



Sanmaargi
— to shepherd HIS flock —



MDB 01/2025

MYSORE DIOCESAN BULLETIN

JAN. & FEB. 2025



***Wishing you all a Holy
&
Grace filled New Year - 2025***

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THE JUBILEE PRAYER

*Father in heaven,
may the faith you have given us
in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother,
and the flame of charity enkindled
in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,
for the coming of your Kingdom.*

*May your grace transform us into
tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel.
May those seeds transform from within
both humanity and the whole cosmos
in the sure expectation of
a new heaven and a new earth,
when, with the powers of Evil vanquished,
your glory will shine eternally.*

*May the grace of the Jubilee
reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope,
a yearning for the treasures of heaven.*

*May that same grace spread
the joy and peace of our Redeemer
throughout the earth.*

*To you our God, eternally blessed,
be glory and praise for ever.*

Amen



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SHEPHERD'S VOICE

Dear & Rev. Fathers / Brothers / Sisters / Laity,

*Greetings from Archbishop Bernard Moras,
Apostolic Administrator, Mysore.*

HOLY JUBILEE YEAR 2025: PILGRIMS OF HOPE

The Catholic Church celebrates the Holy Jubilee year once in 25 years (ordinary Jubilee). This Ordinary Jubilee in the Catholic Church marks the commemoration of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. This time for the jubilee, the Holy Father has chosen the theme PILGRIMS OF HOPE. We are all on a pilgrim journey, we have a common destination to reach, Heaven. This Holy Jubilee Year is a call for each one of us to journey together to reach that common destination. The Holy Year, marked by the theme "Pilgrims of Hope", will focus on rekindling hope and unity in a world that has faced profound challenges in recent years.

The announcement of the Jubilee 2025 highlights the significance of Jubilee Years in the Catholic Church, a tradition rooted in Scripture and established in 1300 by Pope Boniface VIII. Jubilee Years, held every 25 years, offer a time for deep spiritual renewal, the

reception of indulgences, and reconciliation with God. They are characterized by pilgrimages, the opening of the Holy Doors in Rome's four major basilicas, and a call to prayer, charity, and conversion.

In his message, the Holy Father emphasized the need for hope in today's world, encouraging the faithful to embrace their role as "pilgrims" journeying together toward a deeper relationship with God and a commitment to living the Gospel. Pope Francis also expressed his desire for the Jubilee to be a time of healing and renewal, particularly in the aftermath of global crises like the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing social and environmental challenges.

The Holy Father has inaugurated the Holy Jubilee year at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome on 24th December 2024 by opening the Holy Door in the same Basilica and subsequently in all the three other Major Basilicas in Rome. In our diocese we have inaugurated the Holy Jubilee year by the inaugural ceremony held on 29th December 2024 following the instructions given by the Holy Father and the Conference of the Catholic Bishops of India.

Let this year of Jubilee be a year of special graces and blessings from God Almighty. On our part, let us celebrate this jubilee year with more interest and make it a meaningful one. Let this Jubilee be not just a celebration of the events, but let it be a celebration of relationships. Let us renew our baptismal commitments. Let us never forget that we are PILGRIMS OF HOPE. Let us journey together and make this journey a memorable one.



IMPORTANT EVENTS

NEW YEAR 2025: MARY MOTHER OF GOD

As we step into the New Year, let us give thanks to God for the gift of life, faith, and new beginnings. The start of the new year is an invitation to renew our trust in God's plan and to dedicate ourselves to living lives of faith, hope, and love. May 2025 be a jubilee year filled with God's grace, peace, and blessings for you and your loved ones.

On the New Year Day, Church celebrates the solemnity of Mary Mother of God. The Church reminds us of her unique role in the salvation history and her deep maternal love for us. By entrusting the year 2025 to her maternal care, we invite her to accompany us in our joys and struggles, just as she accompanied Jesus throughout His life. Let us seek her protection and imitate her faith, humility, and obedience to God's will as we journey through this year.

**WISHING YOU ALL A HOLY AND
GRACE - FILLED NEW YEAR 2025!**

EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

We celebrate the Epiphany of the Lord, the feast that reveals Jesus Christ as the Light of the Nations. The visit of the Magi reminds us that God's salvation is for all people, regardless of race, culture, or nation. The gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh symbolize Christ's kingship, divinity, and sacrificial mission.

As we journey into the New Year, let us reflect on the faith and perseverance of the Magi. Like them, we are called to seek Christ, offering Him our gifts - our time, talents, and hearts. Their encounter with Jesus transformed their lives, and ours can be too if we follow His light.

UNITY OCTAVE

We join Christians around the world in celebrating the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity from January 18th to the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul on 25th January. This special octave reminds us of Jesus' heartfelt prayer for His disciples in John 17:23, calling us to unity so that the world may believe in His love. Unity is a gift from God, nurtured through our prayers, actions, and openness to the Holy Spirit. As followers of Christ, we are called to set aside divisions and embrace the bonds of faith and love that unite us.

The Diocese of Mysore along with the United Christian Forum (UCF), Mysore Zone, every year organises the week of prayer for Christian Unity. The theme is "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD... AND YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS YOURSELF (Luke 10:27)". We shall have a week's prayer in different churches within the city of Mysore, organised by the Commission for Ecumenism. Kindly do participate in this week of prayer and pray for the unity of all Christians.

REPUBLIC DAY

On 26th of January 2025, we complete 75 years and celebrate 76th Republic Day. After achieving the independence in 1947, the first republic day was celebrated in 1950. The constituent assembly was

entrusted with the responsibility to draft the Constitution on 26th November 1949 and it came into existence on the 26th January of 1950. On this Republic Day, let us celebrate the spirit of our great nation and honor the values enshrined in our Constitution—justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity. As we salute the sacrifices of those who shaped India's democratic foundation, may we reaffirm our commitment to unity, diversity, and progress. Let's strive together to build a brighter, stronger, and more inclusive future for our country. Wishing everyone a very Happy Republic Day!

WORLD DAY OF PEACE

On 30th January, our Diocese celebrates the World Day of Peace in coordination with the commission for Inter Religious Dialogue and the Chair in Christianity of the University of Mysore. This special day calls us to reflect on the profound gift of peace, a cornerstone of Christ's mission, and a shared responsibility for every believer. In a world often divided by conflict, injustice, and inequality, we are reminded of our Christian duty to be peacemakers, both in our local communities and across the globe.

The Church invites us to pray fervently for peace and to commit ourselves to acts of kindness, forgiveness, and reconciliation in our daily lives. Together, may we become instruments of His peace, bringing hope to a world in need. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God." (Matthew 5:9). For the message of the Holy Father on the occasion of the World Day of Peace, please refer to ***Annexure I***.

DAY OF THE CONSECRATED LIFE

A day of prayer for men and women in consecrated life was instituted by Pope St John Paul II in 1997. It is attached to the feast of the Presentation of the Lord on 2nd February. Let us pray for all the consecrated persons, especially for those serving in our diocese.

I thank all the religious fathers, sisters and brothers in our diocese for their support to the Church and for their service in the diocese, parishes and institutions.

WORLD DAY OF THE SICK

Pope St John Paul II declared 11th February (the feast of our Lady of Lourdes) as the World Day of the Sick to unite in Spirit with those who are suffering from various diseases and pray for them. Let us remember and pray for all those who are sick and suffering around the world.

CCBI MEETING

The Conference of Catholic Bishops of India (CCBI) will hold its biannual plenary assembly from Jan 28th to Feb 4th 2025 at Xavier Institute of Management (XIM) in the Diocese of Cuttack Bhubaneswar, Odisha. The assembly will focus on the theme: "Discerning the Synodal Pathways for Mission". Around 150 Bishops/ Administrators and Secretaries of various Commissions will participate in the meeting. I request you to pray for the success of the meeting. The CCBI has sent the following prayer to be recited in our churches and religious gathering.

PRAYER FOR THE CCBI MEETING

O God, Our Father, You have revealed Your infinite love through Jesus Christ, our Saviour, and continue to call Your Church to share in His mission through the power of the Holy Spirit.

We thank You for the clergy, religious, and laity who have generously responded to Your call, faithfully proclaiming the message of salvation in our land.

Bless the 36th Plenary Assembly of the Conference of Catholic Bishops of India. As our Bishops reflect on the theme "Discerning Synodal Pathways for Mission," pour out afresh Your Holy Spirit upon them. Grant them the grace to discern Your will and lead Your Church with wisdom and courage.

Give them, as true shepherds, the grace and wisdom to inspire the faithful to bear witness to Christ amid the joys and challenges of our times. May every

moment of the Plenary Assembly be inspired by Your Spirit, so that, through prayerful listening, mutual sharing, and collective discernment, new pathways may emerge to carry the Gospel of Christ into the heart of the world.

Through the ministry of our bishops, make us Your instruments of love and peace, bringing hope and light to every corner of our nation.

Through the intercession of Mary, Queen of Apostles, St. Thomas, and St. Francis Xavier, may Your Church in India flourish and bear abundant fruit for Your glory.

We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

JUBILEE 2025

The Holy Jubilee Year 2025 was announced by Pope Francis in 2023 calling us to study the four major documents of Vatican II and praying for the Jubilee year. The Jubilee 2025 was officially proclaimed on 9th May 2024, by Pope Francis, who presided over a formal reading of the Jubilee's papal bull of indiction. The papal bull, titled "Spes Non Confudit," meaning "Hope Does Not Disappoint," declared that the Jubilee Year would officially begin with the opening of the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica on Christmas Eve 2024. For the papal bull of indiction please refer to ***Annexure II***.

Finally on 24th December 2024, the Holy Father has inaugurated the Jubilee year by opening the Jubilee doors in St. Peter's Basilica, Rome. Following the instructions of the Holy Father, we in our diocese have inaugurated the Holy Jubilee Year 2025 on

29th December 2024 by taking the special Jubilee Cross in procession from Virgin of the Poor Church, Bannimantap to St. Joseph's Cathedral, Mysuru and celebrating the solemn Holy Eucharist in the Cathedral Church. It was a very meaningful celebration and a large number of priests, sisters and brothers and the lay faithful participated in the inaugural ceremony.

