



Pilgrims on the way of Hope: A Resource for the Jubilee of the World of Communications

Jubilee 2025: Pilgrims of Hope

United States Conference of
Catholic Bishops

Jubilee of the World of Communications: Resource Packet

January 24-26, 2025

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

Jubilee 2025 invites you to be a pilgrim of hope. For Christians, hope is anchored in the encounter with Jesus whose life, death, and resurrection reveals God's transforming love. Our hope in God is renewed constantly in the gift of the Holy Spirit, the love of the Father and the Son, who is given, even now, to the community of believers.

The Holy See has designated a number of Jubilee Days throughout 2025 to recognize and celebrate different groups of people and various ministries in the Church. The Jubilee of the World of Communications will be held from Friday, January 24, to Sunday, January 26, 2025; however, these resources can be used for engaging and celebrating the important role of communications in the Church at any time throughout the Jubilee Year.

This resource packet is for anyone who finds it useful. It can be used and/or adapted by dioceses, eparchies, parishes, schools, campuses, apostolates, movements, organizations, or individuals to plan their celebration for the Jubilee of the World of



Communications. It might also serve as a catalyst or inspiration for the creation and development of local or year-round resources for the communications community.

For people who are making a Jubilee pilgrimage to Rome or to a particular Jubilee celebration in a diocese or eparchy within the United States during 2025, this packet can also serve as an aid in the preparation or experience of that trip.

Additional resources for the Jubilee of the World of Communications and other celebrations can be found online at the USCCB Jubilee Year web pages: available in English at <https://www.usccb.org/committees/jubilee-2025> and available in Spanish at <https://www.usccb.org/es/committees/jubileo-2025>.

SPIRITUAL REFLECTION

In all that we do, all our interactions and conversation should be rooted in prayer. If we are not listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit communicating the life and mystery of



God to us, then how can we effectively be icons of the Christ, sharing in His attitude?

In our interactions and conversations, communication isn't just about how we talk, what we say, our facial expressions and body language. *It's also about how well and respectfully we listen!* Like our prayer, all communication is a two-way street.

St. Paul's image of the Church as the Body of Christ is particularly powerful when considering the Holy Father's call to be a listening Church. We must rely upon one another. Just as the heart relies on the lungs, so too the lungs depend on the heart. Where would the hand be without the brain? How would we recover from the flu without an immune system?

We rely on one another, we need one another, we are in this life and world together! Listening deeply and communicating respectfully are the baseline for our growth as the Church, the Body of Christ.

In anticipation of the Jubilee of the World of Communications, set within a yearlong celebration of hope, we remember the words of Pope Francis in his message for the 27th World Day of Social Communications:

We have a pressing need in the Church for communication that kindles hearts, that is balm on wounds and that shines light on the journey of our brothers and sisters. I dream of an ecclesial communication that knows how to let itself be guided by the Holy Spirit, gentle and at the same time, prophetic, that knows how to find new ways and means for the wonderful proclamation it is called to deliver in the third millennium. A communication which puts the relationship with God and one's neighbour, especially the neediest, at the centre and which knows how to light the fire of faith rather than preserve the ashes of a self-referential identity. A form of

communication founded on humility in listening and parrhesia in speaking, which never separates truth from charity.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PILGRIM PREPARATION - ROME

One major element of the Jubilee celebration for Catholics is making a pilgrimage. For some, that may involve going to Rome, where international pilgrims traditionally visit the Holy Doors of the four great basilicas (Saint Peter, Saint Paul Outside the Walls, Saint Mary Major, and Saint John Lateran). For most others, though, local Jubilee pilgrimages can be made to diocesan or eparchial cathedrals, churches, and/or religious sites.

If headed to Rome for the Jubilee of the World of Communications:

Should you or your ministry/group/community decide to travel to Rome, in particular for the Jubilee of the World of Communication (January 24-26, 2025), the following may be useful:

- You can develop a trip on your own or go through a licensed tour operator that specializes or has experience in religious travel. The latter option may cost extra, but it can save a local organizer time; additionally, those operators may have existing connections with vendors and may be able to advise on travel concerns. PLEASE NOTE: The USCCB does not endorse nor identify any licensed tour operator as the official U.S. tour operator.



- The official Jubilee events for the World of Communications begin January 24 (see [here](#)), include welcome and prayer organized by the Vicariate of the Diocese of Rome, Jubilee rites through Holy Doors, cultural events in different symbolic places in Rome, and the Closing Mass on the “Sunday of the Word of God.” Participating in these activities will offer pilgrims the full Jubilee experience.
- Pilgrims and groups may also consider additional activities, either planned on their own or events hosted by organizations, apostolates, episcopal conferences, or movements.
- Prepare with liturgies, retreats, devotional and service experiences, community building, catechesis, and fundraising, as needed. Take time for prayer, especially with the Blessed Sacrament. Recommended reading should include Pope Francis’s messages for the World Day of Social Communications.
- Practical travel preparation will be essential, especially since the Jubilee events in 2025 are expected to draw very large crowds to Rome.
- Pilgrims should bring backpacks, comfortable shoes, appropriate clothing, necessary medications and supplies, and resources that aid in pilgrim prayer. Packing light is essential.
- After returning home or to the United States, take time for prayer and theological reflection on the graces of God received during the pilgrimage to Rome. If you went as a group, continue to gather in the weeks and months following the trip to support one another and coordinate missionary actions.

If coordinating a local pilgrimage within the United States:

It is highly recommended to make a pilgrimage to one's own diocesan or eparchial cathedral or other church(es) or religious site(s) designated by the bishop.

- Planning for a local pilgrimage can take place at any time of year, or it can be done at the same time as the events for the World of Communication in Rome (around January 24-26, 2025). The timing, as well as the exact local destination, is at the discretion of the local organizer(s).
- Research the pilgrimage destination to ensure that your visit does not coincide with liturgical or local community events or is being done within the posted opening hours for the site. You may wish to contact someone in leadership at the location in advance, especially if you plan to bring a group.
- Before embarking on the local pilgrimage, consider taking time for prayer and community-building similar to the type of spiritual preparation one would take for an international journey (i.e. to Rome or World Youth Day).
- Prepare with a walking pilgrimage within or around the parish, campus, or local community, in particular if the journey to the cathedral or other major site involves some walking. In fact, consider adding a walking component if one is not naturally part of the program, as the spirituality of physical movement is a key ingredient to a spiritual pilgrimage.



- After returning home (even if the trip was local), take time for prayer and theological reflection on the graces of God received during the pilgrimage experience. If you went as a group, continue to gather in the weeks and months following the trip to support one another and coordinate missionary actions.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CELEBRATING COMMUNICATIONS LOCALLY

Suggestions for Parishes

- Use the weekend liturgies on January 24-26 (Sunday of the Word of God) to recognize the important role of communication in sharing the Good News: in the homily, general intercessions, with a special blessing, or by inviting communications professionals to serve in key liturgical roles. An example of a petition for the Prayer of the Faithful might include:

*For the Church throughout the world:
For Pope Francis, Church leaders, and
Christians everywhere. May they
communicate the Good News of Jesus Christ
with courage and conviction.
Lord, hear us.*

*For all involved in the work of
communications and media:
that their work may serve the cause of truth
and justice and help us overcome division.
Lord, hear us.*

*For a desire to be faithful witness to the
Gospel: That people everywhere may hear
God's good news for the world.
Lord, hear us.*

- Have a reception or networking activity after all weekend Masses on January 24-26 (Sunday of the Word of God) and make a concerted effort to invite communications professionals or students pursuing a career in communication. This could include diocesan and secular media, videographers, graphic designers, writers, publishers, and people who work in public relations, marketing, public information, and digital and social media. During those gatherings, offer food and drink, opportunities to meet-and-mingle, and invitations to deeper faith engagement.
- Host a Jubilee prayer service, held at the parish at some point between January 24-26 (Sunday of the Word of God), that recognizes communications professionals, their gifts, and their contributions to society and to the Church.
- Plan a local pilgrimage to the diocesan/eparchial cathedral or to another religious site or church in your area, using the ideas laid out in the previous section.
- Livestream or replay video of key Jubilee events (e.g., Closing Mass) taking place in Rome between January 24-26 (Sunday of the Word of God) at a gathering held at the parish (noting the time difference between Rome and your local area).



Suggestions for Dioceses and Eparchies

- Celebrate a liturgy or host a prayer service aimed at communications professionals at the diocesan/eparchial cathedral between January 24-26 (Sunday of the Word of God), concurrent with the Jubilee celebrations happening in Rome. Invite all parishes across the diocese to attend. Prayer cards from the Catholic Communication Campaign are a good way to commemorate the event and ensure ongoing prayer for good communications. Dioceses can contact the USCCB's Office of National Collections to receive the prayer cards.
- Hold a diocesan/eparchial-wide Jubilee walking pilgrimage from the cathedral (or another site of your choosing) to religious sites, churches, universities/schools, and/or to a Catholic-led social services center or institution. Consider also inviting the bishop on this journey.
- Post stories about communications professionals on the diocesan or eparchial website, social media channels, and communications (magazine, newspaper, newsletter, etc.) prior to and/or during the Jubilee of the World of Communications in January 2025.
- Host a diocesan/eparchial-wide Jubilee gathering with the bishop/eparch. This can be a presentation, dialogue/discussion, meet-and-greet social, meal, liturgy, and/or a virtual event, allowing communications professionals across the diocese/eparchy to engage with their episcopal shepherd.

- Encourage all diocesan/eparchial offices and departments to feature, celebrate, or acknowledge the important role of communications and communications professionals during January 2025, centered around the global Jubilee celebrations. This might need to be preceded by a workshop or meeting with diocesan/eparchial staff to coordinate efforts.
- Inaugurate a diocesan/eparchial initiative for communications professionals beginning with the Jubilee celebrations. This might include an area-wide evangelization effort; an annual award/recognition ceremony; an annual liturgy with the bishop; scholarship funds for college or graduate students; or an annual pilgrimage, etc.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & DOCUMENTS

Message of the Holy Father Francis for World Communications Days

The Vatican Dicastery for Communications has a compilation of the Holy Father's annual messages for World Communication Day. Available online here: <https://www.comunicazione.va/en/magistero/wcd-messages.html>.



KEY SAINTS

- **Archangels Gabriel, Raphael, and Michael (feast day September 29)**, servants and messengers of God. "Because they 'always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven' they are the mighty ones who do his word, hearkening to the voice of his word" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 329).
- **St. Paul the Apostle (5-67, feast day June 29)**, patron of missionaries, evangelists, writers, journalists, authors, public workers, rope and saddle makers, and tent makers. St. Paul, whose writings are contained in the Canon of the Bible, transformed his life after an encounter with the Risen Lord and became one of the most important and influential of all the saints.
- **St. Hildegard (1098-1179, feast day September 17)**, patron saint of musicians and writers. A Doctor of the Church and mystic, St. Hildegard was a talented poet, composer, and writer, who traveled widely to evangelize to large groups of people.
- **St. Clare of Assisi (1194-1253, feast day August 11)**, patron saint of television, bike messengers, eye disease, goldsmiths, good weather, and needle workers. Inspired by her friend Saint Francis of Assisi, St. Clare dedicated her life to poverty, prayer, and service and founded the Order of Poor Ladies (now known as the Poor Clares).
- **St. Francis de Sales (1567-1622, feast day January 24)**, patron of the Catholic writers, Catholic press, the deaf, journalists, and adult education. A Doctor of the Church, St. Francis was devoted to evangelization and catechesis through preaching and writing.
- **St. Maximilian Kolbe (1894-1941, feast day August 14)**, patron of journalists, media communications, the family, and the chemically addicted. A Martyr of Charity, St. Maximilian used modern communication techniques to share the faith before his persecution under the Nazi regime and death in a concentration camp.
- **St. Titus Brandsma, (1881-1942, feast day July 27)**, a Dutch Carmelite priest, journalist and martyr, he was arrested by the Nazis after personally delivering to the editors ordering them not to print official Nazi documents. He was killed by lethal injection at the Dachau death camp.
- **Blessed Carlo Acutis (1991-2006)**, proposed patron of young people, computer programmers, and the Internet. Carlo was an Italian website designer who documented Eucharistic miracles and Marian apparitions on a website he designed. On July 1, 2024, Pope Francis presided at an Ordinary Consistory of Cardinals, which approved the canonization of Blessed Carlo Acutis.



PRAYERS

Prayer of Saint Francis de Sales

Be at Peace

Do not look forward in fear to the changes of life; rather look to them with full hope as they arise. God, whose very own you are, will deliver you from out of them.

