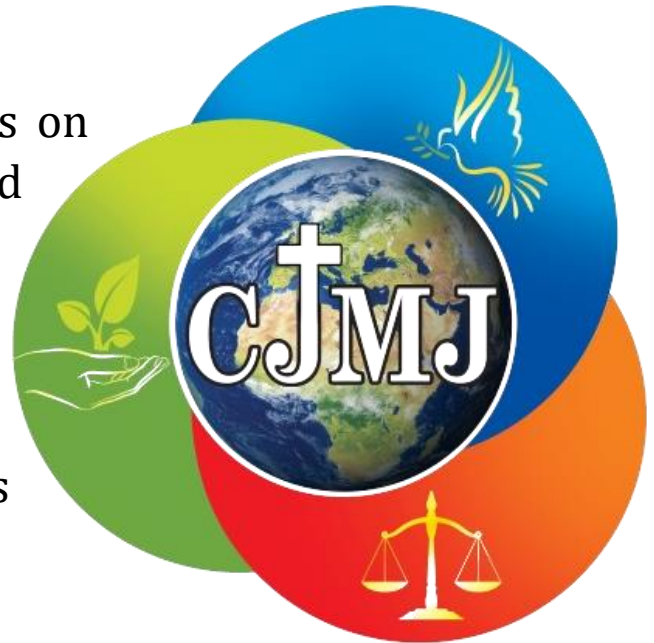


INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY

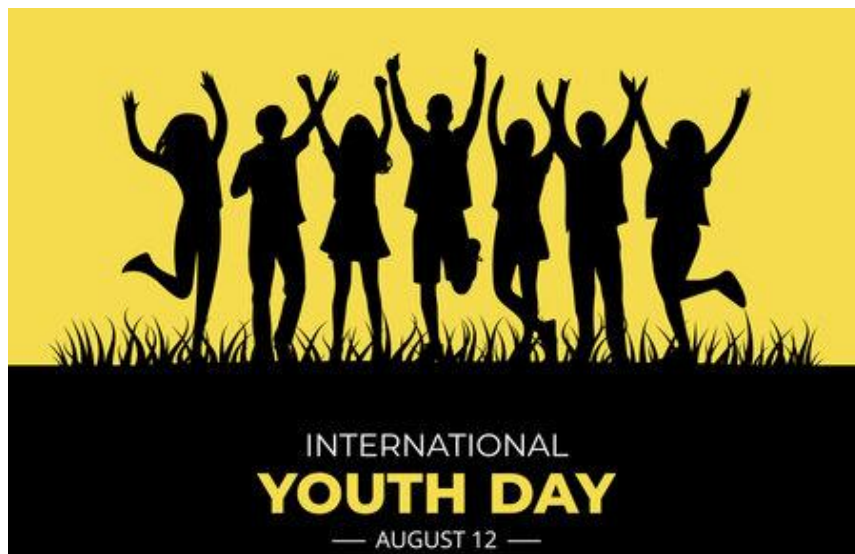
2025 Theme:

“Local Youth Actions for the SDGs and Beyond”

This theme places special emphasis on the powerful role of local youth-led initiatives in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—not just in achieving these targets, but in going beyond them through continued grassroots innovation and activism.



Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals requires a seismic shift – which can only happen if we empower young people and work with them as equals. "



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Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph

Introduction

International Youth Day 2025 will be observed on August 12th. This year's theme is **"Local Youth Actions for the SDGs and Beyond"**

The day aims to highlight the important role of young people in driving sustainable development and addressing global challenges. It provides a platform to celebrate youth contributions and discuss ways to enhance their involvement in shaping a better world for future generations.

International Youth Day 2025 focuses on celebrating and empowering young people as key drivers of change and innovation. The day aims to highlight how youth can harness digital tools to address environmental challenges, foster economic growth, and create a more sustainable future.

International Youth Day highlights the significant contributions of young people and the challenges they face globally. This day aims to raise awareness about the challenges and opportunities facing young people worldwide and to promote their role in shaping a better future.