ACTIVITIES SUGGESTED TO BE TAKEN UP DURING JUBILEE YEAR 2025.

The following are the activities suggested by the Jubilee Committee for the meaningful celebration of the Holy Jubilee Year 2025 in our diocese. All are requested to cooperate and celebrate the Jubilee Year meaningfully.

1. Pilgrimage centers suggested during the Holy year to visit:

- (1) St. Joseph Cathedral, Mysuru.
- (2) Virgine of the Poor Church, Mysuru.
- (3) St. Antony's Shrine, Dornahalli.
- (4) Servant of God Rajendra Swamy Shrine, Chikkarasinakere.
- (5) St. Antony the Hermit Church, Karattukovil.
- (6) St. Anne's Church, Virajpet.

2. The Holy Jubilee Cross would be taken round to various places with prior arrangement with the Cathedral Parish Priest. Cross should be taken around with great respect and dignity. It can be taken to a parish only for two days and then handed over to another parish or return to cathedral.

3. The Commissions of the Diocese to take up various animation program in the parish level/ deanery level/Diocesan level. Every commission should undertake at least 3 programs during the Holy Jubilee Year 2025 based on final statement of Synod of Synodality. Diocesan Commission coordinators with the help of Commission secretaries to draw up pastoral plan for the year 2025.
4. Deanery level meetings of the religious and priests to discuss and implement their involvement in the pastoral, social and educational activities as how best we could transmit the values of the Gospel to the people.
5. Diocesan level Bible Quiz competitions to be conducted.
6. Deanery level animation regarding Jubilee, preferably during Lenten season.
7. Deanery level animation of altar servers, Vincent De Paul Society members, Legion of Mary, Parish choir, catechism teachers, Parish Finance Committee, and Parish Pastoral Council.
8. Deanery level programs for young couples.
9. Deanery level various sports and games competition for the youth.
10. It was proposed to start a meal center at Virgin of the poor Church for giving meals (Lunch) around 100 poor people every day as a memorial of Holy Jubilee Year 2025.

INDULGENCES DURING THE ORDINARY JUBILEE 2025

The Ordinary Jubilee Year of 2025, inaugurated by Pope Francis on December 24, 2024, offers Catholics the opportunity to obtain plenary indulgences - complete remission of temporal punishment due to sin - through specific spiritual practices and acts of devotion.

Ways to Obtain a Plenary Indulgence during the Jubilee Year:

1. Pilgrimage to Designated Churches:

■ **In Rome:** Catholics can obtain a plenary indulgence by making a pilgrimage to at least one of the four major papal basilicas: St. Peter's Basilica, the Archbasilica of St. John Lateran, St. Mary Major, or St. Paul Outside the Walls. Additional churches include the Basilica of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem, Basilica of St. Lawrence Outside the Walls, Basilica of St. Sebastian, Sanctuary of Divine Love, Church of the Holy Spirit in Sassia, Church of St. Paul at Tre Fontane, and the Roman Catacombs.

■ **Worldwide:** The indulgence can also be obtained by devoutly visiting any designated Jubilee site and participating in Eucharistic adoration or meditation, concluding with the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and invocations to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

2. Sacramental Participation:

■ Receive the Sacrament of Penance (confession) and Holy Communion.

■ Pray for the intentions of the Holy Father.

3. **Spiritual Disposition:**

- Be truly repentant and free from any attachment to sin.

4. **Special Considerations:**

- Individuals unable to travel, such as the elderly, sick, or incarcerated, can obtain the indulgence by uniting spiritually with Jubilee celebrations, offering their prayers and sufferings to God, and fulfilling the usual conditions as soon as possible.

In **Annexure III** you can find the Decree on the Granting of the Indulgence during the Ordinary Jubilee Year 2025 by the Apostolic Penitentiary.

At this jointure, I would like to place on record the efforts taken by the Jubilee Committee of our diocese. From the day of its inception, the Committee came together several times and spent day and night in planning and executing every bit of the inauguration of the Jubilee 2025 in our diocese. So many people of good will came forward to collaborate with the Jubilee Committee members and made the celebration a grand success. I wish to appreciate and congratulate the Jubilee Committee and all those who played their role in one way or the other in this event. This inaugural ceremony was a great means of witnessing to Christ to those living around us.

THE ANNUAL SPIRITUAL RETURNS

It is the responsibility of the parish priests to keep a record of the sacraments administered in the parish limits. The parish priest is also the shepherd of the flock (both the Catholics and the entire population

within the parish limits) in his parish. He is expected to know his flock. The Local Ordinary with the help of the parish priests gets the information concerning the flock within the diocese and should send the report of the same to Rome by the end of January every year. Therefore, all the Parish Priests are requested to send the Annual Spiritual Returns in the prescribed forms. Please send the details by 15th January 2025 without fail and retain a signed copy of the same for your file.

BUDGET PREPARATION FOR THE YEAR 01-04-2025 TO 31-03-2026

Budget preparation is an important activity for good financial management for any activity, more so annual budget preparation is a very important activity for the well management of our parishes and institutions and the Diocese.

Budget preparation takes time. While one goes through the income and expenditure of the previous year 2024 - 2025, one has to plan all activities for the coming year 2025 - 2026, plan the projects to be taken up etc., get the estimate and project the income and expenditure, both for the revenue budget as well as capital budget.

The budget scrutiny and evaluation will take place in the month of March 2025. Budget is to be got approved before 1st of April 2025. Hence, I request all the parish priests and heads of the institutions and societies of the Diocese to prepare the budgets in the format given to you. The procurator / heads of the

institution will send you via email the budget format. You are expected to send back the budget to procurator/ concerned institutions by on line by 3rdweek of February 2025.

EARMARKED COLLECTIONS

All are reminded to send the stipulated collections to the Financial Administrator at the earliest. While thanking you all for sending the collections for specific purposes, I request those who have not sent the same, to send them without delay. Let us avoid last minute transactions.

Please find enclosed the details of the earmarked collections received for the period from November - December 2024 in ***ANNEXURE IV***.

Archbishop Emeritus
+ **Most Rev. Dr. Bernard Moras**
Apostolic Administrator,
Diocese of Mysore.



ANNEXURE - I

Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the 58th World Day of Peace 1st January 2025

FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES: GRANT US YOUR PEACE

I. LISTENING TO THE PLEA OF AN ENDANGERED HUMANITY

1. At the dawn of this New Year given to us by our heavenly Father, a year of Jubilee in the spirit of hope, I offer heartfelt good wishes of peace to every man and woman. I think especially of those who feel downtrodden, burdened by their past mistakes, oppressed by the judgment of others and incapable of perceiving even a glimmer of hope for their own lives. Upon everyone I invoke hope and peace, for this is a Year of Grace born of the Heart of the Redeemer!
2. Throughout this year, the Catholic Church celebrates the Jubilee, an event that fills hearts with hope. The "jubilee" recalls an ancient Jewish practice, when, every forty-ninth year, the sound of arams horn (in Hebrew, jobel) would proclaim a year of forgiveness and freedom for the entire people (cf. Lev 25:10). This solemn proclamation was meant to echo throughout the land (cf. Lev 25:9) and to restore God's justice in every aspect of life: in the use of the land, in the possession of goods and in relationships with others, above all the poor and the dispossessed. The blowing of the horn reminded the entire people, rich and poor alike, that no one comes into this world doomed to

oppression: all of us are brothers and sisters, sons and daughters of the same Father, born to live in freedom, in accordance with the Lord's will (cf. Lev 25:17, 25, 43, 46, 55).

3. In our day too, the Jubilee is an event that inspires us to seek to establish the liberating justice of God in our world. In place of the ram's horn, at the start of this Year of Grace we wish to hear the "desperate plea for help"[1] that, like the cry of the blood of Abel (cf. Gen 4:10), rises up from so many parts of our world - a plea that God never fails to hear. We for our part feel bound to cry out and denounce the many situations in which the earth is exploited and our neighbours oppressed. [2] These injustices can appear at times in the form of what Saint John Paul II called "structures of sin" [3] that arise not only from injustice on the part of some but are also consolidated and maintained by a network of complicity.
4. Each of us must feel in some way responsible for the devastation to which the earth, our common home, has been subjected, beginning with those actions that, albeit only indirectly, fuel the conflicts that presently plague our human family. Systemic challenges, distinct yet interconnected, are thus created and together cause havoc in our world. [4] I think, in particular, of all manner of disparities, the inhuman treatment meted out to migrants, environmental decay, the confusion wilfully created by disinformation, the refusal to engage in any form of dialogue and the immense resources spent on the industry of war. All these, taken together,

represent a threat to the existence of humanity as a whole. At the beginning of this year, then, we desire to heed the plea of suffering humankind in order to feel called, together and as individuals, to break the bonds of injustice and to proclaim God's justice. Sporadic acts of philanthropy are not enough. Cultural and structural changes are necessary, so that enduring change may come about. [5]

II.A CULTURAL CHANGE: ALL OF US ARE DEBTORS

5. The celebration of the Jubilee spurs us to make a number of changes in order to confront the present state of injustice and inequality by reminding ourselves that the goods of the earth are meant not for a privileged few, but for everyone. [6] We do well to recall the words of Saint Basil of Caesarea: "Tell me, what things belong to you? Where did you find them to make them part of your life? ... Did you not come forth naked from the womb of your mother? Will you not return naked to the ground? Where did your property come from? If you say that it comes to you naturally by luck, you would deny God by not recognizing the Creator and being grateful to the Giver". [7] Without gratitude, we are unable to recognize God's gifts. Yet in his infinite mercy the Lord does not abandon sinful humanity, but instead reaffirms his gift of life by the saving forgiveness offered to all through Jesus Christ. That is why, in teaching us the "Our Father," Jesus told us to pray: "Forgive us our trespasses" (Mt 6:12).

