre Awi Mello, Secretary for the Dicastery for the Laity, Family, and Life, presided over this important meeting accompanied by Father Joao Chagas, Jr., who is head of the Youth Office of the Dicastery.

From Panama, the board of directors includes the Metropolitan Archbishop Monsignor José Domingo Ulloa Mendieta; José Luis Cardinal Lacunza Maestrojuan, Bishop of the Diocese of David, the Apostolic Nuncio Monsignor Mirosław Adamczyk; Father Rómulo Aguilar, General Coordinator of the Local Organizing Committee for WYD; and the Executive Secretary of the agencies, Víctor Chang.

Among the guests are the Panamanian Bishops Monsignor Manuel Ochogavía, Colón ; Edgardo Cedeño, Penonomé; Monsignor Rafael Valdivieso, Chitré, and the Auxiliary Bishop of Panama, Monsignor Pablo Varela.

More Data from the Second Meeting:

IN ATTENDANCE:

Africa: 25 countries (19 delegates)

America: 25 countries (48 delegates) **Asia:** 11 countries (18 delegates)

Europe : 25 countries (40 delegates) **Oceania :** 2 countries (3 delegates)