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2024 “Year of Prayer” to prepare for “Jubilee 2025”

CATHOLICS worldwide have 5 months more to prepare spiritually for the celebration of “Jubilee 2025” — an event that comes just once every quarter of a century.

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Pope Francis first mentioned “Jubilee 2025” in his Angelus address on 1 January 2021. 2025 marks the 1,700th anniversary of the First Council of

Nicaea, which took place in 325 AD. In this historic gathering, the bishops addressed important doctrinal issues of the time and established the Nicene Creed.

On 9 May 2024, the Solemnity of the Ascension of Our Lord, Pope Francis issued the decree “**Spes Non Confundit**” (“*Hope does not disappoint*”), officially declaring 2025 as a Jubilee Year in the Church.

It will commence with the opening of the Holy Door of St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome on Christmas Eve 2024 and will end with the closing of the Holy Door on 6 January 2026. 20-30 million pilgrims are expected in Rome throughout the Jubilee.

2024 Year of Prayer

“I would greatly desire that we devote 2024, the year preceding the Jubilee event, to a great “symphony” of prayer,” Pope Francis encouraged

the Christian faithful. In January of this year, he declared 2024 a “Year of Prayer” as the fitting personal preparation to receive the outpouring of graces that will accompany the upcoming Jubilee.

To help Catholics live the “Year of Prayer,” the Dicastery for Evangelization published a resource aide, entitled: **Teach Us to Pray: Living the Year of Prayer in Preparation for Jubilee 2025.**

The publication, addressed to families, parishes, the religious, and all people, especially the young, is meant to make the faithful rediscover prayer and to develop their prayer life into one that is more personal and meaningful. As the introduction reads: “This resource aide is meant to help renew the spirit of prayer in all those situations in which we are called to live in daily life.”

Teach Us to Pray outlines various aspects and forms of prayer and has the following sections:

- *Pope Francis' Teaching on Prayer*
- *Prayer in the Parish Community: the Eucharist, Liturgy of the Hours, 24 Hours for the Lord, and Eucharistic Adoration*
- *Prayer in the Family: examples of family prayer*
- *Young People's Prayer: how to understand God's will and prayer events and meetings with the youth*
- *Retreats on Prayer*
- *Catechesis on Prayer: the shepherd's exhortation prayer and guidelines for catechesis on prayer*
- *The Prayer of the Cloistered: the contemplative vocation and pilgrimages to monasteries*
- *Prayer in Sanctuaries*

- *The Prayer of the Faithful for the 2025 Jubilee: the importance of the prayer of God's people for the Holy Year and examples of prayers of the faithful in preparation for the Jubilee*

“Each part — from the meaning of personal prayer to its practice in community life — offers reflections, guidance, and advice for living more fully in dialogue with the Lord, present in our relationship with others and in every moment of our day,” the Introduction to the document reads.

Of particular note is an exhortation for all Catholics to make pilgrimages to major shrines. “Pilgrimage is, of course, a fundamental element of every Jubilee event,” the document says. “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.”

“Through prayer, may we arrive at the Holy Door with our hearts ready to welcome the gifts of grace and forgiveness that the Jubilee offers as a vivid expression of our relationship with God. Let us immerse ourselves through prayer in an ongoing dialogue with the Creator, discovering the joy of silence, the peace of abandonment and the power of intercession in the communion of saints,” the document says.

2025 Jubilee: “Pilgrims of Hope”

The pilgrimage to Rome on a Jubilee Year is a tradition that dates back to 1300. It initially took place every century, then every 50 years, and presently every 25 years. The last one, in the year 2000 under the pontificate of St. Pope John Paul II,

“ushered the Church into the third millennium of her history,” the current Holy Father explained.

This coming Jubilee, themed: “Pilgrims of Hope,” takes place against a backdrop of regional conflicts and tensions that threaten to draw in more countries; worsening climate conditions; and lingering socio-economic effects following the Covid-19 pandemic.

“As Christians, we are invited to bear witness as authentic ‘Pilgrims of Hope’ walking toward the Lord, Who opens His merciful and forgiving arms to us, as well as to our brothers and sisters who are still waiting for the Gospel to be proclaimed to them,” Pope Francis wrote.

“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,”

the papal decree ***Spes Non Confundit*** says.

In the document ***Teach Us to Pray***, Pope Francis encourages the Christian faithful “to persevere in prayer, emphasizing how constant prayer transforms not only the person, but also the wider community, even where evil seems to have the upper hand.”

“Jubilee 2025” also prepares Christendom for the 2,000th anniversary in 2033 of the redemption won by the passion, death and resurrection of Our Lord. “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,” the Pope said in ***Spes Non Confundit***.

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