It also aims to promote ways to engage them in becoming more actively involved in making positive contributions to their communities.

Youth Day is a time to celebrate the energy, passion, and potential of young individuals who are shaping the future.

1. "The youth are the architects of tomorrow's world."
2. "The future belongs to those who dare to dream beyond boundaries."
3. "Every great accomplishment starts with a youthful dream."
4. "The energy of youth is the driving force behind progress."
5. "Youthful enthusiasm is the spark that ignites innovation."
6. "The dreams of today's youth pave the way for a better tomorrow."
7. "The dreams of youth hold the key to unlocking a world of possibilities."
8. "The dreams of youth are the blueprints for a better world"

Let's continue to support and champion the voices of the next generation, ensuring a brighter future for all.

In Biblical Perspective: 1 Timothy 4:12

In Scripture, young people are not seen as "future leaders" only — they are **already called, gifted, and responsible** for living out God's purposes in their own generation.

- **1 Timothy 4:12** – *“Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.”*
Just as the UN theme highlights local leadership, Paul tells Timothy that youth can already model godly living and influence others.
- **Jeremiah 1:7** – *“Do not say, ‘I am only a youth’; for to all to whom I send you, you shall go.”*

God affirms that age is no barrier when He sends someone with a mission.

2. Youth as Agents of Transformation

The 2025 theme speaks of **local action** for global goals. The Bible consistently shows that **change often begins with faithful individuals in their own context.**

- **Daniel 1:8–20** – Daniel and his friends stood firm in their values in Babylon, influencing an entire kingdom through faithfulness in a local setting.
- **John 6:9–11** – A boy’s small gift of five loaves and two fish became a blessing for thousands when placed in Jesus’ hands.
Local, small-scale action can have global, kingdom-scale impact.

3. Serving God Through Stewardship

The SDGs aim to address poverty, injustice, inequality, and environmental harm. The Bible calls believers — including youth — to be **stewards of creation** and champions of justice.

- **Micah 6:8** – *“To act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.”*
Aligns with social justice and community responsibility.
- **Genesis 2:15** – Humanity is called to “work” and “keep” the garden — caring for creation is a biblical mandate.

4. Local Witness, Global Impact

Matthew 5:14–16 – *“You are the light of the world... let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”*
Local faithfulness leads to wider influence.

5. Encouragement to Today’s Youth

On this International Youth Day, the biblical message to young people is:

- You are **valued** now, not just in the future.
- Your **local actions matter** to God’s global mission.
- Faith, courage, and compassion are as essential as skill and innovation.

In Founder's Perspective :

As we celebrate the International Day of Youth 2024, we are reminded of the profound insights of Fr. Wolff, whose vision and dedication to the well-being of young people remain timeless and relevant. Fr. Wolff's founding of the congregation was driven by a deep commitment to enhancing the lives of youth, prioritizing their spiritual development over mere academic excellence. Fr. Wolff urged the sisters under his guidance to nurture the young girls in their care with a reverent fear of God, understanding that true education encompasses not only intellectual growth but also the cultivation of virtue and moral integrity.

He writes: "Why was this Holy Society instituted? For several reasons:

To educate the young in a Christian way and not only to teach them all kinds of languages, beautiful handicrafts, and housekeeping, but also and especially to inculcate Christian virtues; so that, by their examples and influence on others, they will make whole families happy for time and eternity; Fr. Wolff recognized that by nurturing Christian virtues in the youth, they would, in turn, influence their families and communities positively, creating ripples of goodness and happiness that extend far beyond their immediate surroundings. On this International Day of Youth, let us draw inspiration from Fr. Wolff's teachings and renew our commitment to the holistic development of young people. It is the vocation of each one of us to help them navigate the complexities of the modern world with integrity and faith, empowering them to shape a brighter and more compassionate future.