6. Once we lose sight of our relationship to the Father, we begin to cherish the illusion that our relationships with others can be governed by a logic of exploitation and oppression, where might makes right. [8] Like the elites at the time of Jesus, who profited from the suffering of the poor, so today, in our interconnected global village, [9] the international system, unless it is inspired by a spirit of solidarity and interdependence, gives rise to injustices, aggravated by corruption, which leave the poorer countries trapped. A mentality that exploits the indebted can serve as ashorth and description of the present "debt crisis" that weighs upon a number of countries, above all in the global South.
7. I have repeatedly stated that foreign debt has become a means of control whereby certain governments and private financial institutions of the richer countries unscrupulously and indiscriminately exploit the human and natural resources of poorer countries, simply to satisfy the demands of their own markets. [10] In addition, different peoples, already burdened by international debt, find themselves also forced to bear the burden of the "ecological debt" incurred by the more developed countries. [11] Foreign debt and ecological debt are two sides of the same coin, namely the mindset of exploitation that has culminated in the debt crisis. [12] In the spirit of this Jubilee Year, I urge the international community to work towards forgiving foreign debt in recognition of the ecological debt existing between

the North and the South of this world. This is an appeal for solidarity, but above all for justice. [13]

8. The cultural and structural change needed to surmount this crisis will come about when we finally recognize that we are all sons and daughters of the one Father, that we are all in his debt but also that we need one another, in a spirit of shared and diversified responsibility. We will be able to "rediscover once for all that we need one another" and are indebted one to another. [14]

III. A JOURNEY OF HOPE: THREE PROPOSALS

9. If we take to heart these much-needed changes, the Jubilee Year of Grace can serve to set each of us on a renewed journey of hope, born of the experience of God's unlimited mercy. [15] God owes nothing to anyone, yet he constantly bestows his grace and mercy upon all. As Isaac of Nineveh, a seventh-century Father of the Eastern Church, put it in one of his prayers: "Your love, Lord, is greater than my trespasses. The waves of the sea are nothing with respect to the multitude of my sins, but placed on a scale and weighed against your love, they vanish like a speck of dust". [16] God does not weigh up the evils we commit; rather, he is immensely "rich in mercy, for the great love with which he loved us" (Eph 2:4). Yet he also hears the plea of the poor and the cry of the earth. We would do well simply to stop for a moment, at the beginning of this year, to think of the mercy with which he constantly forgives our sins and forgives our every debt, so that our hearts may overflow with hope and peace.

10. In teaching us to pray the "Our Father", Jesus begins by asking the Father to forgive our trespasses, but passes immediately to the challenging words: "as we forgive those who trespass against us" (cf. Mt 6:12). In order to forgive others their trespasses and to offer them hope, we need for our own lives to be filled with that same hope, the fruit of our experience of God's mercy. Hope overflows in generosity; it is free of calculation, makes no hidden demands, is unconcerned with gain, but aims at one thing alone: to raise up those who have fallen, to heal hearts that are broken and to set us free from every kind of bondage.
11. Consequently, at the beginning of this Year of Grace, I would like to offer three proposals capable of restoring dignity to the lives of entire peoples and enabling them to set them out anew on the journey of hope. In this way, the debt crisis can be overcome and all of us can once more realize that we are debtors whose debts have been forgiven. First, I renew the appeal launched by Saint John Paul II on the occasion of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000 to consider "reducing substantially, if not cancelling outright, the international debt which seriously threatens the future of many nations". [17] In recognition of their ecological debt, the more prosperous countries ought to feel called to do everything possible to forgive the debts of those countries that are in no condition to repay the amount they owe. Naturally, lest this prove merely an isolated act of charity that simply reboots the

vicious cycle of financing and indebtedness, a new financial framework must be devised, leading to the creation of a global financial Charter based on solidarity and harmony between peoples. I also ask for a firm commitment to respect for the dignity of human life from conception to natural death, so that each person can cherish his or her own life and all may look with hope to a future of prosperity and happiness for themselves and for their children. Without hope for the future, it becomes hard for the young to look forward to bringing new lives into the world. Here I would like once more to propose a concrete gesture that can help foster the culture of life, namely the elimination of the death penalty in all nations. This penalty not only compromises the inviolability of life but eliminates every human hope of forgiveness and rehabilitation. [18] In addition, following in the footsteps of Saint Paul VI and Benedict XVI, [19] I do not hesitate to make yet another appeal, for the sake of future generations. In this time marked by wars, let us use at least a fixed percentage of the money earmarked for armaments to establish a global Fund to eradicate hunger and facilitate in the poorer countries educational activities aimed at promoting sustainable development and combating climate change. [20] We need to work at eliminating every pretext that encourages young people to regard their future as hopeless or dominated by the thirst to avenge the blood of their dear ones. The future is a gift meant to enable us to go beyond past failures and to pave new paths of peace.

IV. THE GOAL OF PEACE

12. Those who take up these proposals and set out on the journey of hope will surely glimpse the dawn of the greatly desired goal of peace. The Psalmist promises us that "steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss" (Ps 85:10). When I divest myself of the weapon of credit and restore the path of hope to one of my brothers or sisters, I contribute to the restoration of God's justice on this earth and, with that person, I advance towards the goal of peace. As Saint John XXIII observed, true peace can be born only from a heart "disarmed" of anxiety and the fear of war. [21]
13. May 2025 be a year in which peace flourishes! A true and lasting peace that goes beyond quibbling over the details of agreements and human compromises. [22] May we seek the true peace that is granted by God to hearts disarmed: hearts not set on calculating what is mine and what is yours; hearts that turn selfishness into readiness to reach out to others; hearts that see themselves as indebted to God and thus prepared to forgive the debts that oppress others; hearts that replace anxiety about the future with the hope that every individual can be a resource for the building of a better world.
14. Disarming hearts is a job for everyone, great and small, rich and poor alike. At times, something quite simple will do, such as "a smile, a small gesture of friendship, a kind look, a ready ear, a good deed". [23] With such gestures, we progress towards the goal of peace. We will arrive all the more quickly

if, in the course of journeying alongside our brothers and sisters, we discover that we have changed from the time we first set out. Peace does not only come with the end of wars but with the dawn of a new world, a world in which we realize that we are different, closer and more fraternal than we ever thought possible.

15. Lord, grant us your peace! This is my prayer to God as I now offer my cordial good wishes for the New Year to the Heads of State and Government, to the leaders of International Organizations, to the leaders of the various religions and to every person of good will. Forgive us our trespasses, Lord, as we forgive those who trespass against us. In this cycle of forgiveness, grant us your peace, the peace that you alone can give to those who let themselves be disarmed in heart, to those who choose in hope to forgive the debts of their brothers and sisters, to those who are unafraid to confess their debt to you, and to those who do not close their ears to the cry of the poor.

From the Vatican, 8 December 2024

- POPE FRANCIS

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- [1] Bull of Indiction of the Ordinary Jubilee of the Year 2025 *Spes Non Confundit* (9 May 2024), 8.
- [2] Cf. SAINT JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Letter *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* (10 November 1994), 51.
- [3] Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (30 December 1987), 36.
- [4] Cf. Address to Participants in the Summit of the Pontifical Academies of Sciences and of Social Sciences, 16 May 2024.
- [5] Cf. Apostolic Exhortation *Laudate Deum* (4 October 2023), 70.
- [6] Cf. Bull of Indiction of the Ordinary Jubilee of the Year 2025 *Spes Non Confundit* (9 May 2024), 16.

- [7] Homilia de avaritia, 7: PG 31, 275.
- [8] Cf. Encyclical Letter Laudato Si' (24 May 2015), 123.
- [9] Cf. Catechesis, 2 September 2020: L'Osservatore Romano, 3 September 2020, p. 8.
- [10] Cf. Address to Participants in the Meeting "Addressing the Debt Crisis in the Global South", 5 June 2024.
- [11] Cf. Address to the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change – COP 28, 2 December 2023.
- [12] Cf. Address to Participants in the Meeting "Addressing Debt Crisis in the Global South", 5 June 2024.
- [13] Cf. Bull of Indiction of the Ordinary Jubilee of the Year 2025 Spes Non Confundit (9 May 2024), 16.
- [14] Encyclical Letter Fratelli Tutti (3 October 2020), 35.
- [15] Cf. Bull of Indiction of the Ordinary Jubilee of the Year 2025 Spes Non Confundit (9 May 2024), 23.
- [16] Oratio X, 100-101: CSCO 638, 115. Saint Augustine could even state that God remains constantly in our debt: "Since 'your mercy is everlasting', you deign by your promises to become debtor to all those whose sins you forgive" (cf. Confessions, 5, 9, 17: PL 32, 714).
- [17] Apostolic Letter Tertio Millennio Adveniente (10 November 1994), 51.
- [18] Cf. Bull of Indiction of the Ordinary Jubilee of the Year 2025 Spes Non Confundit (9 May 2024), 10.
- [19] Cf. SAINT PAUL VI, Encyclical Letter Populorum Progressio (26 March 1967), 51; BENEDICT XVI, Address to the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See, 9 January 2006; Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Sacramentum Caritatis (22 February 2007), 90.
- [20] Cf. Encyclical Letter Fratelli Tutti (3 October 2020), 262; Address to the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See, 8 January 2024; Address to the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change – COP 28, 2 December 2023.
- [21] Cf. Encyclical Letter Pacem in Terris (11 April 1963), Carlen 113.
- [22] Cf. Moment of Prayer on the Tenth Anniversary of the "Invocation for Peace in the Holy Land", 7 June 2024.
- [23] Bull of Indiction of the Ordinary Jubilee of the Year 2025 Spes Non Confundit (9 May 2024), 18.

ANNEXURE II

SPES NON CONFUNDIT

BULL OF INDICTION OF THE ORDINARY JUBILEE OF THE YEAR 2025

TO ALL WHO READ THIS LETTER MAY HOPE FILL YOUR HEARTS

1. *SPES NON CONFUNDIT*. "Hope does not disappoint" (*Rom* 5:5). In the spirit of hope, the Apostle Paul addressed these words of encouragement to the Christian community of Rome. Hope is also the central message of the coming Jubilee that, in accordance with an ancient tradition, the Pope proclaims every twenty-five years. My thoughts turn to all those *pilgrims of hope* who will travel to Rome in order to experience the Holy Year and to all those others who, though unable to visit the City of the Apostles Peter and Paul, will celebrate it in their local Churches. For everyone, may the Jubilee be a moment of genuine, personal encounter with the Lord Jesus, the "door" (cf. *Jn* 10:7.9) of our salvation, whom the Church is charged to proclaim always, everywhere and to all as "our hope" (*1 Tim* 1:1).

