

June 18, 2010 - Spain – The Salesian Youth Movement prepares for WYD



(ANS – Madrid) – The Salesian houses in Madrid are preparing to welcome thousands of young people who will be taking part in World Youth Day next year. 4,500 young people in the Salesian Youth Movement from 30 countries have already booked.

At the invitation of Pope Benedict XVI, hundreds of thousands of young people will flock to Madrid to take part in this great gathering planned for August 11-15, 2011. As at previous World Youth Days, groups of young people from Salesian centers around the world will take part. Preparations are already underway at world level and especially in Spain.

From the very start Salesian centers in Madrid declared their willingness to collaborate in the organization of the World Youth Day, offering their services and expressing their readiness to accommodate, in the first place, the more than 4,500 young people of the Salesian Youth Movement (SYM) already booked. They will not be the only ones, however, given that many other thousands of young people are expected to be hosted and cared for within the organizations of the various dioceses.

For about a year, the team put together by those responsible for the youth ministry of the Salesians and Salesian Sisters has been working on the logistics of the infrastructures needed to host so many young people. The Salesian houses in Madrid and the surrounding locales are already considering how best to welcome the young pilgrims, and various working parties have been formed (secretariat, pastoral animation, volunteers, logistics, communication) so as to have everything ready for next summer.

On June 17 there was meeting to assess the state of the preparations. The meeting's agenda also included the program for the evening of August 17, on which--as at previous WYDs--the SYM members will meet with the Rector Major and Mother General of the Salesians.

The Salesian youth ministry program in Spain during the coming year in the schools, parishes, and youth centers will be linked to WYD. There will be topics for reflection related to the WYD motto and catechesis in order "to encourage the young people to feel themselves members of the Church so that they might be aware of their Christian vocation," declare those responsible for Salesian youth ministry. Values such as a sense of Church, communion, and the international dimension will be part of the celebrations, of the campaigns, and of the material provided throughout the whole of the coming year.

For young Spaniards, especially those in Madrid, there will be emphasis in particular on the virtue of hospitality, given that they are being asked to work actively in welcoming young people from all round the world.