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# **Vatican extends indulgence period for PH 500YOC celebration**

Pope Francis has extended to December 31, 2022 the possibility of obtaining a plenary indulgence in celebration of the 500th anniversary of the arrival of Christianity in the Philippines.

11/23/2022

**The decision comes in response to the Covid-19 pandemic that has affected activities for many people, and particularly to the request of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines.**

In a March 7 letter to the Vatican, the CBCP said that the Jubilee Year “has been marked with difficulties” posed by the health crisis.

It explained the planned “ecclesial and spiritual activities” in the dioceses were not fully carried out due to the lockdowns and quarantines imposed by the government.

By means of the decree, the pope extended the opportunities for pilgrims visiting any of the more

than 500 “**Jubilee Churches**” to gain indulgences until December 31, 2022.

The decree dated March 17 was issued by Cardinal Mauro Piacenza, head of the Apostolic Penitentiary.

With the now “more relaxed” health protocols in the country, CBCP president Bishop Pablo Virgilio David said this allowed churches to increase the capacity in Masses and other religious gatherings.

“It also gives us a greater possibility to push with our spiritual and ecclesiastical celebrations relative to the celebrations of the Jubilee Year,” David said.

Originally, the indulgence was limited from the start of the year-long celebration on April 4, 2021 — Easter Sunday — to April 22, 2022.

In order to avail the indulgence, the pilgrims are required to meet the

usual conditions of going to confession, receiving the Eucharist, and praying for the intentions of the pope.

They are also asked to pray “for the fidelity of the Filipino people to their Christian calling, for the increase of priestly and religious vocations and for the defense of the family, concluding with the Lord’s Prayer, the profession of faith, and an invocation to the Blessed Virgin Mary”.

The bishops also decided during their plenary assembly last January to close the Jubilee Year on Divine Mercy Sunday, April 24.

[Among the 500 Jubilee Churches is the diocesan shrine of St. Josemaria Escriva in Gerona, Tarlac.]

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