He has kept you hitherto, and He will lead you safely through all things; and when you cannot stand it, God will bury you in his arms.

Do not fear what may happen tomorrow; the same everlasting Father who cares for you today will take care of you then and every day. He will either shield you from suffering, or will give you unfailing strength to bear it. Be at peace, and put aside all anxious thoughts and imagination.

Amen.

St. Francis de Sales (1567-1622)

Patron of Journalists, Writers, Editors and the Catholic Press.

Found [here](#).

Pope's Prayer for Communications

Lord, teach us to move beyond ourselves, and to set out in search of truth.

Teach us to go out and see, teach us to listen, not to entertain prejudices or draw hasty conclusions.

Teach us to go where no one else will go, to take the time needed to understand, to pay attention to the essentials, not to be distracted by the superfluous, to distinguish deceptive appearances from the truth.

Grant us the grace to recognize your dwelling places in our world and the honesty needed to tell others what we have seen.

Amen.

From the message of the Holy Father for World Communications Day 2021.

Found [here](#).

Prayer for Communicators

Lord, let the good news of your marvelous deeds fall on every ear, and let all tongues rejoice in your wisdom, your compassion, your faithfulness, and your love.

Make me bold and let me share your Word with those you desire to reach.

As my heart overflows with your love, speak through me.

Let me proclaim your glory and your majesty, and tell of the kindness you have shown your people.

This I ask, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Found [here](#).



Communications Prayer for Those Working in Diocesan and Parish Communications

*Holy Spirit,
you blessed the first disciples
with the power to spread God's love
throughout the world.
Give me a new power to proclaim your
word through my own unique gifts
and through the channels of clear
communications.
Make me willing to receive that word
as it enters my daily life.
Bless all who use their talents
in the field of communications.
Guide those who send out the message and
those who receive it,
so that all people
may come to know your truth
and be renewed by your love.
We ask this through Jesus Christ, Our Lord.
Amen.*

Found [here](#).

Prayer for Journalists

*Almighty God, strengthen and direct,
we pray, the will of all whose work it is to
write what many read, and to speak where
many listen. May we be bold to confront evil
and injustice: understanding and
compassionate of human weakness;
rejecting alike the half-truth which deceives,
and the slanted word which corrupts.
May the power which is ours, for good or ill,
always be used with honesty and courage,
with respect and integrity,
so that, when all here has been written, said
and done, we may, unashamed,
meet Thee face to face, through Jesus Christ
our Lord,
Amen.*

Found [here](#).

Catholic Communication Campaign Prayer

*Lord, make us instruments of your peace.
Help us to recognize the evil latent in a
communication that does not build
communion.
Help us to remove the venom from our
judgments. Help us to speak about others as our
brothers and sisters.*

*You are faithful and trustworthy; may our words
be seeds of goodness for the world:
where there is shouting, let us practice listening;
where there is confusion, let us inspire harmony;
where there is ambiguity, let us bring clarity;
where there is exclusion, let us offer solidarity;
where there is sensationalism, let us use sobriety;
where there is superficiality, let us raise real
questions;
where there is prejudice, let us awaken trust;
where there is hostility, let us bring respect;
where there is falsehood, let us bring truth.
Amen.*

Found [here](#).





Pilgrims on the way of Hope: A Resource for the Jubilee of the Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel

Jubilee 2025: Pilgrims of Hope

United States Conference of
Catholic Bishops

Jubilee of the Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel: Resource Packet

February 8-9, 2025

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

Jubilee 2025 invites you to be a pilgrim of hope. For Christians, hope is anchored in the encounter with Jesus whose life, death, and resurrection reveals God's transforming love. Our hope in God is renewed constantly in the gift of the Holy Spirit, the love of the Father and the Son, who is given, even now, to the community of believers.

The Holy See has designated a number of Jubilee Days throughout 2025 to recognize and celebrate different groups of people and various ministries in the Church. The Jubilee of the Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel will be held from Saturday, February 8, to Sunday, February 9, 2025.

Recently, Pope Francis addressed participants in the 64th International Military Pilgrimage at the

French Marian Shrine of Lourdes. Entrusting to God's mercy all of their comrades-in-arms who died serving their countries and defending peace, Pope Francis urged Catholic members of the military to let their faith inform their service:



"The world needs you, especially at this dark moment in our history. We need men and women of faith who are capable of putting weapons at the service of peace and brotherhood."

The Pope also emphasized the need for quiet time for spiritual discernment that will allow military personnel to reaffirm with hope their vocation in prayer: "This spiritual pause at Lourdes is a time to rethink your military vocation from the perspective of faith, and of the love that every Christian must cultivate towards his brother, even his enemy."

In addition, Pope Francis urged members of the military to renew their commitment to the transformative Word of God: "Be military men and women who stand tall and proud to honor your uniform, your motto and your homeland, but who are also aware that you are part of a single human family, a family that is divided and wounded, but which Christ came to redeem and save through the power of love, not the violence



of arms.” [The full article can be accessed online via the Vatican’s website: [Message of the Holy Father, signed by the Cardinal Secretary of State, on the occasion of the 64th International Military Pilgrimage to Lourdes presided over by Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher \[24-26 May 2024\] \(25 May 2024\) | Francis \(vatican.va\)](#)]

This resource packet is for anyone who finds it useful. It can be used or adapted by dioceses, eparchies, parishes, schools, chaplaincies, apostolates, movements, organizations, or individuals to plan their celebration for the Jubilee of the Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel. It may also serve as a catalyst or inspiration for the creation and development of local or year-round resources for the Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel communities.

For members of the Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel and their families who are making a Jubilee pilgrimage to Rome or a pilgrimage within the United States during 2025, this packet can also serve as an aid in the preparation or experience of that trip.

Additional resources for the Jubilee of the Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel and other celebrations can be found online at the USCCB Jubilee Year web pages: available in English at <https://www.usccb.org/committees/jubilee-2025> and available in Spanish at <https://www.usccb.org/es/committees/jubileo-2025>.

LETTER FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE FOR THE MILITARY SERVICES, USA

Office of the Archbishop

28 August 2024

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It is with great joy that I invite you to join the Universal Church in responding to the call of the

Bishop of Rome, Pope Francis, to participate in the Jubilee Year 2025: Pilgrims of Hope.

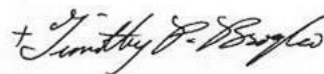
On 8-9 February 2025, the Holy Father will join in prayer with the Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel worldwide, and I take this opportunity to remember and honor the members of the U.S. Armed Forces who have given their lives for our Country.

After sixteen years of ministry as the Archbishop for the Military Services, USA, I express my gratitude to the military in all six branches who have stood on the frontlines of freedom, risking everything to keep the light of liberty burning brightly at home and around the globe.

I extend an invitation to active-duty military and their families to join me in Rome, Italy for our archdiocesan pilgrimage from 5 to 11 February to participate in the activities organized by the Holy See and to live moments of prayer in a truly universal setting during this historic Holy Year. Having lived nineteen years in the Eternal City, I can assure you that it is a remarkable place. For more information about the pilgrimage package for the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA please visit: <https://www.milarch.org/jubilee-of-the-armed-forces/>.

Invoking Divine Protection on our U.S. Armed Forces, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,



(The Most Reverend) Timothy P. Broglio
Archbishop of the Military Services, USA
President, United States Conference of
Catholic Bishops

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SUGGESTIONS FOR PILGRIMAGE PREPARATION

One major element of the Jubilee celebration for Catholics is making pilgrimage. For some, that may involve going to Rome, where international pilgrims traditionally visit the Holy Doors of the four great basilicas (Saint Peter, Saint Paul Outside the Walls, Saint Mary Major, and Saint John Lateran). For most others, though, local Jubilee pilgrimages can be made to diocesan or eparchial cathedrals, churches, or other religious sites.

If headed to Rome for the Jubilee of the Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel:

Should you or your ministry/group/community decide to travel to Rome, in particular for the Jubilee of the Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel (February 8-9, 2025), the following may be helpful:

- The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has prepared an information guide in preparation and participation for the Jubilee 2025: Pilgrims of Hope. You can access the USCCB's guide via the following link: [Jubilee Information Sheet.pdf \(usccb.org\)](#).
- The USCCB's Jubilee 2025 guide includes a Jubilee Mobile App, a digital app for mobile devices, which makes the registration for Jubilee events easier and can be downloaded from the App Store for iOS and from the Play Store for Android. The mobile app is available in six languages.
- Join the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA (AMS), and Verso Ministries on February 5-11, 2025, for a pilgrimage to Rome for the Jubilee of the Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel. This is an opportunity to be transformed by the beauty and universality of the Catholic Church during this historic Holy Year. This handcrafted journey invites you into a prayerful, authentic, and joyful encounter with the centuries-old practice of Jubilee pilgrimages. Visit the seven traditional pilgrim churches, enter through the Holy Doors, and embrace the Holy Father's call to be pilgrims of hope. For additional information, cost, and registration visit the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA's webpage: [Learn more about the Jubilee Pilgrimage](#).
- Other dioceses and eparchies might wish to coordinate their own pilgrimages to Rome for the Jubilee celebrations. For official registration of diocesan or eparchial pilgrimages and large groups for the Jubilee, designated persons should contact pilgrim@iubilaeum2025.va and communicate the dates of the intended pilgrimage and the estimated number of participants. Staff from the Vatican Dicastery for Evangelization will respond accordingly. PLEASE NOTE: The USCCB is NOT coordinating any U.S. event activities in Rome during the Jubilee Year, nor is the USCCB coordinating any official national delegation to Jubilee events.
- Smaller groups can organize a pilgrimage on their own or through a licensed tour operator who specializes in religious travel. The latter option may cost extra, but it can save a local organizer time; additionally, those operators may have existing connections with vendors and may be able to advise on travel concerns. PLEASE NOTE: The USCCB does not endorse nor identify any licensed tour operator as the official U.S. tour operator.



- The official [schedule](#) for Jubilee events of the Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel are as follows: (All details are subject to change. The times listed are local to Rome [CET/CEST]).

Saturday, February 8

8:00 AM to 6:00 PM - Jubilee rites
 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM - Spiritual and cultural events throughout the city of Rome

Sunday, February 9

10:00 AM - Mass with the Holy Father

- Pilgrims and groups may also consider additional activities when traveling, either planned on their own or events hosted by organizations, apostolates, other episcopal conferences, or movements.
- Prepare for the trip with liturgies, retreats, devotional and service experiences, community building, catechesis, and fundraising, as needed. Take time for prayer, especially with the Blessed Sacrament.
- Practical travel preparation will be essential, especially since the Jubilee of the Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel (and other Jubilee events in 2025) in Rome are expected to draw very large crowds. This particular event will also take place in winter, so it is important that pilgrims dress appropriately for cold weather knowing that at night temperatures can reach below freezing.
- Pilgrims should bring backpacks, comfortable shoes, appropriate winter clothing, necessary medications and supplies, and resources that aid in pilgrim prayer. Packing light is essential.

- After returning home or to the United States, take time for prayer and theological reflection on the graces of God received during the pilgrimage to Rome. If you went as a group, continue to gather in the weeks and months following the trip to support one another and coordinate missionary actions.

Additional Pilgrimages to Lourdes, France:

- The Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA (AMS) and the Knights of Columbus will sponsor its annual [Warriors to Lourdes Pilgrimage](#) for wounded warriors and their families, in conjunction with the 65th International Military Pilgrimage. The Warriors to Lourdes Pilgrimage will be held on May 13-19, 2025. The Warriors to Lourdes Pilgrimage allows non-wounded, wounded (physical, mental and/or moral injuries), ill or injured U.S. military personnel to travel from the United States and Europe to the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in France. There, they will participate in the 65th International Military Pilgrimage's events, which include an international opening ceremony, special Masses, visits to the famous healing baths at Lourdes, a Unified Sports Challenge, and a candlelight vigil that draws tens of thousands annually. All information regarding the Warriors to Lourdes Pilgrimage, related videos, and required [application](#) will be available on the pilgrimage website. Applications for the 2025 Warriors to Lourdes Pilgrimage will be available on **September 15, 2024**. Please note that all applications must be completed and submitted by **January 15, 2025**, to be considered for the 2025 pilgrimage. For questions email lourdes@kofc.org or call 203-800-4857, 7:30 AM - 3:30 PM ET, Monday-Friday.