Everyone knows what it is to hope. In the heart of each person, hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come, despite our not knowing what the future may bring. Even so, uncertainty about the future may at times give rise to conflicting feelings, ranging from confident trust to apprehensiveness, from serenity to anxiety, from firm conviction to hesitation and doubt. Often, we come

across people who are discouraged, pessimistic and cynical about the future, as if nothing could possibly bring them happiness. For all of us, may the Jubilee be an opportunity to be renewed in hope. God's word helps us find reasons for that hope. Taking it as our guide, let us return to the message that the Apostle Paul wished to communicate to the Christians of Rome.

A word of hope

2. "Since we are justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing in the glory of God... Hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us" (*Rom 5:1-2.5*). In this passage, Saint Paul gives us much to reflect upon. We know that the Letter to the Romans marked a decisive turning point in his work of evangelization. Until then, he had carried out his activity in the eastern part of the Empire, but now he turns to Rome and all that Rome meant in the eyes of the world. Before him lay a great challenge, which he took up for the sake of preaching the Gospel, which knows no barriers or confines. The Church of Rome was not founded by Paul, yet he felt impelled to hasten there in order to bring to everyone the Gospel of Jesus Christ, crucified and risen from the dead, a message of hope that fulfils the ancient promises, leads to glory and, grounded in love, does not disappoint.

3. Hope is born of love and based on the love springing from the pierced heart of Jesus upon the cross: "For if while we were enemies, we were

reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life" (*Rom 5:19*). That life becomes manifest in our own life of faith, which begins with Baptism, develops in openness to God's grace and is enlivened by a hope constantly renewed and confirmed by the working of the Holy Spirit.

By his perennial presence in the life of the pilgrim Church, the Holy Spirit illumines all believers with the light of hope. He keeps that light burning, like an ever-burning lamp, to sustain and invigorate our lives. Christian hope does not deceive or disappoint because it is grounded in the certainty that nothing and no one may ever separate us from God's love: "Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril or the sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (*Rom 8:35-39*). Here we see the reason why this hope perseveres in the midst of trials: founded on faith and nurtured by charity, it enables us to press forward in life. As Saint Augustine observes: "Whatever our state of life, we cannot live without these three dispositions of the soul, namely, to believe, to hope and to love". [1]

4. Saint Paul is a realist. He knows that life has its joys and sorrows, that love is tested amid trials, and that hope can falter in the face of suffering. Even so,

he can write: “We boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope” (Rom 5:3-4). For the Apostle, trials and tribulations mark the lives of those who preach the Gospel amid incomprehension and persecution (cf. 2 Cor 6:3-10). Yet in those very contexts, beyond the darkness we glimpse a light: we come to realize that evangelization is sustained by the power flowing from Christ’s cross and resurrection. In this way, we learn to practise a virtue closely linked to hope, namely *patience*. In our fast-paced world, we are used to wanting everything now. We no longer have time simply to be with others; even families find it hard to get together and enjoy one another’s company. Patience has been put to flight by frenetic haste, and this has proved detrimental, since it leads to impatience, anxiety and even gratuitous violence, resulting in more unhappiness and self-centredness.

Nor is there much place for patience in this age of the Internet, as space and time yield to an ever-present “now”. Were we still able to contemplate creation with a sense of awe, we might better understand the importance of patience. We could appreciate the changes of the seasons and their harvests, observe the life of animals and their cycles of growth, and enjoy the clarity of vision of Saint Francis. In his *Canticle of the Creatures*, written exactly eight hundred years ago, Francis saw all creation as a great family and could call the sun his “brother” and the moon his “sister”. [2] A renewed appreciation of the value of patience could only prove beneficial for

ourselves and for others. Saint Paul often speaks of patience in the context of our need for perseverance and confident trust in God's promises. Yet, before all else, he testifies to God's own patience, as "the God of all patience and encouragement" (Rom 15:5). Patience, one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit, sustains our hope and strengthens it as a virtue and a way of life. May we learn to pray frequently for the grace of patience, which is both the daughter of hope and at the same time its firm foundation.

A Journey of hope

5. This interplay of hope and patience makes us see clearly that the Christian life is a *journey* calling for *moments of greater intensity* to encourage and sustain hope as the constant companion that guides our steps towards the goal of our encounter with the Lord Jesus. I like to think that the proclamation of the first Jubilee, in the year 1300, was preceded by a journey of grace inspired by popular spirituality. How can we fail to recall the various ways by which the grace of forgiveness had been poured out upon God's holy and faithful People? We are reminded, for example, of the great "Pardon" that Saint Celestine V granted to all those who visited the Basilica of Santa Maria di Collemaggio in Aquila on the 28th and 29th days of August 1294, six years before Pope Boniface VIII instituted the Holy Year. The Church was already experiencing the grace of the Jubilee as an outpouring of divine mercy. Even earlier, in 1216, Pope Honorius III granted the plea of Saint Francis for an indulgence for all those visiting the Porziuncola on the first two days of August. The same can be said of the

pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela: in 1222, Pope Callistus II allowed the Jubilee to be celebrated there whenever the Feast of the Apostle James fell on a Sunday. It is good that such “dispersed” celebrations of the Jubilee continue, so that the power of God’s forgiveness can support and accompany communities and individuals on their pilgrim way.

Pilgrimage is of course a fundamental element of every Jubilee event. Setting out on a journey is traditionally associated with our human quest for meaning in life. A pilgrimage on foot is a great aid for rediscovering the value of silence, effort and simplicity of life. In the coming year, *pilgrims of hope* will surely travel the ancient and more modern routes in order to experience the Jubilee to the full. In Rome itself, along with the usual visits to the catacombs and the Seven Churches, other itineraries of faith will be proposed. Journeying from one country to another as if borders no longer mattered, and passing from one city to another in contemplating the beauty of creation and masterpieces of art, we learn to treasure the richness of different experiences and cultures, and are inspired to lift up that beauty, in prayer, to God, in thanksgiving for his wondrous works. The Jubilee Churches along the pilgrimage routes and in the city of Rome can serve as oases of spirituality and places of rest on the pilgrimage of faith, where we can drink from the wellsprings of hope, above all by approaching the sacrament of Reconciliation, the essential starting-point of any true journey of conversion. In the particular Churches, special care should be taken to prepare priests and the faithful to

celebrate the sacrament of Confession and to make it readily available in its individual form.

In a particular way, I would like to invite the faithful of the Eastern Churches, particularly those already in full communion with the Successor of Peter, to take part in this pilgrimage. They have suffered greatly, often even unto death, for their fidelity to Christ and the Church, and so they should feel themselves especially welcome in this City of Rome that is also their Mother and cherishes so many memories of their presence. The Catholic Church, enriched by their ancient liturgies and the theology and spirituality of their Fathers, monks and theologians, wants to give symbolic expression to its embrace of them and their Orthodox brothers and sisters in these times when they endure their own Way of the Cross, often forced by violence and instability to leave their homelands, their holy lands, for safer places. For them, the hope born of the knowledge that they are loved by the Church, which does not abandon them but follows them wherever they go, will make the symbolism of the Jubilee all the more powerful.

6. The Holy Year of 2025 is itself in continuity with preceding celebrations of grace. In the last Ordinary Jubilee, we crossed the threshold of two millennia from the birth of Jesus Christ. Then, on 13 March 2015, I proclaimed an Extraordinary Jubilee for the sake of making known and encouraging an encounter with the “merciful face of God”, [3] the core message of the Gospel for every man and woman of every time and place. Now the time has come for a new Jubilee, when once more the Holy Door will be flung open to

invite everyone to an intense experience of the love of God that awakens in hearts the sure hope of salvation in Christ. The Holy Year will also guide our steps towards yet another fundamental celebration for all Christians: 2033 will mark the two thousandth anniversary of the redemption won by the passion, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. We are about to make a pilgrimage marked by great events, in which the grace of God precedes and accompanies his people as they press forward firm in faith, active in charity and steadfast in hope (cf. *1 Thess 1:3*).

Sustained by this great tradition, and certain that the Jubilee Year will be for the entire Church a lively experience of grace and hope, I hereby decree that the Holy Door of the Basilica of Saint Peter in the Vatican will be opened on 24 December 2024, thus inaugurating the Ordinary Jubilee. On the following Sunday, 29 December 2024, I will open the Holy Door of my cathedral, Saint John Lateran, which on 9 November this year will celebrate the 1700th anniversary of its dedication. Then, on 1 January 2025, the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, the Holy Door of the Papal Basilica of Saint Mary Major will be opened. Finally, Sunday, 5 January 2025, will mark the opening of the Holy Door of the Papal Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls. These last three Holy Doors will be closed on Sunday, 28 December 2025.

I further decree that on Sunday, 29 December 2024, in every cathedral and co-cathedral, diocesan bishops are to celebrate Holy Mass as the solemn opening of the Jubilee Year, using the ritual indications that will be provided for that occasion. For celebrations in co-

cathedrals, the bishop's place can be taken by a suitably designated delegate. A pilgrimage that sets out from a church chosen for the *collectio* and then proceeds to the cathedral can serve to symbolize the journey of hope that, illumined by the word of God, unites all the faithful. In the course of this pilgrimage, passages from the present Document can be read, along with the announcement of the Jubilee Indulgence to be gained in accordance with the prescriptions found in the ritual indications mentioned above. The Holy Year will conclude in the particular Churches on Sunday, 28 December 2025; in the course of the year, every effort should be made to enable the People of God to participate fully in its proclamation of hope in God's grace and in the signs that attest to its efficacy.

The Ordinary Jubilee will conclude with the closing of the Holy Door in the Papal Basilica of Saint Peter in the Vatican on 6 January 2026, the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord. During the Holy Year, may the light of Christian hope illumine every man and woman, as a message of God's love addressed to all! And may the Church bear faithful witness to this message in every part of the world!

