



# WORLD YOUTH DAY PANAMA 2019

NZ National Pilgrimage - INFORMATION SHEET 2 as at 11 May 2018

You are invited to consider journeying with Bishop Charles Drennan and the national pilgrimage as pilgrims to World Youth Day in Panama 2019. There you will join with Pope Francis and hundreds of thousands of young Catholic pilgrims from around the world!

The New Zealand Catholic Bishops have agreed that a national pilgrimage to WYD2019 be established and planned. This will involve:

- One travel provider used by all pilgrims (provider yet to be agreed)
- An agreed pilgrimage price, with the estimated range of \$6,000-\$7,000, but still to be confirmed due to flight & insurance pricing, land travel, and accommodation arrangements still in negotiation
- National promotion of the pilgrimage with local engagement
- Common pastoral preparation programme with local delivery
- A pilgrim hui in Auckland immediately prior to departure
- A common itinerary for the pilgrimage with all pilgrims travelling together to Panama and for the length of the pilgrimage. Some pilgrims may choose to extend their stay, or travel home by alternative routes following the conclusion of the pilgrimage
- An accompanying bishop (Bishop Charles Drennan, Bishop of Palmerston North)
- A pilgrimage chaplain (to be agreed)
- A pilgrimage coordinator (to be agreed)
- Approximately 40-60 pilgrims with the target age being 18yrs-35yrs old. The minimum age is 18yrs old, unless turning 18yrs in the near future and accompanied by an adult aged 25 yrs or older.

A Working Group of the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference's Council for Young People has been established with contact points for each diocese.

The indicative itinerary, *still to be confirmed when flights are released*:

Tuesday January 15	Pilgrims arrive in Auckland, Pilgrim Hui
Wednesday January 16 or Thursday January 17	Depart Auckland for Panama, via LA/Houston/Santiago (TBC) and travel to Days in the Diocese location.
Friday January 18	Days in the Diocese Programme - Diocese TBC
Saturday January 19	Days in the Diocese Programme - Diocese TBC
Sunday January 20	Days in the Diocese Programme - Diocese TBC
Monday January 21	Possible travel to Panama City
Tuesday January 22	Participation in WYD, Opening Mass
Wednesday January 23	Participation in WYD, Catechesis, Festival
Thursday January 24	Participation in WYD, Catechesis, Festival, Arrival of the Pope
Friday January 25	Participation in WYD, Catechesis, Festival, Stations of the Cross
Saturday January 26	Pilgrim Walk to site of Final Mass
Sunday January 27	WYD Final Mass
Monday January 28	Debrief and Depart for Auckland
Tuesday January 29	In transit
Wednesday January 30	Arrive Auckland

There are some risks to travel to Panama and the general Central America region. Parts of the NZ Government travel advisory website are re-produced on the following page. The Working Group are seeking further information from our Embassy based in Mexico City and from sources in Panama.

The World Youth Day Working Group will work through a reputable travel provider who will be responsible for tailoring the flights, accommodation, insurance and land transfers. The provider will assess risks and work with the Working Group to make a decision about each risk and the required responses. Travel insurance will be compulsory for our pilgrims as this is a strong recommendation of the enclosed travel advisory. A comprehensive risk management plan will be in place.

One identified risk is the simple accommodation usually offered by the WYD host city during the WYD week. This accommodation is usually very basic based in school halls and public facilities sleeping 'Marae style'. Due to the particular risks identified in Panama the Working Group is proposing to mitigate the risk somewhat by opting for a basic hotel/hostel option during the WYD week. This will increase costs compared to the simple accommodation option but help reduce risk.

The Working Group are awaiting a final quote and information from the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference's official pilgrimage partner, Cosmos Tours, who are assisting many Australian dioceses with their pilgrimages. One holdup has been the release of flight pricing for flights in and out of Panama during the period of WYD. The main airline that services Panama has not yet released pricing and therefore all airlines are holding on pricing and only offering full-priced seats for those prepared to pay up front.

As flights get released some cheaper fares may become available to those who can pay that component up front. However, NZ pilgrims will all pay a standard package price and travel together to Panama together. The NZ pilgrim package will include the following items (all prices to be confirmed):

- Flights + Insurance
- WYD Package
- Days in Diocese contribution to host diocese
- Coach transport and accommodation
- \*NZ pilgrim contribution (T-Shirt/Pilgrim prep materials etc)
- \*NZ Pilgrim Hui cost

\* An important part of the NZ pilgrimage is the unity of group (hui, traveling together to Panama) and the common pastoral preparation run local in each region/diocese. A pilgrimage is different to a normal tourist experience and a group pilgrimage to a WYD is something different again. The key pastoral goal for the pilgrimage is *providing a faith experience for pilgrims that motivates and deepens commitment to their local Catholic community and that parishes of pilgrims engage with returning pilgrims and involve them in ministry.* Therefore preparatory sessions prepare pilgrims for attending WYD, being part of a pilgrimage group, and also for returning home to put the experience into action!