- The [65th International Military Pilgrimage to Lourdes](#) will take place in Lourdes from May 16 -18, 2025. This pilgrimage is a unique occasion for service personnel to come together in uniform while participating in a series of national and international events. In a sense, they act as ambassadors for their country and their service, engaging with senior political, military and ecclesiastical figures from across the world. For application to this pilgrimage contact the Knights of Columbus at lourdes@kofc.org; you have to be a part of a nation’s delegation in order to participate in this pilgrimage. For more information and videos of past pilgrimages, visit: [The International Military Pilgrimage - Diocese to the French Armed Forces \(dioceseauxarmees.fr\)](#).
- The Warriors to Lourdes Pilgrimage and the 65th International Military Pilgrimage to Lourdes are expected to draw very large crowds, and they will take place during the month of May. While the month of May is considered pleasant and warmer with nights slightly cooler, it is important that pilgrims recognize causes, symptoms, and support for dehydration, sickness, and heat exhaustion should they arise.
- If interested in visiting the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in France individually, go to the sanctuary’s website, which provides information on pilgrimages and events throughout the year at [Sanctuaire Notre-Dame de Lourdes - Land of healing of body and soul \(lourdes-france.com\)](#) and for reservations reservation@lourdes-france.com.

If coordinating a local pilgrimage within the United States:

It is highly recommended to make pilgrimage to one’s own diocesan or eparchial cathedral or other churches or sites designated by the diocesan or eparchial bishop.

- For pilgrims who cannot travel to Rome, bishops around the world are expected to designate their cathedrals or a popular Catholic shrine as special places of prayer for the Holy Year, offering opportunities for reconciliation, indulgences and other events intended to strengthen and revive the faith. The USCCB will be sharing ideas on how to develop these “stateside” local events, which will be posted online as more information becomes available. Check regularly the USCCB’s website for updates at <https://www.usccb.org/committees/jubilee-2025>.
- [Pilgrimage and Memorial Mass](#) will be held on May 18th, 2025, at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. Honoring the men and women who have served in the United States Armed Forces, particularly those who paid the ultimate price for American liberty, the Memorial Mass begins with the posting of the colors and singing of the National Anthem. It concludes with the playing of Taps. Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio, Archbishop for the Military Services, USA and President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops will be the primary celebrant. The information for the 2025 Pilgrimage and Memorial Mass has not been posted yet. The pilgrimage’s website will be updated in the coming months.



- A unique pilgrimage opportunity is the Father Kapaun Pilgrimage – The Kansas Camino, held on May 29-June 1, 2025. Each year at the beginning of summer hundreds of pilgrims walk 60 miles through the plains of Kansas to the hometown of Servant of God Chaplain (Capt.) Emil J. Kapaun (April 20, 1916 – May 23, 1951). Pilgrims do it not only to remember the heroic Catholic priest and Army chaplain who is on the path to sainthood but to discover the true meaning of their own unique paths to sainthood. Registration for this pilgrimage begins on March 4, 2025. This pilgrimage is made possible by donations. A small donation in the amount of \$50.00 per person is required to cover food, gas, and other needs. For more information, please contact Scott Carter at carters@catholicdioceseofwichita.org and visit Father Kapaun Pilgrimage’s website for more information at [Pilgrimage | Fr. Kapaun \(frkapaun.org\)](http://Pilgrimage|Fr.Kapaun(frkapaun.org)). Prayer cards, booklets, and Medal of Honor Cards are available at <https://frkapaun.org/contact>.
- Dioceses, eparchies, and local communities may wish to coordinate a domestic Jubilee pilgrimage to Catholic sites and destinations, in conjunction with the Jubilee of the Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel in Rome (February 8-9, 2025) or at some other convenient time.
- Things to consider for all pilgrimages would include:
 - Before embarking on the local pilgrimage, consider taking time for prayer and community-building similar to the type of spiritual preparation one would take for an international journey (i.e. to Rome or World Youth Day).
 - Prepare with a walking pilgrimage within or around the parish, campus, or local community, in particular if the journey to the cathedral or other major site involves some walking. In fact, consider adding a walking component if one is not naturally part of the program, as the spirituality of physical movement is a key ingredient to a spiritual pilgrimage.
 - After returning home (even if the trip was local), take time for prayer and theological reflection on the graces of God received during the pilgrimage experience. If you went as a group, continue to gather in the weeks and months following the trip to support one another and coordinate missionary actions.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CELEBRATING THE ARMED FORCES, POLICE, AND SECURITY PERSONNEL LOCALLY

Suggestions for Parishes

- Use the weekend liturgies on either February 1-2 or February 15-16 to recognize all the Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel in the community: in the homily, general intercessions, with a special blessing, or by inviting the Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel to serve in key liturgical roles. An example of a petition for the Prayer of the Faithful might include:

For Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel in this parish and in our community: that they may always remain close to Christ and that they be kept safe from all harm, we pray to the Lord.



- Have a reception or networking activity after all weekend Masses on either February 1-2 or February 15-16. During those gatherings, offer food and drink, opportunities to meet-and-mingle, and invitations to deeper faith engagement.
- Host a Jubilee prayer service, held at the parish at some point between February 10 and February 16, that recognizes all Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel in the community, their gifts, and their contributions to society and to the Church.
- Use the Jubilee celebration as an opportunity to engage the wider parish community and parish leadership in the accompaniment and evangelization of the Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel. This can include hosting small group conversations based on Pope Francis' teachings or inviting key leaders in the community to a reception or dinner dialogue with Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel in the local area, including those who are both active churchgoers and those who are less active in the practice of the Catholic faith.
- Plan a local pilgrimage for the Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel to a diocesan/eparchial cathedral or to another religious site or church in your area, using the ideas laid out in the previous section.
- Invite active churchgoing Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel in your parish to engage in "acts of hope" during the Jubilee Year, which can include visits with marginalized communities, evangelizing outreach to those who are disaffiliated from the Church, and/or engagement with their families on issues of faith.

- Discuss with your parish priest the need of inviting a Catholic chaplain to your parish to concelebrate a Mass on a Sunday. Announce the name of the Catholic chaplain in the Sunday's bulletin and mention the opportunity to receive a special blessing if you are part of the Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel.
- Make your parish "Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel friendly" by acknowledging, honoring, and thanking those who are currently serving or have served in the Armed Forces, Police, or acted as Security Personnel and make known that their service is appreciated.
- Reach out to military families during separations. Pastoral calls will alleviate stress when a family member is gone.
- Reach out to deployed soldiers. Send the weekly parish bulletin, or a handwritten note to let them know they are not forgotten.
- Invite parishioners to join chaplains and Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel to community events, academy graduations, law enforcement family events, and promotional and award ceremonies.
- Organize a volunteer group in your parish who could visit Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel at the hospital or home. Accompany them by praying the Rosary together and meditating on the Scripture of the day.
- Organize and promote in your parish inclusive fun activities for those Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel who have been hurt in the line of duty, such as bingo, culinary challenges, a raffle, board games, singing contest, or any other social activity where the whole parish community could participate in creating a stronger Catholic identity.



- Organize a Charity Gala in your parish, a walkathon or a 5k to raise funds to help the [Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA \(AMS\)](#) to continue its mission of evangelizing the United States Armed Forces. This includes more than 220 installations in 29 countries, patients in 153 V.A. Medical Centers, and federal employees serving outside the boundaries of the USA in 134 countries. Numerically, the AMS is responsible for more than 1.8 million men, women, and children. Promote the AMS “Give” webpage: [Donate - Of all the sacrifices our service members make, their faith should not be one of them \(milarch.org\)](#).
- Livestream or replay videos of key Jubilee events (e.g., Opening Mass, Vigil, or Closing Mass) taking place in Rome between February 8-9 at one or more Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel gatherings held at the parish (noting the time difference between Rome and your local area). You may also consider coordinating at the parish during the livestream viewings liturgies, Eucharistic adoration, confessions, catechesis, service projects, small groups, or social activities.

Suggestions for Dioceses and Eparchies

- Celebrate a liturgy or host a prayer service aimed at the Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel at the diocesan/eparchial cathedral between February 8-9, concurrent with the Jubilee celebrations happening in Rome.
- Hold a diocesan/eparchial-wide Jubilee walking pilgrimage for Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel from the cathedral (or another site of your choosing) to religious sites, churches, [Arlington National Cemetery](#) in Washington, D.C., and/or to a Catholic-led social services center or institution. Consider also inviting the diocesan or eparchial bishop on this journey.
- Post stories about Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel, and ministry leaders accompanying them on the diocesan or eparchial website, social media channels, and communications (magazine, newspaper, newsletter, etc.) prior to and/or during the Jubilee for the Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel in February 2025.
- Host a diocesan/eparchial-wide Jubilee gathering for Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel with the diocesan/eparchial bishop. This can be a presentation, dialogue/discussion, meet-and-greet social, meal, liturgy, and/or a virtual event, allowing those across the diocese/eparchy to engage with their episcopal shepherd.
- Encourage all diocesan/eparchial offices and departments to feature, celebrate, or acknowledge Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel during February 2025, centered around the global Jubilee celebrations. This might need to be preceded by a workshop or meeting with diocesan/eparchial staff to coordinate efforts.



- Inaugurate a diocesan/eparchial initiative for Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel beginning with the Jubilee celebrations. This might include an area-wide evangelization effort (for example, around key moments of return for military personnel such as Ash Wednesday); an annual award/recognition ceremony; an annual liturgy with the bishop; scholarship funds for college or graduate students; or an annual pilgrimage, etc.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & DOCUMENTS

- [Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA](#): The Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA was created by Pope Saint John Paul II to provide the Catholic Church's full range of pastoral ministries and spiritual services to those in the United States Armed Forces.
- For spiritual support for families during deployment, police officers, and security personnel, the Knights of Columbus Catholic Information Service (CIS) Publication Catalog provides information on three series of booklets that CIS has available on the Catholic faith. The three series of booklets are the [Building the Domestic Church Series](#); the [Veritas Series](#); and the [Luke E. Hart Series](#). The *Building the Domestic Church Series* contains booklets that focus on issues for Catholic families seeking to build up and strengthen the church at home. The *Veritas Series* is a series of booklets that touch on different areas of the Catholic faith (faith, prayer, morality, sacraments, scripture). The *Luke E. Hart Series* booklets cover the principal elements of the faith and are based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church first issued by Pope St. John Paul II in 1992. Please

note, the *New Evangelization Series* is not available at this time. The series is currently undergoing revisions.

- Supporting service members with deployment preparation, the Knights of Columbus offers the [Faith Formation Correspondence Study Course](#): The purpose of the course is to provide some basic information about the Catholic faith. The course confines itself to the more important matters and does not pretend to be an advanced or complete course in Catholic theology. It provides a start for Catholics who wish to review Church teaching, and for non-Catholics who wish to learn something about the Catholic Church.
 - The course is informal in the sense that it is built around ten booklets which were written precisely as booklets rather than as course lessons, and which are sent in five mailings. These booklets are arranged in logical sequence so that they provide a series of readings in the basic beliefs of Catholics. Each lesson comes accompanied by a Lesson Summary and Questionnaire booklet and a test sheet, which is based on the material in the corresponding lesson. Questions are prepared for each of them and are returned for correcting. At the successful completion of the course, participants will receive a certificate of completion. This course is offered confidentially and free of charge.



- The Knights of Columbus are offering the same course in an online format. Please visit the [Faith Formation Course](#) for more information.
- **Armed with the Faith** is a Catholic handbook for active-duty military personnel who seek a practical resource for reflection and prayer. The “military version” is printed to fit in the pocket of a soldier on heavy-duty paper with a spiral binding. The handbooks are in high demand; therefore, priority is given to military members who are deployed. Catholic chaplains should request copies from the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA and provide the following information: quantity desired, complete shipping address, phone number and e-mail. Chaplains should distribute the handbooks to those they serve. Other requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. **Armed with the Faith** is available to military personnel free of charge through the generosity of the Knights of Columbus. The “military” version is distributed by the Military Archdiocese. Please contact the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA to order the “military version” of the booklet at info@milarch.org.
 - The “home edition” of [Armed with the Faith](#) is printed on standard paper, to meet the high demand for copies from military families, veterans, Knights of Columbus, and other interested parties. The “Home Edition” booklets are also distributed freely upon request, though donations are welcome to defray the cost of printing and mailing. To request copies of the booklet **Armed with the Faith - Home Edition** (#364) write to cis@kofc.org or call (203) 752-4267. This version is available to

all who request it. Please visit the Knights of Columbus website to see a listing of all the items they offer at www.kofc.org/shopcis or at www.kofc.org/cis. Please note that all Knights of Columbus’ materials are offered free of charge for military personnel.