Signs of hope

7. In addition to finding hope in God's grace, we are also called to discover hope in the *signs of the times* that the Lord gives us. As the Second Vatican Council observed: "In every age, the Church has the responsibility of reading the signs of the times and interpreting them in the light of the Gospel. In this way, in language adapted to every generation, she can

respond to people's persistent questions about the meaning of this present life and of the life to come, and how one is related to the other". [4] We need to recognize the immense goodness present in our world, lest we be tempted to think ourselves overwhelmed by evil and violence. The signs of the times, which include the yearning of human hearts in need of God's saving presence, ought to become signs of hope.

8. The first sign of hope should be the desire for peace in our world, which once more finds itself immersed in the tragedy of war. Heedless of the horrors of the past, humanity is confronting yet another ordeal, as many peoples are prey to brutality and violence. What does the future hold for those peoples, who have already endured so much? How is it possible that their desperate plea for help is not motivating world leaders to resolve the numerous regional conflicts in view of their possible consequences at the global level? Is it too much to dream that arms can fall silent and cease to rain down destruction and death? May the Jubilee remind us that those who are peacemakers will be called "children of God" (Mt 5:9). The need for peace challenges us all, and demands that concrete steps be taken. May diplomacy be tireless in its commitment to seek, with courage and creativity, every opportunity to undertake negotiations aimed at a lasting peace.

9. Looking to the future with hope also entails having enthusiasm for life and a readiness to share it. Sadly, in many situations this is lacking. A first effect of this is the *loss of the desire to transmit life*. A number of

countries are experiencing an alarming *decline in the birthrate* as a result of today's frenetic pace, fears about the future, the lack of job security and adequate social policies, and social models whose agenda is dictated by the quest for profit rather than concern for relationships. In certain quarters, the tendency "to blame population growth, instead of extreme and selective consumerism on the part of some, is one way of refusing to face the [real] issues". [5]

Openness to life and responsible parenthood is the design that the Creator has implanted in the hearts and bodies of men and women, a mission that the Lord has entrusted to spouses and to their love. It is urgent that responsible legislation on the part of states be accompanied by the firm support of communities of believers and the entire civil community in all its components. For *the desire of young people to give birth to new sons and daughters* as a sign of the fruitfulness of their love ensures a future for every society. This is a matter of hope: it is born of hope and it generates hope.

Consequently, the Christian community should be at the forefront in pointing out the need for a *social covenant to support and foster hope*, one that is inclusive and not ideological, working for a future filled with the laughter of babies and children, in order to fill the empty cradles in so many parts of our world. All of us, however, need to recover the joy of living, since men and women, created in the image and likeness of God (cf. *Gen 1:26*), cannot rest content with getting along one day at a time, settling for the here and now and seeking fulfilment in material realities

alone. This leads to a narrow individualism and the loss of hope; it gives rise to a sadness that lodges in the heart and brings forth fruits of discontent and intolerance.

10. During the Holy Year, we are called to be tangible signs of hope for those of our brothers and sisters who experience hardships of any kind. I think of *prisoners* who, deprived of their freedom, daily feel the harshness of detention and its restrictions, lack of affection and, in more than a few cases, lack of respect for their persons. I propose that in this Jubilee Year governments undertake initiatives aimed at restoring hope; forms of amnesty or pardon meant to help individuals regain confidence in themselves and in society; and programmes of reintegration in the community, including a concrete commitment to respect for law.

This is an ancient appeal, one drawn from the word of God, whose wisdom remains ever timely. It calls for acts of clemency and liberation that enable new beginnings: "You shall hallow the fiftieth year and you shall proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants" (*Lev 25:10*). This institution of the Mosaic law was later taken up by the prophet Isaiah: "The Lord has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour" (*Is 61:1-2*). Jesus made those words his own at the beginning of his ministry, presenting himself as the fulfilment of the "year of the Lord's favour" (cf. *Lk 4:18-19*). In every part of the world, believers, and their Pastors in particular, should

be one in demanding dignified conditions for those in prison, respect for their human rights and above all the abolition of the death penalty, a provision at odds with Christian faith and one that eliminates all hope of forgiveness and rehabilitation. [6] In order to offer prisoners a concrete sign of closeness, I would myself like to open a Holy Door in a prison, as a sign inviting prisoners to look to the future with hope and a renewed sense of confidence.

11. Signs of hope should also be shown to the *sick*, at home or in hospital. Their sufferings can be allayed by the closeness and affection of those who visit them. Works of mercy are also works of hope that give rise to immense gratitude. Gratitude should likewise be shown to all those healthcare workers who, often in precarious conditions, carry out their mission with constant care and concern for the sick and for those who are most vulnerable.

Inclusive attention should also be given to all those in particularly difficult situations, who experience their own weaknesses and limitations, especially those affected by illnesses or disabilities that severely restrict their personal independence and freedom. Care given to them is a hymn to human dignity, a song of hope that calls for the choral participation of society as a whole.

12. Signs of hope are also needed by those who are the very embodiment of hope, namely, *the young*. Sadly, they often see their dreams and aspirations frustrated. We must not disappoint them, for the future depends on their enthusiasm. It is gratifying to see the energy they demonstrate, for example, by rolling

up their sleeves and volunteering to help when disasters strike and people are in need. Yet it is sad to see young people who are without hope, who face an uncertain and unpromising future, who lack employment or job security, or realistic prospects after finishing school. Without the hope that their dreams can come true, they will inevitably grow discouraged and listless. Escaping into drugs, risk-taking and the pursuit of momentary pleasure does greater harm to them in particular, since it closes them to life's beauty and richness, and can lead to depression and even self-destructive actions. For this reason, the Jubilee should inspire the Church to make greater efforts to reach out to them. With renewed passion, let us demonstrate care and concern for adolescents, students and young couples, the rising generation. Let us draw close to the young, for they are the joy and hope of the Church and of the world!

13. Signs of hope should also be present for *migrants* who leave their homelands behind in search of a better life for themselves and for their families. Their expectations must not be frustrated by prejudice and rejection. A spirit of welcome, which embraces everyone with respect for his or her dignity, should be accompanied by a sense of responsibility, lest anyone be denied the right to a dignified existence. *Exiles, displaced persons and refugees*, whom international tensions force to emigrate in order to avoid war, violence and discrimination, ought to be guaranteed security and access to employment and education, the means they need to find their place in a new social context.

May the Christian community always be prepared to defend the rights of those who are most vulnerable, opening wide its doors to welcome them, lest anyone ever be robbed of the hope of a better future. May the Lord's words in the great parable of the Last Judgement always find an echo in our hearts: "I was a stranger and you welcomed me" for "just as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you did it to me" (Mt 25:35.40).

14. The *elderly*, who frequently feel lonely and abandoned, also deserve signs of hope. Esteem for the treasure that they are, their life experiences, their accumulated wisdom and the contribution that they can still make, is incumbent on the Christian community and civil society, which are called to cooperate in strengthening the covenant between generations.

Here I would also mention *grandparents*, who represent the passing on of faith and wisdom to the younger generation. May they find support in the gratitude of their children and the love of their grandchildren, who discover in them their roots and a source of understanding and encouragement.

15. I ask with all my heart that hope be granted to the billions of the *poor*, who often lack the essentials of life. Before the constant tide of new forms of impoverishment, we can easily grow inured and resigned. Yet we must not close our eyes to the dramatic situations that we now encounter all around us, not only in certain parts of the world. Each day we meet people who are poor or impoverished; they may even be our next-door neighbours. Often, they are

homeless or lack sufficient food for the day. They suffer from exclusion and indifference on the part of many. It is scandalous that in a world possessed of immense resources, destined largely to producing weapons, the poor continue to be “the majority of the planet’s population, billions of people. These days they are mentioned in international political and economic discussions, but one often has the impression that their problems are brought up as an afterthought, a question which gets added almost out of duty or in a tangential way, if not treated merely as collateral damage. Indeed, when all is said and done, they frequently remain at the bottom of the pile”. [7] Let us not forget: the poor are almost always the victims, not the ones to blame.

Appeals for hope

16. Echoing the age-old message of the prophets, the Jubilee reminds us that *the goods of the earth* are not destined for a privileged few, but for everyone. The rich must be generous and not avert their eyes from the faces of their brothers and sisters in need. Here I think especially of those who lack water and food: hunger is a scandal, an open wound on the body of our humanity, and it summons all of us to a serious examination of conscience. I renew my appeal that “with the money spent on weapons and other military expenditures, let us establish a global fund that can finally put an end to hunger and favour development in the most impoverished countries, so that their citizens will not resort to violent or illusory situations, or have to leave their countries in order to seek a more dignified life”. [8]

Another heartfelt appeal that I would make in light of the coming Jubilee is directed to the more affluent nations. I ask that they acknowledge the gravity of so many of their past decisions and determine to *forgive the debts* of countries that will never be able to repay them. More than a question of generosity, this is a matter of justice. It is made all the more serious today by a new form of injustice which we increasingly recognize, namely, that “a true ‘ecological debt’ exists, particularly between the global North and South, connected to commercial imbalances with effects on the environment and the disproportionate use of natural resources by certain countries over long periods of time”. [9] As sacred Scripture teaches, the earth is the Lord’s and all of us dwell in it as “aliens and tenants” (*Lev 25:23*). If we really wish to prepare a path to peace in our world, let us commit ourselves to remedying the remote causes of injustice, settling unjust and unpayable debts, and feeding the hungry.

17. The coming Jubilee Year will also coincide with a significant date for all Christians, namely, *the 1700th anniversary of the celebration of the first great Ecumenical Council, that of Nicaea*. It is worth noting that, from apostolic times, bishops have gathered on various occasions in order to discuss doctrinal questions and disciplinary matters. In the first centuries of Christianity, synods frequently took place in both East and West, showing the importance of ensuring the unity of God’s People and the faithful proclamation of the Gospel. The Jubilee can serve as an important occasion for giving concrete expression to this form of synodality, which the Christian community today considers increasingly necessary

for responding to the urgent need for evangelization. All the baptized, with their respective charisms and ministries, are co-responsible for ensuring that manifold signs of hope bear witness to God's presence in the world.