Other costs that will be at the pilgrim's own expense and discretion and not included in the Pilgrim Package include:

- Incidental meals not included in Pilgrim Package
- Vaccinations
- Personal items costs
- Entry to tourist sites not included in DiD or WYD programme
- Add-on/variations for alternative return options
- Third party surcharges/levies
- Passport/visa costs
- Excess baggage

#### Indicative Timeline (subject to change)

May - Pilgrimage Chaplain confirmed, indicative costings and indicative travel itinerary in place.

early-June - Preparatory meeting, decision on confirmation of pilgrimage.

mid-June - Bookings open - Booking Deposit will be required.

late-June - Pilgrimage Coordinator confirmed

Aug - Close of bookings & confirmation of numbers.

Oct - Full and Final Payments due.

Interested? Be in touch with your diocesan contact person:

Auckland | Rochelle Dias [rochelled@cda.org.nz](mailto:rochelled@cda.org.nz)

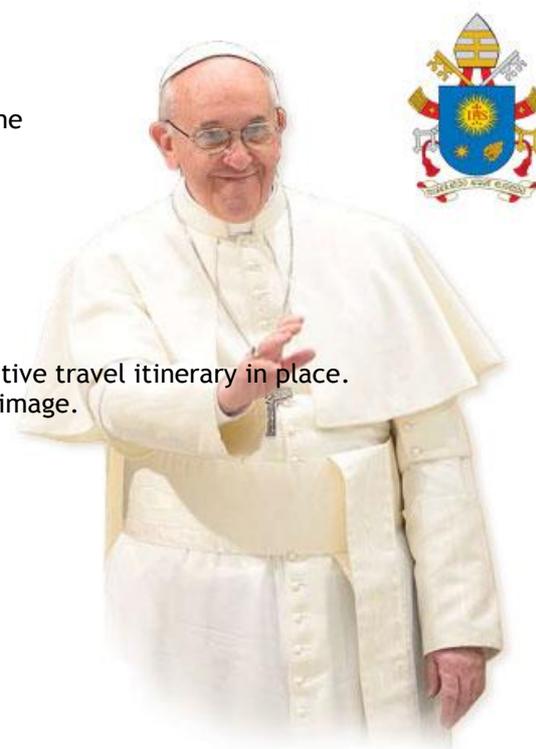
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# TRAVEL ADVISORY

**From:** [www.safetravel.govt.nz/centralsouth-america](http://www.safetravel.govt.nz/centralsouth-america)

## General Health Concerns:

*Medical facilities in Central and South America vary widely in quality. In large cities and tourist areas, clinics often provide high quality care for routine and emergency issues. In smaller centres or rural areas access to supplies and a standard of medical care similar to New Zealand is likely to be more difficult to find. New Zealanders travelling or resident in Central or South America should hold a comprehensive travel insurance policy that includes provision for medical evacuation by air.*

*A number of mosquito-borne illnesses, including Dengue fever, Chikungunya, Malaria and Zika virus, are common throughout parts of Central and South America. Travellers are advised to use insect repellent, wear protective clothing, and stay in lodgings where there are mosquito screens on windows and doors. The [Ministry of Health website](#) contains more advice on avoiding mosquito bites while travelling.*

**Note:** The NZ Pilgrimage is likely to opt for Home-stay accommodation during days in the diocese and Hotel accommodation during WYD. However, WYD events will be outdoors and in large spaces and the WYD Vigil and Final Mass includes an overnight stay in the open.

**From:** <https://www.safetravel.govt.nz/panama>

## **Extreme Risk**

*There is **extreme risk** to your security in the Darien Gap, south of the town of Yaviza, due to violent crime and the presence of drug traffickers and armed guerrilla forces. We advise against all travel to this area, which includes the Darien National Park, nature reserves and tourist resorts.*

**Note:** The NZ Pilgrimage will not travel to this region

## **Some Risk**

*There is **some risk** to your security elsewhere in Panama due to criminal activity and the potential for civil unrest and we advise caution.*

## **Crime**

*Violent crime in Panama, such as armed robbery, is not common but does occur. There have also been reports of “express kidnappings”, where individuals are forced to withdraw funds from automatic teller machines (ATMs) to secure their release. To reduce the risk of this occurring we recommend you use ATMs located inside banks during daylight hours and exercise vigilance while doing so.*

*Petty crime, such as bag-snatching and pick-pocketing, is common, especially in urban areas such as Panama City, Colon and in airports, bus terminals and on public transport. We advise New Zealanders travelling in Panama to be safety conscious at all times and take steps to secure personal belongings. You should avoid walking alone at night in Panama City. Only use registered yellow taxis and avoid sharing a taxi with unknown passengers.*

## **Civil Unrest**

*Protests and demonstrations occur occasionally in Panama City and are often focused near the university and on major streets and highways. New Zealanders in Panama are advised to avoid all protests, demonstrations and marches, as they have the potential to turn violent with little warning.*

## **General Travel Advice**

*New Zealanders travelling or living in Panama should have a comprehensive travel insurance policy in place that includes provision for medical evacuation by air. New Zealanders in Panama are encouraged to [register their details](#) with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.*