- **“Into the Breach”** series: These series of videos offer great video and program content that serves to evangelize and form Armed Forces, Police, and Security Personnel, and their families in the Catholic faith.
 - Into the Breach 1: [The Mission of the Family trailer](#)
 - Into the Breach 2: [The Catholic Family in a Post-Christian World | The Mission of the Family](#)
 - Into the Breach 3: [Marriage: The Foundation of the Family | The Mission of the Family](#)
 - Into the Breach 4: [The Gift of Children | The Mission of the Family](#)
 - Into the Breach 5: [Healing in the Family | The Mission of the Family](#)
 - Into the Breach 6: [Creating a Legacy of Faith | The Mission of the Family](#)
- **Knights of Columbus COR Program:** The mission of Cor Program is to refocus Catholic men on Jesus Christ and to form and strengthen them in faith and virtue through a brotherhood committed to prayer, formation, and fraternity. The goal of each Cor gathering is to provide the opportunity for men to encounter Christ, to pray together, to be formed in their faith, and to strengthen their bonds of brotherhood, preparing them for courageous leadership and the mission of evangelization for their families and communities. For additional information visit www.kofc.org/cor.



- The Knights of Columbus also developed the “**Everyday Heroes**” video series (3 seasons) highlighting individual Knights who embody what every man of faith should aspire to in terms of living out their faith with courage and a commitment to charity:
 - Season 1: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8dhS0o-trLj4YwukwAK8U0goRNmQOVrQ>
 - Season 2: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8dhS0o-trLjD9oRtocCCHlqa6wcMIOK8>
 - Season 3: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8dhS0o-trLgzzbyRjtHBttzOypLKPcQI>
- The Eucharistic Revival: Videos to use to help you, and your council, deepen your devotion to the Eucharist: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8dhS0o-trLg_gY6bTemjad9OWb-cx1CK
- Documentary films: The Knight of Columbus produced documentary films that are worth watching for personal edification: <https://www.youtube.com/@KnightsOfColumbus/search?query=Documentaries>
- [Ascension Press](#) presents the truth and beauty of the Catholic Faith as the path to a fulfilled life and authentic happiness. Ascension Press shares valuable resources, create powerful media, and build communities to answer the longings of the human heart with the transformative power of the Gospel. From [Bible studies](#) to [sacramental prep programs](#), to [Q&A-style books](#) and [free online videos](#), everything is focused on the encounter with Christ.

Letters and Articles:

- Letter of the Holy Father Francis to Msgr. Rino Fisichella, President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, for the Jubilee 2025: [Letter from Pope Francis \(iubilaeum2025.va\)](#).
- Letter of the Holy Father Pope Francis to the people of Ukraine, nine months after the outbreak of the war, November 24, 2022: [Letter of His Holiness Pope Francis to the People of Ukraine Nine Months after the Outbreak of the War \(24 November 2022\) | Francis \(vatican.va\)](#).
- Apostolic letter Salvifici Doloris of Pope St. John Paul II on the Christian meaning of human suffering: [Salvifici Doloris \(February 11, 1984\) | John Paul II \(vatican.va\)](#).
- Speech of Pope St. John Paul II to the bishops and laity of the International Military Apostolate, Saturday, June 21, 1986: [Speech of Pope John Paul II to AMI \(1986\) - Apostolat Militaire International](#)
- Honoring our Military Chaplains, a USCCB article: [Servants of Church and Country](#).
- A USCCB article on Saints: [Saints](#).
- Of Medal of Honor winners and saints article by Sister Mary Ann Walsh, 2013, USCCB’s blog: [Of Medal of Honor Winners and Saints](#).
- An article by Father Captain Michael J. Parisi, Chaplain Corps, U.S. Navy, USCCB: [United States Naval Vessels Named for Catholic Military Chaplains](#).



KEY SAINTS

Holy Military Companions

- **St. Michael the Archangel (feast day September 29)**, patron of the military in general. Being an archangel, St. Michael is particularly honored by the Air Force and airborne divisions of the ground troops. Army paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne Division in Fort Bragg, NC, complete the "[St. Michael's Jump](#)" every year in honor of their patron saint.

Army

- **St. Sebastian (c. AD 255 - c. AD 288, feast day January 20)**, a Christian Roman soldier who became a captain in the Praetorian Guard, the emperor's personal bodyguard. When Emperor Diocletian discovered Sebastian's faith, he ordered him to be pierced with arrows, but incredibly, this did not kill him. Sebastian returned to challenge the emperor for his cruelty to the Christians, at which point he was cudged to death.
- **St. George (3rd century - 303, feast day April 23)**, patron saint of England and Catalonia. When George was old enough, he was welcomed into Diocletian's army. On February 24, 303 A.D., Diocletian, who hated Christians, announced that every Christian the army passed would be arrested and every other soldier should offer a sacrifice to the Roman gods. George refused to abide by Diocletian's order. Diocletian ordered George's execution. In preparation for his death, George gave his money to the poor and was sent to be tortured. On April 23, 303 A.D., George was decapitated, and his body was sent to Lydda for burial.
- **St. Joan of Arc (1412-1431, feast day May 30)**, patron saint of France and soldiers. St. Joan of Arc is one of the heroines of France and is revered as a holy person for her faithfulness and courage, which she displayed in battle, but even more acutely in her trial and execution.
- **St. Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556, feast day July 31)**, founder of the Society of Jesus, or the Jesuits, Ignatius of Loyola was a former soldier from Spain. He founded the Jesuits in 1540 as an effort to counter the effects of the Protestant Reformation by the promotion and defense of the teachings and authority of the Church across Europe. Ignatius also developed his Spiritual Exercises, a model of prayer still used today.
- **St. Maurice (3rd century AD – 287, feast day September 22)**, a Roman soldier from Egypt who eventually led the entire Theban Legion. He and his men were all Christians and were martyred together when they refused to worship the Roman gods. St. Maurice is particularly honored by infantry units.
- **St. John of Capistrano (1386-1456, feast day October 23)**, Franciscan priest and patron saint of jurist and military chaplains, as well as the namesake of two Franciscan missions, one in Southern California and the other in San Antonio, Texas.
- **St. Martin of Tours (316 or 336–397, feast day November 11)**, a patron saint of France, father of monasticism in Gaul, and the first great leader of Western monasticism. A conscientious objector who wanted to be a monk; a monk who was maneuvered into being a bishop; a bishop who fought paganism as well as pleaded for mercy to heretics. St. Martin of Tours, one of the most popular of saints and one of the first not to be a martyr.



Marine Corps

- **St. Barbara (mid-3rd century - late-3rd century, feast day December 4)**, a virgin-martyr and the patroness of both Army and Marine artillerymen. Her own father martyred her out of hatred for her Christian faith, and legend says that lightning struck him as divine punishment—hence the connection to artillery.

Air Force

- **St. Joseph of Cupertino (1603-1663, feast day September 18)**, Franciscan priest and patron saint of aviators because of his habit of levitating during prayer. The life of this saint was marked by ecstasies and levitations. The people flocked to him in droves seeking help and advice in the confessional, and he assisted many in living a truly devout Christian life. However, this humble man had to endure many severe trials and terrible temptations throughout his life.
- **Our Lady of Loreto**, also the patroness of aviation and air travelers, since it is said that the Holy House of Loreto—the Holy Family’s home—was carried by angels to Italy. Optional Memorial on December 10.

Navy

- **St. Brendan the Navigator (5th-6th century, feast day May 16)**, an Irish monk who traveled by sea to spread the faith and monasticism in other lands. He is the hero of the early medieval legend *The Voyage of St. Brendan*, in which he and his companions embark on an epic sea adventure to find a promised land of the saints.

ON THE PATH TO SAINTHOOD

- **Servant of God Chaplain (Capt.) Emil J. Kapaun (1916-1951)** was a U.S. Army chaplain who gave his life in the service of his fellow-soldiers when they were captured by Chinese forces in the Korean War. He died in a prison camp in 1951 and was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor. His body was identified recently and returned to his home state of Kansas. Read Father Kapaun’s bio at [Chaplain \(Capt.\) Emil J. Kapaun | Medal of Honor Recipient | U.S. Army.](#)
- **Servant of God Rev. Lieutenant Joseph Verbis Lafleur (1912-1944)** was a Roman Catholic priest and a heroic United States Military chaplain who died as a Japanese prisoner of World War II. On September 5, 2020, the Diocese of Lafayette in Louisiana, led by Bishop John Douglas Deshotel, officially opened Father Lafleur’s cause for beatification and canonization. Read Father Lafleur’s bio at [U.S. Bishops Conduct Canonical Consultation on Cause of Beatification and Canonization of the Servant of God Joseph Verbis Lafleur, Diocesan Priest | USCCB.](#)
- **Servant of God Vincent Robert Capodanno (1929-1967)**, was a Marine chaplain who was killed in action in the Vietnam War and is a Medal of Honor recipient. Read Father Capodanno’s bio at [Father Capodanno Biography -Archdiocese for the Military, USA \(milarch.org\).](#)



PRAYERS

Prayers for the Military

These prayers are courtesy from the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA, at [Prayers for the Military - Archdiocese for the Military, USA \(milarch.org\)](http://Prayers for the Military - Archdiocese for the Military, USA (milarch.org)).

Prayer to One's Guardian Angel

Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom his love commits me here.

Ever this day be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.

Prayer to Saint Michael the Archangel

Saint Michael, the Archangel, defend us in battle,

Be our protection against the malice and snares of the devil.

We humbly beseech God to command him, And do thou, O prince of the heavenly host, By the divine power thrust into hell Satan

And the other evil spirits who roam through the world

Seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

Prayer in Time of War

*God our Father,
Maker and lover of peace,
To know you is to live,
And to serve you is to reign.
All our faith is in your saving help;
Protect us from men of violence
And keep us safe from weapons of hate.
Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Psalm 23 - The Lord is my shepherd

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures;

He leads me beside still waters;

He restores my soul.

He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil;

For you are with me;

Your rod and your staff – they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

You anoint my head with oil;

My cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,

And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.

Prayer for Military Chaplains

Heavenly Father, bless and protect Military Chaplains and fill them

with the joy and courage of their vocation as personal ministers of

Christ in preaching your word and nourishing us with the Sacraments.

Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



St. Patrick's Breastplate

*May the strength of God guide me this day,
and may his power preserve me.*

*May the wisdom of God instruct me; the eye of
God watch over me; the ear of God hear me;
the word of God give sweetness to my speech;
the hand of God defend me; and may I follow
the way of God.*

*Christ be with me, Christ before me,
Christ be after me, Christ within me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ at my right hand, Christ at my left,
Christ in the fort, Christ in the chariot,
Christ in the ship,
Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of
me,
Christ in the mouth of every man who speaks
to me.
Christ in every eye that sees me.
Christ in every ear that hears me.*

Prayer for Our Troops

These prayers were extracted from the USCCB's website at [Prayer for Our Troops | USCCB](#)

Priest: *Let us pray for our brothers and sisters
as they go forth with courage and
determination to face the forces of violence,
weapons of destruction and hearts filled with
hate.*

RESPONSE: *THROUGH THE DARKNESS BRING
US TO THE LIGHT.*

Deacon or Reader: *For our Commander-In-
Chief, President N.N., and our political and
military leaders that they may tirelessly seek
peaceful settlements to international disputes;
we pray to the Lord:*

*That the Lord may preserve the members of
our Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard and Air
Force from all harm; we pray to the Lord:*

*That even in war, we may keep clearly before
us the defense of all human rights, especially
the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of
happiness; we pray to the Lord.*

*That the families, relatives and friends of our
military members may be strengthened in
this time of concern and anxiety; we pray to
the Lord.*

*That the Lord may help families with men
and women in the armed forces to cope with
daily challenges in the absence of their loved
ones; we pray to the Lord.*

*That our homeland will be preserved from
violence and terrorism; we pray to the Lord.*

*That the nations of the world will seek to
work together in harmony and peace; we
pray to the Lord.*

*That the hearts of all men and women will be
moved to pursue true peace and justice; we
pray to the Lord.*

*That violence may be overcome by peace;
that weapons of destruction be transformed
into tools of justice, and hate give way to true
charity; we pray to the Lord.*

*That grateful for and inspired by those
veterans who have given their lives for our
country we may bravely face the challenges
ahead; we pray to the Lord.*

Priest: *Lord God, Almighty Father,
creator of mankind and author of peace,
as we are ever mindful of the cost paid for
the liberty we possess,
we ask you to bless the members of our
armed forces.*

*Give them courage, hope and strength.
May they ever experience your firm support,
gentle love and compassionate healing.*



*Be their power and protector, leading them from darkness to light.
To you be all glory, honor and praise, now and forever.
Amen.*

Active-Duty Military - Blessings for those leaving for or returning from deployment

These blessings were extracted from the website of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington: [Veterans Support - Archdiocese of Washington \(adw.org\)](http://Veterans Support - Archdiocese of Washington (adw.org)).