The Council of Nicaea sought to preserve the Church's unity, which was seriously threatened by the denial of the full divinity of Jesus Christ and hence his consubstantiality with the Father. Some three hundred bishops took part, convoked at the behest of the Emperor Constantine; their first meeting took place in the Imperial Palace on 20 May 325. After various debates, by the grace of the Spirit they unanimously approved the Creed that we still recite each Sunday at the celebration of the Eucharist. The Council Fathers chose to begin that Creed by using for the first time the expression "We believe", [10] as a sign that all the Churches were in communion and that all Christians professed the same faith.

The Council of Nicaea was a milestone in the Church's history. The celebration of its anniversary invites Christians to join in a hymn of praise and thanksgiving to the Blessed Trinity and in particular to Jesus Christ, the Son of God, "consubstantial with the Father", [11] who revealed to us that mystery of love. At the same time, Nicaea represents a summons to all Churches and Ecclesial Communities to persevere on the path to visible unity and in the quest of finding ways to respond fully to the prayer of Jesus "that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me" (Jn 17:21).

The Council of Nicaea also discussed the date of Easter. To this day, different approaches to this question prevent celebrating the fundamental event of our faith on the same day. Providentially, a common celebration will take place in the year 2025. May this serve as an appeal to all Christians, East and West, to take a decisive step forward towards unity around a common date for Easter. We do well to remind ourselves that many people, unaware of the controversies of the past, fail to understand how divisions in this regard can continue to exist.

Anchored in hope

18. Hope, together with faith and charity, makes up the triptych of the “theological virtues” that express the heart of the Christian life (cf. *1 Cor 13:13; 1 Thess 1:3*). In their inseparable unity, hope is the virtue that, so to speak, gives inward direction and purpose to the life of believers. For this reason, the Apostle Paul encourages us to “rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, and persevere in prayer” (*Rom 12:12*). Surely we need to “abound in hope” (cf. *Rom 15:13*), so that we may bear credible and attractive witness to the faith and love that dwell in our hearts; that our faith may be joyful and our charity enthusiastic; and that each of us may be able to offer a smile, a small gesture of friendship, a kind look, a ready ear, a good deed, in the knowledge that, in the Spirit of Jesus, these can become, for those who receive them, rich seeds of hope. Yet what is the basis of our hope? To understand this, let us stop and reflect on “the reasons for our hope” (cf. *1 Pet 3:15*).

19. "I believe in *life everlasting*". [12] So our faith professes. Christian hope finds in these words an essential foundation. For hope is "that theological virtue by which we desire... eternal life as our happiness". [13] The Second Vatican Council says of hope that, "when people are deprived of this divine support, and lack hope in eternal life, their dignity is deeply impaired, as may so often be seen today. The problems of life and death, of guilt and suffering, remain unsolved, so that people are frequently thrown into despair". [14] We, however, by virtue of the hope in which we were saved, can view the passage of time with the certainty that the history of humanity and our own individual history are not doomed to a dead end or a dark abyss, but directed to an encounter with the Lord of glory. As a result, we live our lives in expectation of his return and in the hope of living forever in him. In this spirit, we make our own the heartfelt prayer of the first Christians with which sacred Scripture ends: "Come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev 22:20).

20. The death and resurrection of Jesus is the heart of our faith and the basis of our hope. Saint Paul states this succinctly by the use of four verbs: "I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas and then to the twelve" (1 Cor 15:3-5). Christ *died, was buried, was raised and appeared*. For our sake, Jesus experienced the drama of death. The Father's love

raised him in the power of the Spirit, and made of his humanity the first fruits of our eternal salvation. Christian hope consists precisely in this: that in facing death, which appears to be the end of everything, we have the certainty that, thanks to the grace of Christ imparted to us in Baptism, “life is changed, not ended”, [15] forever. Buried with Christ in Baptism, we receive in his resurrection the gift of a new life that breaks down the walls of death, making it a passage to eternity.

The reality of *death*, as a painful separation from those dearest to us, cannot be mitigated by empty rhetoric. The Jubilee, however, offers us the opportunity to appreciate anew, and with immense gratitude, the gift of the new life that we have received in Baptism, a life capable of transfiguring death’s drama. It is worth reflecting, in the context of the Jubilee, on how that mystery has been understood from the earliest centuries of the Church’s life. An example would be the tradition of building baptismal fonts in the shape of an octagon, as seen in many ancient baptisteries, like that of Saint John Lateran in Rome. This was intended to symbolize that Baptism is the dawn of the “eighth day”, the day of the resurrection, a day that transcends the normal, weekly passage of time, opening it to the dimension of eternity and to life everlasting: the goal to which we tend on our earthly pilgrimage (cf. *Rom 6:22*).

The most convincing testimony to this hope is provided by the *martyrs*. Steadfast in their faith in the risen Christ, they renounced life itself here below, rather than betray their Lord. Martyrs, as confessors

of the life that knows no end, are present and numerous in every age, and perhaps even more so in our own day. We need to treasure their testimony, in order to confirm our hope and allow it to bear good fruit.

The martyrs, coming as they do from different Christian traditions, are also seeds of unity, expressions of the ecumenism of blood. I greatly hope that the Jubilee will also include ecumenical celebrations as a way of highlighting the richness of the testimony of these martyrs.

21. What, then, will become of us after death? With Jesus, beyond this threshold we will find eternal life, consisting in full communion with God as we forever contemplate and share in his infinite love. All that we now experience in hope, we shall then see in reality. We are reminded of the words of Saint Augustine: "When I am one with you in all my being, there will be no more pain and toil; my life shall be true life, a life wholly filled by you". [16] What will characterize this fullness of communion? Being happy. *Happiness* is our human vocation, a goal to which all aspire.

But what is happiness? What is the happiness that we await and desire? Not some fleeting pleasure, a momentary satisfaction that, once experienced, keeps us longing for more, in a desperate quest that leaves our hearts unsated and increasingly empty. We aspire to a happiness that is definitively found in the one thing that can bring us fulfilment, which is love. Thus, we will be able to say even now: I am loved, therefore I exist; and I will live forever in the love that does not disappoint, the love from which nothing can ever

separate me. Let us listen once more to the words of the Apostle: “I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 8:38-39).

22. Another reality having to do with eternal life is *God’s judgement*, both at the end of our individual lives and at the end of history. Artists have often attempted to portray it – here we can think of Michelangelo’s *magnum opus* in the Sistine Chapel – in accordance with the theological vision of their times and with the aim of inspiring a sense of awe in the viewer. We should indeed prepare ourselves consciously and soberly for the moment when our lives will be judged, but we must always do this from the standpoint of hope, the theological virtue that sustains our lives and shields them from groundless fear. The judgement of God, who is love (cf. *1 Jn* 4:8.16), will surely be based on love, and in particular on all that we have done or failed to do with regard to those in need, in whose midst Christ, the Judge himself, is present (cf. *Mt* 25:31-46). Clearly, then, we are speaking of a judgement unlike any handed down by human, earthly tribunals; it should be understood as a rapport of truth with the God who is love and with oneself, within the unfathomable mystery of divine mercy. Sacred Scripture states: “You have taught your people that the righteous must be kind, and you have filled your children with good hope, because you give repentance for sins, so that... when

we are judged, we may expect mercy” (*Wis 12:19.22*). In the words of Benedict XVI: “At the moment of judgement we experience and we absorb the overwhelming power of his love over all the evil in the world and in ourselves. The pain of love becomes our salvation and our joy”. [17]

Judgement, then, concerns the salvation in which we hope and which Jesus has won for us by his death and resurrection. It is meant to bring us to a definitive encounter with the Lord. The evil we have done cannot remain hidden; it needs to be *purified* in order to enable this definitive encounter with God's love. Here we begin to see the need of our prayers for all those who have ended their earthly pilgrimage, our solidarity in an intercession that is effective by virtue of the communion of the saints, and the shared bond that makes us one in Christ, the firstborn of all creation. The Jubilee indulgence, thanks to the power of prayer, is intended in a particular way for those who have gone before us, so that they may obtain full mercy.

23. Indeed, the *indulgence* is a way of discovering the unlimited nature of God's mercy. Not by chance, for the ancients, the terms “mercy” and “indulgence” were interchangeable, as expressions of the fullness of God's forgiveness, which knows no bounds.

The *sacrament of Penance* assures us that God wipes away our sins. We experience those powerful and comforting words of the Psalm: “It is he who forgives all your guilt, who heals every one of your ills, who redeems your life from the grave, who crowns you with love and compassion... The Lord is compassion and love, slow to anger and rich in

mercy... He does not treat us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our faults. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so strong is his love for those who fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our sins" (Ps 103:3-4.8.10-12). The sacrament of Reconciliation is not only a magnificent spiritual gift, but also a decisive, essential and fundamental step on our journey of faith. There, we allow the Lord to erase our sins, to heal our hearts, to raise us up, to embrace us and to reveal to us his tender and compassionate countenance. There is no better way to know God than to let him reconcile us to himself (cf. 2 Cor 5:20) and savour his forgiveness. Let us not neglect Confession, but rediscover the beauty of this sacrament of healing and joy, the beauty of God's forgiveness of our sins!

Still, as we know from personal experience, every sin "leaves its mark". Sin has consequences, not only outwardly in the effects of the wrong we do, but also inwardly, inasmuch as "every sin, even venial, entails an unhealthy attachment to creatures, which must be purified either here on earth, or after death, in the state called Purgatory". [18] In our humanity, weak and attracted by evil, certain residual effects of sin remain. These are removed by the indulgence, always by the grace of Christ, who, as Saint Paul VI wrote, "is himself our 'indulgence'". [19] The Apostolic Penitentiary will issue norms for obtaining and rendering spiritually fruitful the practice of the Jubilee indulgence.

This experience of full forgiveness cannot fail to open our hearts and minds to the need to *forgive others* in turn. Forgiveness does not change the past;

it cannot change what happened in the past, yet it can allow us to change the future and to live different lives, free of anger, animosity and vindictiveness. Forgiveness makes possible a brighter future, which enables us to look at the past with different eyes, now more serene, albeit still bearing the trace of past tears.

