**ABSTRACT**

**Objective:** The World Youth Day (the WYD) with about 3 million Catholics from all over the world participating directly in a single place and time is one of the biggest and most spectacular projects organized on regular basis by the Catholic Church since more than 30 years ago. From the perspective of management sciences, we presented the WYD as an example of a very large organisational event which requires the people who execute it to display managerial skills adequate for managing megaevents. The research problem that we pondered concerns what made the WYD, as a particular type of project – a large-scale religious event - successful.

**Methodology:** We conducted an in-depth analysis of the literature and the study of the organisation and execution of the World Youth Day held in Cracow in between 25 and 31 July 2016. The combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods was selected: desk research analysis, in-depth individual interviews and partly categorised quantitative interviews.

**Findings:** The results of the research indicate that particularly inspiring for the management practice is, among others, an exceptional ability to involve and motivate project’s stakeholders and special purpose entities which the organisers of the Cracow WYD displayed.

**Value Added:** In our considerations, we point out the specific type of a project – a global event of a religious nature – that according to our knowledge was not a subject of research in the field of management studies and thus we fill out the existing research gap.

**Recommendations:** The exploratory character of the study may inspire further research into the success factors of soft megaprojects and in particular those of religious nature.