When parishioners are being deployed, consider a special blessing of them before the final blessing at Mass. The following prayers may be used and adapted as needed.

- *O God, you led your servants Abraham and Sarah from their home and guarded them in all their wanderings. Guide this servant of yours, N. Be a refuge on the journey, shade in the heat, shelter in the storm, rest in weariness, protection in trouble, and a strong staff in danger. We give you thanks for him / her: bind us together now, even though we may be far apart. Grant this through Christ our Lord. (Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers).*
- *All-powerful and merciful God, you led the children of Israel on dry land, parting the waters of the sea; you guided the Magi to your Son by a star. Help these, our brothers and sisters and give them a safe journey. Under your protection let them reach their destination and come at last to the eternal haven of salvation, through Christ our Lord. (Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers)*
- *May almighty God keep you from all harm and bless you with every good gift. Amen. May he set his word in your heart and fill you with lasting joy. Amen.*

- *May you walk in his ways, always knowing what is right and good. Amen. And may almighty God bless you all... (Book of Blessings, Ch. 67)*

(When parishioners are returning from deployment, consider a similar prayer and blessing.)

The Jubilee Prayer

The Jubilee Prayer is available in twenty languages at [Prayer \(iubilaeum2025.va\)](http://Prayer (iubilaeum2025.va)).

*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, reawaken
in us the blessed hope
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.





United States
Conference of
Catholic Bishops

Pilgrims on the Way of Beauty: A Resource for the Jubilee for Artists

Jubilee 2025: Pilgrims of Hope

United States Conference of
Catholic Bishops

Jubilee for Artists: Resource Packet

February 16-18, 2025

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

Jubilee 2025 invites you to be a pilgrim of hope. For Christians, hope is anchored in the encounter with Jesus whose life, death, and resurrection reveals God's transforming love. Our hope in God is renewed constantly in the gift of the Holy Spirit, the love of the Father and the Son, who is given, even now, to the community of believers.

The Holy See has designated various Jubilee Days throughout 2025 to welcome and celebrate different groups of people and various ministries in the Church. One of these Jubilee Days invites artists, and those who support and nurture artists, to a renewed hope in God. By making a Jubilee pilgrimage of hope you give thanks to God for your vocation as an artist and join in celebrating the many creative gifts that artists have

given to the Church and to the world. This is a graced opportunity to join with artists of every race, language, and culture to discover or re-discover your vocation to beauty that renews the world with the gift of hope.



The Jubilee for Artists will be held from Sunday, February 16, to Tuesday, February 18, 2025. Individual artists and groups of artists are invited to journey on the "way of beauty," the *via pulchritudinis*, to encounter Jesus Christ, "the image (icon) of the invisible God" (Col 1:15). Jesus is the sure foundation of Christian hope, the one who reveals God's love to all people.

This resource is offered to artists as well as those who support and inspire artists. It is also offered to anyone who finds in the arts a place where personal inspiration, joy, and hope abound. Anyone who is led to encounter God through beauty, expressed in the arts and crafts across cultures, is welcome to explore this resource in preparation for the Jubilee for Artists. These reflections and resources can be used and/or adapted by dioceses, eparchies, parishes, schools, campuses, apostolates, and lay movements. Organizations dedicated to the arts and artists or individuals may use it to plan local



pre- and post-pilgrimage celebrations to mark the Jubilee for Artists. And it may serve as a catalyst or inspiration for the creation and development of year-round resources for individuals or communities of artists.

For artists or organizations of artists who plan to make a pilgrimage to Rome or to a particular Jubilee celebration within the United States during 2025, this resource can serve as an aid in the preparation and experience of that pilgrimage. Additional resources for the Jubilee for Artists and other Jubilee celebrations can be found online at the USCCB Jubilee Year web pages: available in English at <https://www.usccb.org/committees/jubilee-2025> and available in Spanish at <https://www.usccb.org/es/committees/jubileo-2025>.

SPIRITUAL REFLECTION

In preparation for the Jubilee for Artists, set within a year-long renewal of Christian hope, we recall the words of St. John Paul II in his *Letter to Artists* (LA):

Artists of every age, captivated by the hidden power of sounds and words, colors and shapes, you have admired the work of your inspiration, sensing in it some echo of the mystery of creation with which God, the sole creator of all things, has wished in some way to associate you. (Letter to Artists, no. 1).

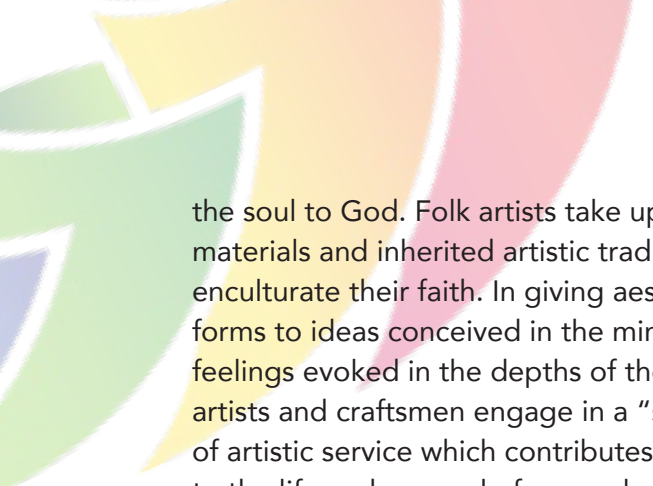
God is the divine artist. The beauty of the natural world, the beauty of artistic works made by human hands, and the beauty of each human life finds its source in God, the divine artist. And it is God who gives to artists—poets, writers, painters, sculptors, architects, musicians, actors, craftsmen and many others—a special vocation to beauty in the gift of artistic creativity.

The work of artists is invaluable for society and for the Church since artistic creativity is an act of hope. A creative person can be a powerful agent of hope in the world. To encounter and to be transformed by art on the “way of beauty” guides one to the path of hope. For as St. Paul VI once said, “this world in which we live needs beauty in order not to sink into despair. It is beauty, like truth, which brings joy to the human heart and is that precious fruit which resists the wear and tear of time, which unites generations and makes them share things in admiration. And all of this is through your hands.” (*Message to Artists*, Sistine Chapel, 1964). Similarly, Pope Francis notes that, “artists remind us that the dimension in which we move, even unconsciously, is always that of the Spirit. Your art is like a sail swelling with the wind of the Spirit and propelling us forward.” (*Address to Artists*, June 23, 2023)

Human beings are created with the unique capacity to create and to enjoy works of art. We delight in the order, harmony, and radiant beauty of the natural world, in masterpieces of artistic creativity, or the beauty of each human person, made in God’s image and likeness. We alone are created for beauty that stills the soul and enlightens hope in each human heart.

Artists imitate the creator God, the divine artist, in creating artistic works that give hope by lifting the spirit to transcendent realities. “The creativity of the artist” says Pope Francis, “can thus be said to share in God’s own passion for creation. You are sharers in God’s dream!” While God creates out of nothing, *ex nihilo*, the artist is privileged to imitate God, the creator of all that exists. By taking up words, sounds, paint, stone, marble, and glass the artist and the craftsman creates works of beauty capable of lifting





the soul to God. Folk artists take up local materials and inherited artistic traditions to enculturate their faith. In giving aesthetic forms to ideas conceived in the mind and feelings evoked in the depths of the heart, artists and craftsmen engage in a “spirituality of artistic service which contributes in its way to the life and renewal of a people.” (LA, no. 4).

In his *Address to Artists* (2023) Pope Francis noted that, “As artists, you can help us to make room for the Spirit. When we see the work of the Spirit, which creates harmony from differences without destroying or standardizing them but bringing them into harmony, we come to understand what beauty really is. Beauty is that work of the Spirit which creates harmony.”

Pope Francis also reminded artists that “Neither art nor faith can leave things simply as they are: they change, transform, move and convert them.” And he encouraged them by saying, “I consider you allies in so many things that are dear to me, like the defense of human life, social justice, concern for the poor, care for our common home, universal human fraternity.”

The Jubilee for Artists is a special opportunity for artists from diverse communities and cultures to discover or re-discover a common “spirituality of artistic service” that you offer to your community, society, and the Church. As St. John Paul II prayed, “may your art help to affirm that true beauty, which as a glimmer of the Spirit of God, will transfigure matter, and open the human soul to the sense of the eternal.” (LA, no. 16)

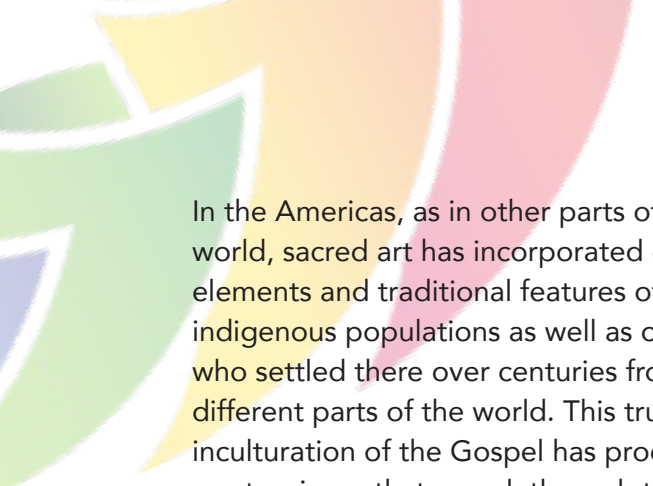
Over two thousand years, the Christian faith has found artistic expression in a vast treasury of artistic masterpieces. For centuries, the Catholic Church was the principal patron of the arts, a cultural role that is greatly diminished today. We know

from history that many of the world’s most admired and treasured artistic masterpieces, including enculturated forms of folk art, are Christian in theme, origin, provenance, and location. Recall, for instance, the biblical frescoes of the ancient Roman catacombs or Giotto’s *Madonna and Child*, Fra Angelico’s *Annunciation* or Michelangelo’s *Piéta*, Leonardo da Vinci’s *Last Supper* or Caravaggio’s *Incredulity of St. Thomas*, Juan de Juanes’ *Last Supper* or Henry Ossawa Tanner’s *Annunciation*, to name only a few celebrated masterpieces.

It is a historical fact that there has never been a time when sacred art has not flourished in the Catholic tradition. From the ancient art of the Christian catacombs to majestic Byzantine basilicas, from the surging Gothic cathedrals of the Middle Ages to the creative flood of the Renaissance, and from the mysticism of the Baroque down to the present day, the truth and goodness of Christian faith has taken the form of the beautiful in an immense treasury of masterpieces of art. This vast treasury of art opens to transcendence and becomes a permanent witness to faith within the evangelizing mission of the Church. As the *Directory for Catechesis* notes, “the way of evangelization is the *way of beauty*, and therefore every form of beauty is a source of catechesis.” (DC, no. 109)

Pilgrims to Europe and the eternal city of Rome encounter many of these artistic masterpieces in churches and chapels that are privileged storehouses of the beauty of Christian faith. As millions of visitors marvel at masterpieces of sacred art in these pilgrim places their encounters with beauty can serve as a “pre-sacrament” that prepares the soil of the heart and mind for God. For as Pope Francis notes, “every expression of true beauty can thus be acknowledged as a path leading to an encounter with the Lord Jesus.” (Pope Francis, *Evangeli Gaudium*, no. 167).





In the Americas, as in other parts of the world, sacred art has incorporated cultural elements and traditional features of local indigenous populations as well as of those who settled there over centuries from different parts of the world. This true inculturation of the Gospel has produced masterpieces that reveal, through the genius of local artists, the intimate relationship between art and beauty, faith and culture. Moving musical compositions, tapestries, stained glass, wood carving, church construction and design, sacred images for veneration, and many other forms of artistic expressions, reveal the genius of the Creator through the creativity and skilled craftsmanship of local artists and artisans.