For the last Extraordinary Jubilee, I commissioned *Missionaries of Mercy*, and these continue to carry out an important mission. During the coming Jubilee, may they exercise their ministry by reviving hope and offering forgiveness whenever a sinner comes to them with an open heart and a penitent spirit. May they remain a source of reconciliation and an encouragement to look to the future with heartfelt hope inspired by the Father's mercy. I encourage bishops to take advantage of their precious ministry, especially by sending them wherever hope is sorely tested: to prisons, hospitals, and places where people's dignity is violated, poverty abounds and social decay is prevalent. In this Jubilee Year, may no one be deprived of the opportunity to receive God's forgiveness and consolation.

24. Hope finds its supreme witness in *the Mother of God*. In the Blessed Virgin, we see that hope is not naive optimism but a gift of grace amid the realities of life. Like every mother, whenever Mary looked at her Son, she thought of his future. Surely she kept pondering in her heart the words spoken to her in the Temple by the elderly Simeon: "This child is destined for the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed, so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed – and a sword will

pierce your own soul too” (*Lk 2:34-35*). At the foot of the cross, she witnessed the passion and death of Jesus, her innocent son. Overwhelmed with grief, she nonetheless renewed her “fiat”, never abandoning her hope and trust in God. In this way, Mary cooperated for our sake in the fulfilment of all that her Son had foretold in announcing that he would have to “undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again” (*Mk 8:31*). In the travail of that sorrow, offered in love, Mary became our Mother, the Mother of Hope. It is not by chance that popular piety continues to invoke the Blessed Virgin as *Stella Maris*, a title that bespeaks the sure hope that, amid the tempests of this life, the Mother of God comes to our aid, sustains us and encourages us to persevere in hope and trust.

In this regard, I would note that the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City is preparing to celebrate, in 2031, the fifth centenary of Our Lady’s first apparition. Through Juan Diego, the Mother of God brought a revolutionary message of hope that she continues to bring to every pilgrim and all the faithful: “Am I not here, who am your Mother?” [20] That message continues to touch hearts in the many Marian shrines throughout the world, where countless pilgrims commend to the holy Mother of God their cares, their sorrows and their hopes. During the Jubilee Year, may these shrines be sacred places of welcome and privileged spaces for the rebirth of hope. I encourage all pilgrims to Rome to spend time in prayer in the Marian shrines of the City, in order to

venerate the Blessed Mother and to implore her protection. I am confident that everyone, especially the suffering and those most in need, will come to know the closeness of Mary, the most affectionate of mothers, who never abandons her children and who, for the holy people of God, is “a sign of certain hope and comfort”. [21]

25. In our journey towards the Jubilee, let us return to Scripture and realize that it speaks to us in these words: “May we who have taken refuge in him be strongly encouraged to seize the hope set before us. We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus, a forerunner on our behalf, has entered” (*Heb 6:18-20*). Those words are a forceful encouragement for us never to lose the hope we have been given, to hold fast to that hope and to find in God our refuge and our strength.

The image of the anchor is eloquent; it helps us to recognize the stability and security that is ours amid the troubled waters of this life, provided we entrust ourselves to the Lord Jesus. The storms that buffet us will never prevail, for we are firmly anchored in the hope born of grace, which enables us to live in Christ and to overcome sin, fear and death. This hope, which transcends life's fleeting pleasures and the achievement of our immediate goals, makes us rise above our trials and difficulties, and inspires us to keep pressing forward, never losing sight of the grandeur of the heavenly goal to which we have been called.

The coming Jubilee will thus be a Holy Year marked by the hope that does not fade, our hope in God. May

it help us to recover the confident trust that we require, in the Church and in society, in our interpersonal relationships, in international relations, and in our task of promoting the dignity of all persons and respect for God's gift of creation. May the witness of believers be for our world a leaven of authentic hope, a harbinger of new heavens and a new earth (cf. *2 Pet 3:13*), where men and women will dwell in justice and harmony, in joyful expectation of the fulfilment of the Lord's promises.

Let us even now be drawn to this hope! Through our witness, may hope spread to all those who anxiously seek it. May the way we live our lives say to them in so many words: "Hope in the Lord! Hold firm, take heart and hope in the Lord!" (*Ps 27:14*). May the power of hope fill our days, as we await with confidence the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and glory, now and forever.

Given in Rome, at Saint John Lateran, on 9 May, the Solemnity of the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the year 2024, the twelfth of my Pontificate.

- POPE FRANCIS

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- [1] Serm. 198 augm. 2.
 - [2] Cf. *Fonti Francescane*, No. 263, 6.10.
 - [3] Cf. Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy *Misericordiae Vultus*, 1-3.
 - [4] Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, 4.
 - [5] Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*, 50.
 - [6] Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, No. 2267.
 - [7] Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*, 49
 - [8] Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti*, 262.
 - [9] Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*, 51.

- [10] Nicene Creed: H. DENZINGER-A.
SCHÖNMETZER, *Enchiridion symbolorum definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*, 125.
- [11] *Ibid.*
- [12] Apostles' Creed: H. DENZINGER-A.
SCHÖNMETZER, *Enchiridion symbolorum definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*, 30.
- [13] *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, No. 1817.
- [14] Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, 21.
- [15] ROMAN MISSAL, *Preface I for the Dead*.
- [16] *Confessions*, X, 28.
- [17] Encyclical Letter *Spe Salvi*, 47.
- [18] *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, No. 1472.
- [19] Apostolic Letter *Apostolorum Limina*, 23 May 1974, II.
- [20] *Nican Mopohua*, No. 119.
- [21] SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, 68.



ANNEXURE III
APOSTOLIC PENITENTIARY
DECREE ON THE GRANTING OF THE
INDULGENCEDURING THE ORDINARY
JUBILEE YEAR 2025

CALLED BY HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

“Now the time has come for a new Jubilee, when once more the Holy Door will be flung open to invite everyone to an intense experience of the love of God” (*Spes non confundit*, 6). In the Bull announcing the Ordinary Jubilee of 2025, at a moment in history in which “heedless of the horrors of the past, humanity is confronting yet another ordeal, as many peoples are prey to brutality and violence” (*Spes non confundit*, 8), the Holy Father calls on all Christians to become pilgrims of hope. This is a virtue which must be sourced above all in the grace of God and in the fullness of His mercy. It is to be rediscovered in the signs of the times, which, encompassing “the yearning of human hearts inneed of God’s saving presence, ought to become signs of hope” (*Spes non confundit*, 7).

Previously, in the Bull announcing the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy in 2015, Pope Francis underlined how the Indulgence acquired “an even more important meaning” in that context (*Misericordiae vultus*, 22), since God’s mercy becomes the “indulgence on the part of the Father who, through the Bride of Christ, his Church, reaches the pardoned sinner and frees him or her from every residue left by the consequences of sin” (*ibid.*). Similarly, now the Holy Father declares

that the gift of the Indulgence “is a way of discovering the unlimited nature of God’s mercy. Not by chance, for the ancients, the terms ‘mercy’ and ‘indulgence’ were interchangeable, as expressions of the fullness of God’s forgiveness, which knows no bounds” (*Spes non confundit*, 23). The Indulgence, therefore, is a Jubilee grace.

And so, also during the Ordinary Jubilee of 2025, by will of the Supreme Pontif, this ‘Court of Mercy’, which is responsible for all that concerns the granting and use of indulgences, wishing to encourage the souls of the faithful and nourish the pious desire to obtain the Indulgence seen as a gift of grace specific to each Holy Year, establishes the following indications, so that the faithful may take advantage of the “norms for obtaining and rendering spiritually fruitful the practice of the Jubilee indulgence” (*Spes non confundit*, 23).

During the Ordinary Jubilee of 2025, all others Indulgences previously granted remain in force. All the faithful, who are truly repentant and free from any affection for sin (cf. *Enchiridion Indulgentiarum*, IV ed., norm. 20, §§ 1), who are moved by a spirit of charity and who, during the Holy Year, purified through the sacrament of penance and refreshed by Holy Communion, pray for the intentions of the Supreme Pontif, will be able to obtain from the treasury of the Church a plenary indulgence, with remission and forgiveness of all their sins, which can be applied in suffrage to the souls in Purgatory in the following ways:

I. Pilgrimages

The faithful, pilgrims of hope, will be able to obtain the Jubilee Indulgence granted by the Holy Father if they undertake a pious pilgrimage:

to any sacred Jubilee site: by devoutly participating in Holy Mass (where the liturgical norms allow for it, the Mass of the Jubilee might fruitfully be chosen, or one of the Votive Masses: for Reconciliation, for the Remission of Sins, for the Promotion of Charity or to Foster Harmony); a ritual Mass for the conferral of the sacraments of Christian Initiation or the Anointing of the Sick; or any of the following: a celebration of the Word of God; the Liturgy of the Hours (office of readings, lauds, vespers); the Via Crucis; the Marian Rosary; the recitation of the Akathist hymn; a penitential celebration, which ends with the individual confessions of the penitents, as established in the Rite of Penance (form II);

in Rome: by visiting at least one of the four Major Papal Basilicas: St. Peter's in the Vatican, the Archbasilica of the Holy Saviour (St John Lateran's), Saint Mary Major's, and St. Paul's Outside the Walls;

in the Holy Land: by visiting at least one of the three basilicas: the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem, or the Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth;

in other ecclesiastical areas: by visiting the Cathedral or other church or sacred place designated by the local Ordinary. Bishops will take into account the needs of the faithful as well as the opportunity to reinforce the concept of pilgrimage with all its

symbolic significance, so as to manifest the great need for conversion and reconciliation;

II. Pious visits to sacred places

Likewise, the faithful can obtain the Jubilee Indulgence if, individually or in a group, they devoutly visit any Jubilee site and there, for a suitable period of time, engage in Eucharistic adoration and meditation, concluding with the Our Father, the Profession of Faith in any legitimate form, and invocations to Mary, the Mother of God, so that in this Holy Year everyone “will come to know the closeness of Mary, the most affectionate of mothers, who never abandons her children” (*Spes non confundit*, 24).