Following in Fr. Wolff's footsteps, as dedicated members of the CJMJ, we should instruct the youth entrusted to us in harnessing the transformative power of technology to address global challenges responsibly and with religious faith. Let us equip them not only with the skills they need for the digital age but also with the values that will enable them to use these tools for the greater good.

May we, inspired by Fr. Wolff's example, continue to support and guide our youth towards a life of virtue, purpose, and eternal happiness.

What we can do.

As young people, **International Youth Day** is a great chance not just to celebrate but to *lead* — to show that youth are not the "future" only, but also the *present*. Here are practical ways you can take action:

1. Lead by Example

- Start a **personal initiative** — plant trees, run a mini fundraiser, or tutor younger students.
- Show responsibility in school, college, or workplace so people see youth as trustworthy change-makers.

2. Learn & Grow

- Join a **workshop or training** in leadership, digital skills, or social entrepreneurship.
- Read about this year's theme and find how it applies to your life and community.

3. Speak Up

- Use **social media** to share positive messages, facts, and stories that inspire change.
- Participate in **youth forums or debates** to voice ideas on local issues.

4. Serve Others

- Volunteer at a **community project**, like a clean-up drive, blood donation camp, or school support program.
- Organize or join a **visit to a care home, orphanage, or marginalized community**.

5. Build Unity

- Work with friends to host an **intercultural day** — share music, food, and traditions to promote harmony.
- Partner with other youth groups to plan joint activities that break social barriers.

6. Deepen Your Values

- Spend time reflecting on **your purpose and strengths** — how can you use them for the good of others?
- If faith-based, participate in **youth-led prayer or worship services** focusing on hope, justice, and compassion.

Pledge :

I pledge to use my energy, talents, and time to make a positive difference in my community.

I pledge to be a voice for justice, peace, and unity, and to stand against all forms of hatred, violence, and discrimination.

I pledge to protect and care for God's creation, to use resources wisely, and to promote a healthy and sustainable future for all.

I pledge to respect and learn from others, to value diversity, and to work together for the common good.

I pledge to live with integrity, compassion, and responsibility, setting an example in speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity (1 Timothy 4:12).

I pledge to let my light shine through local action, believing that even small acts, done with love, can change the world for the better.

Prayer for Youth – International Youth Day 2025

Heavenly Father,

We thank You for the gift of youth — for their energy, creativity, and courage. On this International Youth Day, we lift up every young person around the world.

Lord, as Your Word says, *“Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example”* Fill our young people with wisdom beyond their years, strength to stand for what is right, and love that reaches across differences.

Bless their hands to build, their voices to speak truth, and their hearts to serve faithfully in their communities. May their local actions — in schools, neighborhoods, and churches shine as light to the world (Matthew 5:14–16) and bring glory to Your name.

Raise them up as stewards of Your creation, defenders of justice, and messengers of peace. Protect them from despair and hopelessness; instead, ignite in them a vision for a better world rooted in Your kingdom values.

Lord, let every dream aligned with Your will flourish, and may the youth of today become the faithful leaders, servants, and witnesses of tomorrow.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, who calls and equips even the youngest to follow Him. *Amen.*

Conclusion

As we celebrate this International Youth Day, let us remember that today is not just about words, but about a commitment to action.

The theme for this year — *“Local Youth Actions for the SDGs and Beyond”* — reminds us that change begins right where we are. Every community project, every stand for justice, every act of kindness is a seed for a better world.

Our young people are not simply the leaders of tomorrow; they are the change-makers of today. When youth bring their creativity, courage, and compassion into local action, they create ripples that touch the globe.

Let us go forward inspired — to protect our planet, to serve our communities, to defend the dignity of every person, and to build bridges of peace. Together, we can transform hope into reality.

May each of us, young and old alike, leave here ready to act, ready to serve, and ready to shine. The future is not a distant dream — it begins with what we choose to do now.

May God bless our youth, our communities, and our shared journey toward a just and sustainable world.

Wishing you a Youth Day filled with inspiration, empowerment, and endless possibilities.