Quoting from the Second Vatican Council's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the Catholic Bishops of the United States stated in *Keeping Christ's Sacred Promise* (USCCB, 2024) that, "the Church has not adopted any particular style of art as her very own; she has admitted styles from every period according to the natural talents and circumstances of peoples, and the needs of the various rites. Thus, in the course of the centuries, she has brought into being a treasury of art which must be very carefully preserved." And also, "The art of our own days, coming from every race and region, shall also be given free scope in the Church, provided that it adorns the sacred buildings and holy rites with due reverence and honor; thereby it is enabled to contribute its own voice to that wonderful chorus of praise in honor of the Catholic faith sung by great men in times gone by." (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 123)

Down the centuries, the Church's heritage of sacred music has evoked the transcendent and evangelizing power of art. Renowned

classical composers, such as Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, and Vivaldi, among many others, dedicated their creative talents to composing sacred music for the liturgy in sung Masses, oratorios, and hymns. The beauty of this accumulated heritage of sacred music lifts the soul in praise and worship of God through the transforming power of sound. As the Second Vatican Council noted, "The musical tradition of the universal Church is a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of any other art. The main reason for this pre-eminence is that, as sacred song is united to words, it forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy." (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 112)

The Jubilee for Artists is a graced opportunity when individual artists and communities of artists can travel the Church's historic and treasured path of beauty that leads to a renewed encounter with the Lord Jesus. Coming together as pilgrims in prayer and reflection on one's vocation to beauty, artists can deepen awareness of the gift of artistic talent and the responsibility to place one's artistic talent at the service of the human community that longs for peace and hope. For as Pope Benedict XVI noted:

Artists are the custodians of beauty: thanks to your talent, you have the opportunity to speak to the heart of humanity, to touch individual and collective sensibilities, to call forth dreams and hopes, to broaden the horizons of knowledge and of human engagement. Be grateful, then, for the gifts you have received and be fully conscious of your great responsibility to communicate beauty, to communicate in and through beauty! Through your art, you yourselves are to be heralds and witnesses of hope for humanity! (Address to Artists, 2009).



The Jubilee for Artists also offers an opportunity to draw close to the Blessed Virgin Mary who is praised in an ancient hymn as *tota pulchra es Maria*, “you are the most beautiful, Mary.” The Mother of God, Mary, is the most beautiful of all creatures since God preserved her from the stain of Original Sin. Mary’s beauty radiated from her faith in God’s word, her “yes” to God’s plan revealed by the Archangel Gabriel at the Annunciation, and her witness to discipleship that hears and lives God’s word.

Finally, while not all are called and gifted with artistic talents, Scripture reminds us that “all men and women are entrusted with the task of crafting their own life: in a certain sense, they are to make of it a work of art, a masterpiece.” (St. John Paul II, *Letter to Artists*, no. 2). The Jubilee for Artists is an opportunity for all the faithful to join with artists for a renewed encounter with Jesus Christ as pilgrims on the “way of beauty.”

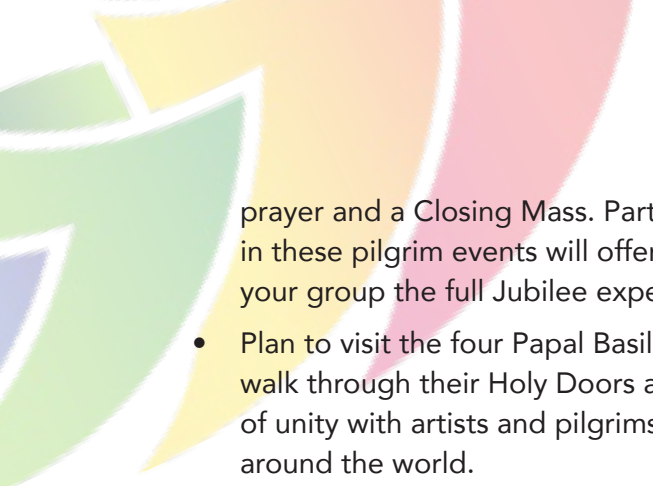
SUGGESTIONS FOR PILGRIM PREPARATION - ROME

One major element of the Jubilee celebrations for Catholics is making pilgrimage. For some, that may involve traveling to Rome, where pilgrims from around the world traditionally visit the Holy Doors of the four Papal Basilicas (St. Peter, St. John Lateran, St. Mary Major, and St. Paul Outside the Walls). At the beginning of the Jubilee 2025, the pope will enter these papal churches through their Holy Doors which will remain open throughout the Jubilee year. For others, local Jubilee pilgrimages can be made to diocesan or eparchial cathedrals, churches, and/or shrines and religious sites.

If you, your parish or ministry group, or artist’s organization or community are planning a pilgrimage to Rome for the Jubilee for Artists (February 16-18, 2025), the following suggestions may help your planning:

- In the weeks and months before the pilgrimage take the time, individually or as a group, to prayerfully read and discuss one or more of the Church’s reflections on the vocation of artists and the place of beauty in the spiritual life and in the evangelizing mission of the Church. Recommended reading would include St. John Paul II’s *Letter to Artists*.
- In the weeks and months before the pilgrimage prepare yourself spiritually as individuals or as a group through liturgies, retreats, devotions, catechesis, and fundraising activities, as is possible. Dedicate times of Eucharistic Adoration for the intention of your pilgrimage. Learn the Jubilee Hymn as a group ([Hymn for the 2025 Jubilee \(iubilaeum2025.va\)](https://iubilaeum2025.va)).
- Download the official app of the Jubilee 2025 - **iubilaeum25**
- Get a free Pilgrim’s Card (see [Pilgrim’s Card \(iubilaeum2025.va\)](https://iubilaeum2025.va)). In addition, you may wish to purchase a Pilgrim’s Services Card that provides discounts on transport, accommodation, and catering. This card will also offer reduced ticket prices for museums, cultural events, and city transport in Rome.
- Official Jubilee events for the Jubilee for Artists include an Opening Mass, Jubilee rites in walking through Holy Doors, and moments of recollection,





prayer and a Closing Mass. Participating in these pilgrim events will offer you and your group the full Jubilee experience.

- Plan to visit the four Papal Basilicas to walk through their Holy Doors as a sign of unity with artists and pilgrims from around the world.
- In addition, plan to make the traditional pilgrimage of “Seven Churches,” originally created by St. Philip Neri in the 16th century. This is one of the oldest Roman pilgrim traditions and involves visiting seven churches that span the entire city as well as the Roman countryside, the Roman Catacombs, and some magnificent awe inspiring Roman basilicas. (for the list of churches see [The Seven Churches Pilgrimage \(iubilaeum2025.va\)](http://TheSevenChurchesPilgrimage(iubilaeum2025.va)).)
- Individual artists and groups of artists may also wish to experience the artistic treasures of Rome and other Italian cities. A tour of the Vatican Museums and other special artistic treasures of Rome, such as the Scavi Tour, may be of interest to your pilgrim group. Such activities may be planned and hosted by organizations, apostolates, episcopal conferences or lay movements.
- You may create your own pilgrimage itinerary or go through a licensed tour operator that specializes or has experience in pilgrimage travel. The latter option may cost extra, but it can save time. In addition, pilgrimage operators typically have existing connections with local vendors and may have recommendations on travel concerns. PLEASE NOTE: The USCCB does not endorse nor identify any licensed tour operator as the official U.S. tour operator.

- Pilgrims are encouraged to bring sturdy backpacks, comfortable shoes, appropriate clothing for February, necessary medications and supplies, and resources that aid in pilgrim prayer. Packing light is essential.
- After returning home, take time for prayer and theological reflection, individually and as a group, to recognize and to thank God for the graces of God received during the pilgrimage to Rome. If you were part of a group pilgrimage, continue to gather in the weeks and months following the trip to support one another and coordinate missionary actions and initiatives inspired by your pilgrimage experience.

SUGGESTIONS FOR LOCAL CELEBRATIONS OF JUBILEE FOR ARTISTS

It is highly recommended to make pilgrimage to one’s own diocesan or eparchial cathedral or other church(es), shrine(s), or religious site(s) designated by the bishop or eparch.

- A local pilgrimage can be planned to take place at any time of year, or to coincide with the Jubilee for Artists in Rome (February 16–18, 2025). The timing of the local celebration, as well as the local destination(s), is at the discretion of the diocese or local organizer(s).
- Communicate with the location in advance, especially if you are organizing a group pilgrimage. This will ensure that your pilgrimage does not overlap with liturgical or local community events and takes place within the hours of operation for the site. Create a smaller group of volunteers to organize various details in the planning of a group pilgrimage.



- In the weeks and months before the pilgrimage take time, individually or as a group, to prayerfully read and discuss one or more of the Church's reflections on the vocation of artists and the place of beauty in the spiritual life and in the evangelizing mission of the Church. Recommended reading would include St. John Paul II's *Letter to Artists*.
- In the weeks and months before the pilgrimage prepare yourself spiritually as individuals or as a group through liturgies, retreats, devotions, catechesis, and fundraising activities, as is possible. Dedicate times of Eucharistic Adoration for the intention of your pilgrimage. Learn the Jubilee Hymn as a group ([Hymn for the 2025 Jubilee \(iubilaeum2025.va\)](https://www.iubilaeum2025.va)).
- Download the official app of the Jubilee 2025—**iubilaeum25**—so your group can stay up to date and remain connected to the celebrations in Rome.
- The pilgrim journey to the cathedral or other major site typically includes some walking. Consider adding a walking component, if one is not part of the pilgrimage activities. The spirituality of a physical journey from one place to another is meant to evoke the spiritual pilgrimage of interior conversion from one spiritual place to another. Prepare by inviting the faithful to complete a walking pilgrimage on a smaller scale, perhaps within or around the parish, campus, or local community.
- After returning home (even if the trip was local), take time for prayer and theological reflection on the graces of God received during the pilgrimage experience. If you went as a group, continue to gather in the weeks and months following the trip to support

one another and coordinate missionary actions and initiatives inspired by your pilgrimage experience.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CELEBRATING ARTISTS LOCALLY (SUGGESTIONS FOR PARISHES)

- Use the weekend liturgies on either February 15-16, 2025, or February 22-23, 2025, to recognize artists and artists groups in the community. Recognition can be included in the homily, general intercessions, with a special blessing, or by inviting artists to serve in key liturgical roles. An example of a petition for the Prayer of the Faithful might include:

For artists in this parish, in the wider community and in our families, and for artists who are distant from the faith, that they may rediscover the hope that Jesus brings, we pray to the Lord.

- Host a social or creative activity for artists after all weekend Masses on either February 15-16 or February 22-23. Create opportunities to share food and drink, to meet-and-mingle, and extend invitations to deeper faith engagement in the life of the parish.
- Host a Jubilee prayer service, held at the parish at some point between February 15–22, 2025, to recognize local artists, their gifts, and their contributions to society and to the Church.
- Use the Jubilee celebration as an opportunity to engage the wider parish community and parish leadership in the welcome, accompaniment, and evangelization of artists. Provide opportunities for artists to share their talents through art displays or an art festival for the parish.



- Invite artists in your parish to engage in “acts of hope” during the Jubilee Year, which can include visits with marginalized communities, evangelizing outreach to artists who are disaffiliated from the Church, and/or engagement with their families on issues of faith.
- Livestream or replay video of key Jubilee events (i.e., Opening Mass, Vigil, or Closing Mass) taking place in Rome at the Jubilee for Artists at any of the parish celebrations described above. Note the time difference between Rome and your local area.

SUGGESTIONS FOR DIOCESES & EPARCHIES

- Celebrate a liturgy or host a prayer service for artists at the diocesan/eparchial cathedral between February 15–23, 2025, concurrent with the Jubilee celebrations happening in Rome. Invite all parishes across the diocese to attend and engage artists in planning for the liturgy or prayer service.
- Hold a diocesan/eparchial Jubilee walking pilgrimage for artists from the cathedral (or another site of your choosing) to religious sites, churches, universities/schools, and/or a Catholic organization dedicated to the arts. Invite the bishop or eparch to join the community on this journey.
- Host a diocesan sacred art contest on a select spiritual theme and invite diverse cultural communities to participate for art submissions in various media. Select a well-known judge(s) for the sacred art contest and offer prizes for the contest winners. Display the submitted artistic works in a special exhibit that travels across the diocese in the Jubilee year. Engage artists in planning the art contest and art exhibits.
- Post testimonies and stories about local Catholic artists on the diocesan or eparchial website, social media channels, and communications (magazine, newspaper, newsletter, etc.) prior to and/or during the Jubilee for Artists from February 16-18, 2025.
- Host a diocesan/eparchial Jubilee gathering of artists with the bishop/eparch. This can be a guest presentation, dialogue/discussion, meet-and-greet social with art displays, meal, and/or a virtual event, allowing artists across the diocese/eparchy to engage with their episcopal shepherd.
- Encourage diocesan/eparchial offices and departments to feature, celebrate, or acknowledge artists during February 2025. A meeting with diocesan/eparchial staff helps with the coordination of efforts.
- Inaugurate a diocesan/eparchial initiative for artists beginning with the Jubilee celebrations. This could include an evangelization effort with an annual Mass for Artists with the bishop, an annual pilgrimage for artists, or an annual sacred art contest and exhibit.
- Organize pilgrimages - local, regional, or located in a different part of the country - to churches, shrines, chapels, and monasteries where sacred art of different times, traditions and cultural influences are displayed.
- Organize a concert or festival of sacred music with the inclusion of pieces from different composers, styles, epochs/times, and ethnic, cultural and liturgical traditions.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & DOCUMENTS