During the Jubilee Year, in addition to the aforementioned places of pilgrimage, the following sacred places may also be visited under the same conditions:

in Rome: the Basilica of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem, the Basilica of St Lawrence at the Verano, the Basilica of St Sebastian, (the traditional visit to “the seven Churches of Rome”, so close to the heart of St Philip Neri is also highly recommended), the Sanctuary of Divine Love (the ‘Divino Amore’), the Church of the Holy Spirit in *Sassia*, the Church of St Paul at the *Tre Fontane*, (the site of the Martyrdom of the Apostle), the Roman Catacombs; the churches of the Jubilee Pathways dedicated respectively to the *Iter Europaeum* and to the *Female Patrons of Europe and Doctors of the Church* (the Basilica of Santa Maria sopra Minerva, and the churches of St Brigid at Campo de’ Fiori, Santa Maria della Vittoria, Trinità dei Monti, the

Basilica of Saint Cecilia in Trastevere, and the Basilica of Sant' Augustine in Campo Marzio);

in other places in the world: the two Minor Papal Basilicas in Assisi – those of St Francis and Our Lady of the Angels; the Pontifical Basilicas of Our Lady of Loreto, Our Lady of Pompeii, and St Anthony in Padua; any minor basilica, cathedral church, co-cathedral church, Marian sanctuary, any distinguished collegiate church or sanctuary designated by the diocesan bishop or Eparchy for the benefit of the faithful, and national or international sanctuaries, “sacred places of welcome and privileged spaces for the rebirth of hope” (*Spes non confundit*, 24), as indicated by Episcopal Conferences.

The faithful who are truly repentant of sin but who cannot participate in the various solemn celebrations, pilgrimages and pious visits for serious reasons (especially cloistered nuns and monks, but also the elderly, the sick, prisoners, and those who, through their work in hospitals or other care facilities, provide continuous service to the sick), can obtain the Jubilee Indulgence, under the same conditions if, united in spirit with the faithful taking part in person, (especially when the words of the Supreme Pontif or the diocesan Bishop are transmitted through the various means of communication), they recite the Our Father, the Profession of Faith in any approved form, and other prayers in conformity with the objectives of the Holy Year, in their homes or wherever they are confined (e.g. in the chapel of the monastery, hospital, nursing home, prison...) offering up their sufferings or the hardships of their lives;

III. Works of mercy and penance

In addition, the faithful will be able to obtain the Jubilee Indulgence if, with a devout spirit, they participate in popular missions, spiritual exercises, or formation activities on the documents of the Second Vatican Council and the Catechism of the Catholic Church, held in a church or other suitable place, according to the mind of the Holy Father.

Despite the rule that only one plenary indulgence can be obtained per day (cf. *Enchiridion Indulgentiarum*, IV ed., norm. 18, § 1), the faithful who have carried out an act of charity on behalf of the souls in Purgatory, if they receive Holy Communion a second time that day, can obtain the plenary indulgence twice on the same day, applicable only to the deceased (this must take place within a Eucharistic celebration; see can. 917 and the Pontifical Commission for the authentic interpretation of the CIC, *Responsa ad dubia*, 1, 11 July 1984). Through this double act, a praiseworthy exercise of supernatural charity is carried out, through that bond by which the faithful still journeying on this earth are united in the mystical Body of Christ, with those who have already completed their journey, by virtue of the fact that “the Jubilee indulgence, thanks to the power of prayer, is intended in a particular way for those who have gone before us, so that they may obtain full mercy” (*Spes non confundit*, 22).

In a special way “during the Holy Year, we are called to be tangible signs of hope for those of our brothers and sisters who experience hardships of any kind” (*Spes non confundit*, 10). Therefore, the Indulgence is

also linked to certain works of mercy and penance, which bear witness to the conversion undertaken. The faithful, following the example and mandate of Christ, are encouraged to carry out works of charity or mercy more frequently, especially in the service of those brothers and sisters who are burdened by various needs. More especially, they should rediscover these “corporal works of mercy: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, heal the sick, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead” (*Misericordiae vultus*, 15) and rediscover also “the spiritual works of mercy: to counsel the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the afflicted, forgive offences, bear patiently those who do us ill, and pray for the living and the dead” (*ibid.*).

In this way, the faithful will be able to obtain the Jubilee Indulgence if they visit, for an appropriate amount of time, their brothers and sisters who are in need or in difficulty (the sick, prisoners, lonely elderly people, disabled people...), in a sense making a pilgrimage to Christ present in them (cf. Mt 25, 34-36) according to the usual spiritual, sacramental and prayer conditions. The faithful can repeat these visits throughout the Holy Year, even daily, acquiring a plenary indulgence each time.

The Jubilee Plenary Indulgence can also be obtained through initiatives that put into practice, in a concrete and generous way, the spirit of penance which is, in a sense, the soul of the Jubilee. In particular the penitential nature of Friday can be rediscovered through abstaining, in a spirit of penance, at least for

one day of the week from futile distractions (real but also virtual distractions, for example, the use of the media and/or social networks), from superfluous consumption (for example by fasting or practising abstinence according to the general norms of the Church and the indications of the Bishops), as well as by donating a proportionate sum of money to the poor; by supporting works of a religious or social nature, especially in support of the defence and protection of life in all its phases, but also by supporting the quality of life of abandoned children, young people in difficulty, the needy or lonely elderly people, or migrants from various countries “who leave their homelands behind in search of a better life for themselves and for their families” (*Spes non confundit*, 13); it can also be obtained by dedicating a reasonable portion of one's free time to voluntary activities that are of service to the community or to other similar forms of personal commitment.

All diocesan bishops and eparchs and those who are equivalent to them in law, on the most appropriate day of this jubilee period, on the occasion of the main celebration in the cathedral and in the individual jubilee churches, may impart the Papal Blessing with the attached plenary indulgence, obtainable by all the faithful who receive this Blessing under the usual conditions.

In order to facilitate access to the sacrament of Penance and the obtaining of divine forgiveness through the ‘Power of the Keys’, local Ordinaries are invited to grant to the Canons and Priests, who in the Cathedrals and Churches specially designated for the

Holy Year, hear the confessions of the faithful, the faculties limited to the internal forum for the faithful of the Eastern Churches covered by can. 728, § 2 of the CCEO, and in the case of a possible reservation, those for can. 727, excluding, clearly, those cases listed in can. 728, § 1; while for the faithful of the Latin Church, the faculties referred to in can. 508, § 1 of the CIC.

In this regard, this Penitentiary urges all priests to offer generous availability and self-dedication to allow the greatest possible opportunity for the faithful to benefit from the means of salvation, by adopting and publishing time slots for confessions, in agreement with parish priests or rectors of neighbouring churches, by making time to be available in the confessional, planning penitential celebrations on a fixed and frequent basis, and also making the widest possible use of retired priests who do not have other defined pastoral roles. Depending on the possibilities, priests should remember, in accordance with the *Motu proprio Misericordia Dei*, the pastoral opportunity that also exists in hearing Confessions during the celebration of Holy Mass.

To facilitate the task of confessors, the Apostolic Penitentiary, by mandate of the Holy Father, grants to priests who accompany or join Jubilee pilgrimages outside their own Diocese the right to make use of the same faculties which they have been granted in their own Diocese by the legitimate authority. Special faculties will be conferred by this Apostolic Penitentiary to the penitentiaries of the Papal Basilicas in Rome, and to Canon Penitentiaries or Diocesan Penitentiaries established in individual ecclesiastical circumscriptions.

Confessors, after having lovingly instructed the faithful on the gravity of the sins to which a reservation or censure is attached, should determine, with pastoral charity, appropriate sacramental penances, so as to lead penitents, as far as possible to stable repentance and, depending on the nature of the case, invite them to repair any scandal and damages.

Finally, the Penitentiary warmly invites Bishops, as bearers of the triple *munus* of teaching, guiding, and sanctifying, to explain clearly the provisions and principles proposed here for the sanctification of the faithful, taking account of local circumstances, cultures and traditions. A catechesis appropriate to the socio-cultural characteristics of each people will propose the Gospel and the entirety of the Christian message effectively, rooting more deeply in people's hearts the desire for this unique gift, obtained through the mediation of the Church.

This Decree is valid for the entire Ordinary Jubilee of 2025, notwithstanding any provision to the contrary.

Given in Rome, from the Offices of the Apostolic Penitentiary, on 13 May 2024, Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Fatima.

Angelo Card. De Donatis

Major Penitentiary

H. E. Mgr. Mons. Krzysztof Nykiel

Regent

ANNEXURE IV

LIST OF THE EARMARKED COLLECTIONS RECEIVED FOR THE PERIOD NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 2024

PARISHES	St. Peter's Pence	Christ-mas Collection	Second Sunday	Communio Sunday	Hunger & Disease	St. Peter the Apostle	Maint of Holy Land	Wayanad Flood Relief	Holy Childhood	Holy Thursday	Poor Patients Fund
Holy Cross Church, Belawadi			7,590								
St. Anthony's Shrine, Dornahali	14,245		1,08,656	9,265	16,820	6,315			37,370		14,530
Nirmala Mathe Church, Kutta		915	940	1,200							
St. Anthony's Church, Gopalapura	650		7,000	800	700	750			700	1,500	
Church of Mother of God, Jakkali	2,100		15,860			2,120	3,200				
St. Anthony's Church, Karatukovil	1,300		9,643			780					
Infant Jesus Mission Station, Yathagadanahalli	2,700		12,550								
Rajendra Swamy Mission Station, Chikkarasinakere	1,520		3,850								
Our Lady of Presentation Church, Marianangalam			2,482								
St. Alphonsa's Church, M. K. Halli			2,430								
Sacred Heart Church, Nagavalli		10,550	7,030								
Our Lady of Assumption Church, Pandavapura			6,140								
St. Anne's Church, Virajpet			30,405								
Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Church, Srirampura			7,400								
St. Anthony's Church, Annathi								70,000			
Our Lady of Immaculate Conception Church, Kudlur											5,000
St. Peter's Church, Bogadi											14,420
Religious :											
O.L.C. Convent, Pandavapura				2,000							
St. Antony's Convent, Ponnampet					2,500					2,500	
St. Joseph's Convent, Mandya					3,000					3,000	
Amal Jyothi Convent, Naguanahalli					500						
Karuna Nilaya Convent, Mysore					1,000						

