

Good evening St. Mary's, my name is Ryan Chestine. I've been attending this parish for roughly ten years, but never have I been asked to give a testimony to the Parish. Sure I've alter served, helped with groundwork, and even been pulled up to lector once or twice, but nothing like this...so bare with me and I'll try to be quick.

What's this testimony about?...It involves answering one little question...Why am I going to World Youth Day 2011? Is it to enjoy a European getaway...sorry no. Could it be to soak up the sun at the beach?...no not at all. Is it to feast on the wonders of Spanish or Italian food and WINE! Wrong again!

I am adventuring to Rome and Madrid in order to move toward a spiritual goal; to experience possibly millions of Catholic youth growing in their faith all together at once! Not to vacation in leisure, but to constantly pray with fervor! To pray, share and physically experience the gifts of our God Jesus! To stand side by side by youth of the World who believe as I do in the sacraments of God's Church! You see, Jesus gave us his Body and Blood to nourish us, and to allow us to be closer to him than at any other part of our human existence. Just as Jesus gathered with his apostles, a million youth will be gathered all at once...Imagine what a million youth could do for the world if they fully devoted themselves to prayer, to holiness, to Jesus.

Just as Jesus taught and rejuvenated his apostles, we too are called to live an authentic life, a holy life. We as the youth of the world will be called like the apostles at Pentecost, to spread the word and miracles of Jesus, through the grace of God and Power of the Holy Spirit!

I'm going to World Youth Day to pray at the tomb of St. Francis, that just as he was called by the voice of God to repair the Church nearly a thousand years ago, that I may have the strength to repair any broken area of the world that God leads me to.

I'm going to World Youth Day to Pray beside St. Peter, the first Pope, who even in his own failings of denying Christ three times, was chosen to lead the Church of God. Just as Peter accepted Jesus as the truth and the light, I will ask the same.

Oh...and I can't forget about praying beside St. Paul, who if you hadn't noticed wrote about half the New Testament from which modern Protestants have kidnapped. I will be praying for his courage to testify to anyone, anywhere to reveal the fullness of faith, just as he was called to speak on God's behalf.

After hearing my testimony You might ask...can't you pray at home?...

Or

Aren't there youth in Washington, not only Europe that need a spiritual awakening?...

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My answer is to both of these questions is yes.

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But no where else in the world can a person pray at the tomb of these great spiritual warriors! No where else in the World would I see the Pope and hundreds of priests preparing the feast of the Lord. No where else in the world can I have the opportunity to surround myself with nearly a million catholic youth, in order to praise our Lord...I am not asking for your money, but something simpler. A prayer. Pray for the youth of our parish, but especially the youth of the world. That we may forever grow deeper in Catholicism, and ever closer to The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Thank you for your time.