- Second Vatican Council, *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, nos. 112 - 130 Chapter VI on Sacred Music and Chapter VII on Sacred Art [Sacrosanctum Concilium \(vatican.va\)](http://www.vatican.va)
- *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, "Truth, Beauty and Sacred Art," nos. 2500–2502. [Catechism of the Catholic Church \(usccb.org\)](http://www.usccb.org)
- St. Paul VI, *Message to Artists*, Sistine Chapel, May 7, 1964 [Messages of the Council: To the artists \(December 8, 1965\) | St. Paul VI \(vatican.va\)](http://www.vatican.va)
- St. John Paul II, *Letter to Artists*, April 1999 [Letter to Artists, \(April 4, 1999\) | St. John Paul II \(vatican.va\)](http://www.vatican.va)
- Pope Benedict XVI, *Address to Artists*, Sistine Chapel, November 21, 2009 [Meeting with artists in the Sistine Chapel \(November 21, 2009\) | BENEDICT XVI \(vatican.va\)](http://www.vatican.va)
- Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 167. "[Evangelii Gaudium](http://www.vatican.va)": [Apostolic Exhortation on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World \(24 November 2013\) | Francis \(vatican.va\)](http://www.vatican.va)
- Pope Francis, *Address to Artists*, Sistine Chapel, June 23, 2023 [To Artists for the 50th Anniversary of the Inauguration of the Vatican Museums' Collection of Modern Art \(23 June 2023\) | Francis](http://www.vatican.va)
- Vatican Dicastery for Culture and Education, *The Via Pulchritudinis: The Way of Beauty*, 2006. [The Via Pulchritudinis, Way of Beauty \(cultura.va\)](http://www.cultura.va)
- St. John Damascus, *On the Divine Images: Three Apologies Against Those Who Attack the Divine Images*. Eighth century. [On the Divine Images: 3 Apologies Against Those Who Attack](http://www.vatican.va)

[the Divine Images \(English and Ancient Greek Edition\): John, of Damascus, Saint, Anderson, David: 9780913836620: Amazon.com: Books](http://www.vatican.va)

PARTICULAR SAINTS WHO ARE PILGRIM COMPANIONS OF ARTISTS:

- **St. Luke (feast day October 18)**, patron of artists, is believed, from legends, to have painted the first icon of the Blessed Virgin Mary. One of the four Evangelists, St. Luke paints with words his Gospel portrait of Mary's role in salvation history and God's preferential option for the poor.
- **Blessed Fra Angelico (feast day February 18)**, patron of artists, gifted Dominican friar painter known for his sublime depictions of the Trinity, Christ, biblical scenes and figures, and the lives of the saints.
- **Blessed Carlo Acutis (feast day October 12)** is known for his skill as a computer programmer and web designer, and his musical talent in playing the saxophone.
- **Venerable Zeinab Alif (1845-1926)** was kidnapped from Sudan and sold into slavery. After her ransom from slavery she became a Poor Clare nun after her ransom from slavery and was known as a gifted singer and organist.
- **St. Thomas Aquinas, (feast day January 28)**, Italian Dominican friar and Doctor of the Church. Prominent theologian and philosopher who forged a lasting synthesis between Aristotelian philosophy and biblical revelation. Among his voluminous and influential theological works is his well-known *Summa Theologica*. Also known as a composer of several beautiful hymns centered on the Eucharist.

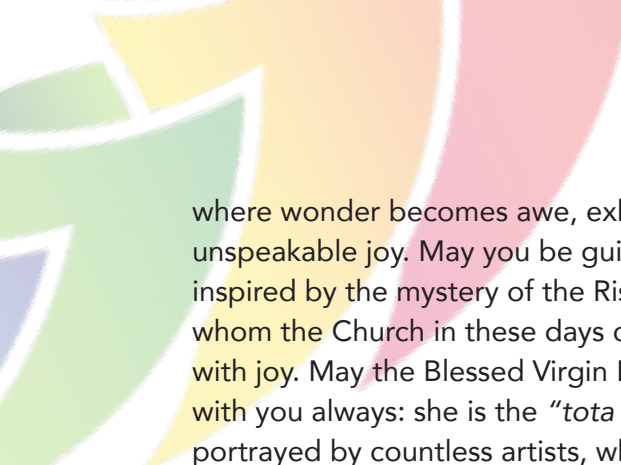


- **St. Catherine of Bologna** (feast day March 9) was an abbess of a community of Poor Clares in Italy. She was a gifted painter, poet and musician who played the viola, till the end of her life.
- **St. Cecilia (feast day November 22)**, patroness of music and musicians, and early Christian martyr known for singing to God in her heart during her arranged marriage to a pagan nobleman.
- **St. Peter Claver (feast day September 9)** was a Spanish Jesuit priest who ministered with enslaved people in Colombia. He formed a choir of Africans whose liturgical music moved the Spaniards and evangelized many people.
- **Servant of God Antonio Cuipa (d. 1704)** was an Apalachee chief who evangelized his community through music, playing the flute and the guitar along with his preaching of the Gospel.
- **St. John Damascene, (feast day December 4)**, defender of images, one of the Fathers of the Eastern Orthodox Church and a Doctor of the Church. An Arab Christian monk, composer of hymns, theologian and apologist. Best known for his treatise *On the Divine Images* whose defense against the iconoclasts of the eighth century was confirmed by the Second Council of Nicea in 787 AD.
- **St. Ephrem the Syrian (feast day June 9)** was a deacon who wrote over 400 hymns and used his hymns to evangelize and catechize the faithful.
- **St. Francis of Assisi (feast day October 4)** praised the beauty of creation in his *Canticle of Creatures*.
- **St. Gregory the Great (feast day September 3)**, early seventh century pope who compiled the *Antiphonarium* that set the stage for the development of sacred music that takes its name from him, namely Gregorian chant.
- **Blessed Ezequiel Huerta Gutiérrez** (feast day April 3) was a Mexican husband and father of 10, a gifted pianist, church organist, choir director, and classically trained tenor who was martyred in the Cristeros War.
- **St. Hildegard of Bingen (feast day September 17)**, doctor of the Church, was a German Benedictine prioress, mystic, poet, herbalist, and **celebrated composer** of hymns and antiphons for the liturgy.
- **St. Andrew Kaggwa (feast day June 3)** was martyred with St. Charles Lwanga. He was the master drummer of the king of Buganda and director of the entire royal band.
- **Blessed Volodymir Pryjma (feast day April 2)** was a Ukrainian Greek Catholic, a husband and father, and a gifted cantor and church choir director who was martyred by the Communists.
- **Servant of God Cyprien Rugamba**, husband and father of 11 children was a composer and choreographer whose artistic works highlighted Rwandan folk culture. He and his wife Daphrose were martyred in the Rwandan Genocide.
- **St. John Wang Rui (feast day July 4)** was a Chinese seminarian and martyr who is remembered for his gifted singing voice.
- **Blessed Carlos Manuel Rodriguez Santiago (feast day May 4)** was a Puerto Rican layman who was devoted to the Eucharist and played the organ at Mass.
- **King David**, composer of the psalms that constitute the Old Testament hymn book of the people of Israel. The psalms are an essential part of the public prayer of the Church in the Mass and in the Liturgy of the Hours.

CLOSING PRAYER

“Artists of the world, may your many different paths all lead to that infinite Ocean of beauty





where wonder becomes awe, exhilaration, unspeakable joy. May you be guided and inspired by the mystery of the Risen Christ, whom the Church in these days contemplates with joy. May the Blessed Virgin Mary be with you always: she is the *"tota pulchra"* portrayed by countless artists, whom Dante contemplates among the splendors of Paradise as "beauty that was joy in the eyes of all the other saints." ... May your art help to affirm that true beauty which, as a glimmer of the Spirit of God, will transfigure matter, opening the human soul to the sense of the eternal." (St. John Paul II, *Letter to Artists*, 1999)





United States
Conference of
Catholic Bishops

Pilgrims on the way of Hope: A Resource for the Jubilee of Deacons

Jubilee 2025: Pilgrims of Hope

United States Conference of
Catholic Bishops

Jubilee of Deacons: Resource Packet

February 21-23, 2025

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

Jubilee 2025 invites you to be a pilgrim of hope. For Christians, hope is anchored in the encounter with Jesus whose life, death, and resurrection reveals God's transforming love. Our hope in God is renewed constantly in the gift of the Holy Spirit, the love of the Father and the Son, who is given, even now, to the community of believers.

The Holy See has designated a number of Jubilee Days throughout 2025 to recognize and celebrate different groups of people and various ministries in the Church. The Jubilee of Deacons will be held from Friday, February 21, to Sunday, February 23, 2025; however, these resources can be used for engaging and celebrating deacons at any time throughout the Jubilee Year.

In the Catholic Church, the diaconate is one of three degrees in ordained ministry - bishops,

priests, and deacons. Since the Second Vatican Council, the Latin-rite Church has restored the diaconate "as a proper and permanent rank of the hierarchy". Deacons preparing for the priesthood are transitional deacons, while those not planning to be ordained priests are permanent deacons. Permanent diaconate can be conferred on a single or married man. If he is married, he must be so before receiving the diaconate.



[Lumen Gentium](#), after describing the function of presbyters as a participation in the priestly function of Christ, illustrates the ministry of deacons, "upon whom", it says, "hands are imposed not unto the priesthood, but unto a ministry of service." The Sacred Order of Deacons is to be a "driving force for the Church's service or *diakonia* toward the local Christian communities and as a sign or sacrament of the Lord Christ himself, who 'came not to be served but to serve.'" This is at the very heart of the diaconate to which you have been called: to be a servant of the mysteries of Christ and, at one and the same time, to be a servant of your brothers and sisters. That these two dimensions are inseparably joined together in one reality shows the important nature of the ministry which is yours by ordination.



Deacons embrace the ministry of word, ministry of liturgy, and works of charity which, in their turn, are carried into daily life.

Depending on the circumstances, one or another of these may receive particular emphasis in an individual deacon's work but these three ministries are inseparably joined together as one in the service of God's redemptive plan.

This resource packet is for anyone who finds it useful. It can be used and/or adapted by dioceses, eparchies, parishes, schools, campuses, apostolates, movements, organizations, or individuals to plan their celebration of the Jubilee of Deacons. It might also serve as a catalyst or inspiration for the creation and development of local or year-round resources for those active in this ministry.

For members of the diaconate who are making a Jubilee pilgrimage to Rome or to a designated special place (or particular Jubilee celebration) in a diocese or eparchy within the United States during 2025, this packet can also serve as an aid in the preparation or experience of that trip.

Additional resources for the Jubilee Days of Deacons and other celebrations can be found online at the USCCB Jubilee Year web pages: available in English at <https://www.usccb.org/committees/jubilee-2025> and available in Spanish at <https://www.usccb.org/es/committees/jubileo-2025>.

SPIRITUAL REFLECTION

The deacon is obligated to give priority to the spiritual life and to live his *diakonia* with generosity. His model *par excellence* is Jesus Christ, the Servant who lived totally at the service of his Father for the good of every person. It is necessary that each deacon must know Christ intimately to live out his ministry to

the fullest, whether he is celibate or married.

In his 2021 address to deacons, Pope Francis expressed a greater focus on cultivating humility and generosity in ministry. Speaking to them, the Holy Father says he expects humble deacons, letting all good be a secret between him and God; he expects deacons to be good spouses, fathers, and grandfathers, inspiring others with their witness of joy in everything without complaining; he expects deacons to be sentinels, to both know the face of the poor and also help the Christian faithful recognize Jesus in them.

The deacon exercises his ministry within the communion and mission of a diocesan Church and in direct relationship with his diocesan bishop, under whose authority he is assigned, as a collaborator in the service of God's people. As collaborators in ministry, serving alongside priests, deacons participate in the one apostolic ministry bestowed by Christ upon the Apostles and their successors. "The diaconate is not an abridged or substitute form of the priesthood; it is a full order in its own right."

In this Jubilee Year, do everything with humility, with joy without complaining, and in radical hospitality to the poor and marginalized. Allow the love of Jesus to flow from you, as you humbly serve others as missionary disciples. Listen with tender care and affection to the needs of others, especially the poor in your community. In this way, you will be messengers of hope to the world.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PILGRIM PREPARATION

One major element of the Jubilee celebration for Catholics is making pilgrimage. For some, that may involve going to Rome, where international pilgrims traditionally visit the Holy Doors of the four great basilicas (Saint Peter, Saint Paul



Outside the Walls, Saint Mary Major, and Saint John Lateran). For most others, though, local Jubilee pilgrimages can be made to diocesan or eparchial cathedrals, churches, and/or religious sites.

If headed to Rome for the Jubilee of Deacons:

Should you or the diocesan diaconate office decide to travel to Rome, in particular for the Jubilee of Deacons (February 21-23, 2025), the following may be helpful:

- You can develop a trip on your own or go through a licensed tour operator who specializes or has experience in religious travel. The latter option may cost extra, but it can save a local organizer time; additionally, those operators may have existing connections with vendors and may be able to advise on travel concerns. PLEASE NOTE: The USCCB does not endorse nor identify any licensed tour operator as the official U.S. tour operator.
- The official Jubilee events for the deacons include passage through Holy Doors and Mass with the Holy Father on Sunday, February 23. Pilgrims and groups may also consider taking part in additional activities, either planned on their own or events hosted by other apostolates/groups.
- Prepare for the trip with liturgies, retreats, devotional and service experiences, community building, catechesis, and fundraising, as needed. Take time for prayer, especially with the Blessed Sacrament, as well as practical travel planning (packing, supplies, water, etc.).
- Upon the return home, consider in advance ways to share the experience with others and put into practice the missionary lessons received during the Jubilee moments in Rome.

If coordinating a local pilgrimage within the United States:

It is highly recommended to make pilgrimage to one's own diocesan or eparchial cathedral or other church(es) or religious site(s) designated by the bishop or eparch. Pope Francis has invited every diocese and eparchy to designate their cathedrals or a popular Catholic shrine as special places of prayer for Holy Year pilgrims, offering opportunities for reconciliation, indulgences, and other events.

- Plan for a local pilgrimage which can take place at any time of year or can be done at the same time as the events for deacons in Rome (February 21-23, 2025). The timing, as well as the exact local destination, is at the discretion of the local organizer(s).
- Research the pilgrimage destination to ensure that your visit does not coincide with liturgical or local community events or is being done within the posted opening hours for the site. You may wish to contact someone in leadership at the location in advance, especially if you plan to bring a group.
- Before embarking on a local pilgrimage, consider taking time for prayer and community-building.
- After returning home (even if the trip was local), take time for prayer and theological reflection on the graces of God received during the pilgrimage experience. If you went as a group, continue to gather in the weeks and months following the trip to support one another and coordinate missionary actions.



SUGGESTIONS FOR CELEBRATING DEACONS LOCALLY

Suggestions for Prayers of the Faithful

- Use the weekend liturgies on February 21-23 to recognize all deacons: in the homily, general intercessions, with a special blessing. An example of a petition for the Prayer of the Faithful might include:

For the deacons of our parish, our dioceses and around the world, that they may be instruments of Christ loving service to our world, we pray to the Lord.

** Insert the names of the deacons in your parish to the Prayers of the Faithful.*

Suggestions of Parish Activities

- Have a reception or diaconate vocation awareness activity after all weekend Masses on February 22 & 23. During those gatherings, offer food and drink and opportunities for parish fellowship.
- Livestream or replay video of key Jubilee events (i.e., Mass with the Holy Father) taking place in Rome from February 21 to 23 at the parish (noting the time difference between Rome and your local area). You may also consider coordinating programs at the parish during the livestream viewings such as liturgies, Eucharistic adoration, confessions, catechesis, service projects, small groups, or socials.

Suggestions for Dioceses and Eparchies

- Celebrate a liturgy or host a prayer service for deacons in the area at the diocesan/eparchial cathedral between February 21 and 23, concurrent with the Jubilee celebrations happening in Rome.
- Hold a diocesan/eparchial-wide Jubilee walking pilgrimage for deacons from the cathedral (or another site of your choosing) to religious sites, churches, and/or to a Catholic-led social services center or institution. Consider also inviting the bishop or eparch.
- Post stories of deacons on the diocesan or eparchial website, social media channels, and communications (magazine, newspaper, newsletter, etc.) prior to and/or during the Jubilee of Deacons in February 2025.
- Host a special diocesan/eparchial-wide dinner or reception for deacons, highlighting the charitable, devotional, or spiritual ministries and services of deacons during the Jubilee Year. Consider an award or recognition program for those who make key contributions to the life of the diocese/eparchy and/or society at large.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & DOCUMENTS

- [National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States of America](#), United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations (2022): an essential document from the USCCB to dioceses to assist in the growth and sustaining of permanent diaconate programs.
- [Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons](#), Congregation for Catholic Education Congregation for the Clergy (1998).
- [Address of His Holiness to the Permanent Deacons of the Diocese of Rome](#), with their Families, Pope Francis (2021).
- [Lumen Gentium, Second Vatican Council \(1964\): Dogmatic Constitution on the Church](#), outlining the role the laity plays in the life and mission of the Church.
- [Evangelii Gaudium](#), Pope Francis (2013): an apostolic exhortation on evangelization and missionary discipleship, ideal for the lay faithful. Available in print and in e-book from several Catholic publishers and online.
- [Meeting with the Men Ordained to the Permanent Diaconate Address of His Holiness John Paul II](#) (1987).

KEY SAINTS

Holy Companions for Transitional and Permanent Deacons

- **St. Stephen (1st century A.D., feast day December 26)**, first Christian martyr, whose death closely mirrored the death of Christ.
- **St. Philip (1st century A.D., feast day June 6)**, one of the original seven deacons mentioned in the Book of Acts, converted the Ethiopian eunuch of Queen Candace's court bringing Christianity to the East African region.
- **St. Lawrence of Rome (d. c. 258, feast day August 10)**, remembered for presenting the poor, the lame, and the infirm as the "Treasure of the Church", was sentenced to death by public execution on a slow-burning griddle; his cheerful martyrdom converted many in Rome.
- **St. Francis of Assisi (1182-1226, feast day October 4)**, chose not to be ordained to the priesthood out of humility, the first recorded recipient of the stigmata, and founder of the religious order of the Franciscans.



PRAYER OF ORDINATION

Draw near, we pray, almighty God, giver of every grace, who apportion every order and assign every office. While remaining unchanged, you make all things new and, setting all things in order with everlasting providence, you make due provision for every age, through your Word, your Power, and your Wisdom, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

You grant that your Church, his Body, adorned with manifold heavenly graces, drawn together in the diversity of her members, and united by a wondrous bond through the Holy Spirit, should grow and spread forth to build up a new temple.

As once you chose the sons of Levi to minister in the former tabernacle, so now you establish three ranks of ministers in their sacred offices to serve your name.

Thus, in the first days of your Church, your Son's Apostles, led by the Holy Spirit, appointed seven men of good repute to help them in the daily ministry, so that they might devote themselves more fully to prayer and the preaching of the word. By prayer and the laying on of hands they entrusted to those chosen men the ministry of serving at table.

Look favorably also on these your servants, we pray, O Lord, whom we humbly dedicate to serve at your holy altars in the office of the Diaconate.

SEND FORTH THE HOLY SPIRIT UPON THEM, O LORD, WE PRAY, THAT THEY MAY BE STRENGTHENED BY THE GIFT OF YOUR SEVENFOLD GRACE TO CARRY OUT FAITHFULLY THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY.

May every evangelical virtue abound in them: unfeigned love, concern for the sick and the poor, unassuming authority, the purity of innocence, and the observance of spiritual discipline.

May your precepts shine forth in their conduct, that by the example of their manner of life they may inspire the imitation of your holy people. In offering the witness of a good conscience, may they remain firm and steadfast in Christ, so that, imitating your Son on earth, who came not to be served but to serve, they may be found worthy to reign with him in heaven.

Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen.

(from Ordination Prayer, Libreria Editrice Vaticana © 1988)





United States
Conference of
Catholic Bishops

Pilgrims on the way of Hope: A Resource for the Jubilee of the World of Volunteering

Jubilee 2025: Pilgrims of Hope

United States Conference of
Catholic Bishops

Jubilee of the World of Volunteering: Resource Packet

March 8-9, 2025

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

Jubilee 2025 invites you to be a pilgrim of hope. For Christians, hope is anchored in the encounter with Jesus whose life, death, and resurrection reveals God's transforming love. Our hope in God is renewed constantly in the gift of the Holy Spirit, the love of the Father and the Son, who is given, even now, to the community of believers.

The Holy See has designated a number of Jubilee Days throughout 2025 to recognize and celebrate different groups of people and various ministries in the Catholic Church. The Jubilee of the World of Volunteering will be held from Saturday, March 8, to Sunday, March 9, 2025; however, these resources can be used for engaging and celebrating volunteers at any time throughout the Jubilee Year.

Volunteering has allowed the lay faithful to step forward into the universal call to holiness in service to the Church and society. The heartbeat of my parish and civic communities across the United States are the dedicated and selfless volunteers who respond to great needs and contribute their stewardship of time, talent, and treasure to the benefit of others. There are also countless Catholic volunteers who engage in domestic and international mission work in service to the poor, vulnerable, and marginalized communities.



This resource packet is for anyone who finds it useful. It can be used and/or adapted by dioceses, eparchies, parishes, schools, campuses, apostolates, movements, organizations, or individuals to plan their celebration of the Jubilee of the World of Volunteering. It might also serve as a catalyst or inspiration for the creation and development of local or year-round resources for volunteers in the community or globally.

For Catholic volunteers and those engaged in mission-service work who are making a Jubilee pilgrimage to Rome or particular Jubilee celebration in a diocese or eparchy within the United States during 2025, this packet can also serve as an aid in the preparation or experience of that trip.



Additional resources for the Jubilee of the World of Volunteering and other celebrations can be found online at the USCCB Jubilee Year web pages: available in English at <https://www.usccb.org/committees/jubilee-2025> and available in Spanish at <https://www.usccb.org/es/committees/jubileo-2025>.

WHO IS A VOLUNTEER? WHAT IS VOLUNTEERING?

This word has many meanings in Catholic settings. Each diocese/eparchy or parish can establish parameters for what it exactly means for each context, but here are a few thoughts about who can be included within the broad category of “volunteering.” This is not an exclusive list, but may spark your own creativity:

- Parishioners who volunteer for one or more of the ministries in a parish community (i.e., liturgical ministers, church council members, children’s catechists, musicians or choir members, food pantry support, soup kitchen, Knights of Columbus, altar servers, non-paid ministry coordinators, etc.).
- Lay Catholics who give of their time and giftedness to the civic community (i.e., docents, volunteer firefighters, community clean-up work, non-paid assisted living support, those who assist with secular poverty programs and shelters, those who coordinate community social events, etc.).
- Lay Catholics who are active on the regional, national, or global level through volunteer-based service and/or mission organizations (i.e., Catholic Volunteer Network, Catholic Charities, Catholic Relief Services, Jesuit Volunteer Corps, Glenmary, Maryknoll, Nazareth Farm, Amate House, Habitat for Humanity, Appalachia Service Project,

AmeriCorps, Teach for America, Greenpeace, Mercy Volunteer Corps, Franciscan Mission Service, Salesian Lay Missioners, etc.).

SPIRITUAL REFLECTION

The heart of a volunteer exudes a generous devotion to service for others and the mission of the Gospel. In upholding the dignity of every person, volunteers are stewards of the gifts God has given them to advance the work of the Church, to alleviate human suffering, or to contribute to the transformation of the world.

When confronted about true righteousness and asked, “who is my neighbor?” (Lk 10:29), Jesus shared the timeless parable of the Good Samaritan, “the one who treated (the victim) with mercy,” and concluded by simply saying, “Go and do likewise” (Lk 10:37). This is the cornerstone of volunteering, to extend mercy and love to others in imitation of Christ, who “did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mk 10:45). The Christian volunteer is the one who fulfills the Lord’s great commandment to “love your neighbor as yourself” (Mt 22:39) and who follows Jesus’ golden rule to “do to others as you would have them do to you” (Lk 6:31). Volunteering allows us to respond to Christ with selflessness.

Yet in the midst of the kindness of volunteering, service-oriented commitment, and the movement to make a real difference in the world, a person can forget to tend their own soul. Perhaps it is fitting that the story of Jesus spending time with Mary and Martha immediately follows the Good Samaritan parable in the Gospel of Luke. Martha, “burdened with much serving” (Lk 10:40), asks Jesus to prod her sister Mary into service work, yet the Lord, while grateful for Martha’s



generosity, expresses concern for her anxiety and worry. We, too, can fall into this habit, dedicating ourselves to volunteering for others, yet not allowing ourselves to rest and sit at the Lord's feet like Martha's sister Mary (see Lk 10:39,42).

During this Jubilee celebration, you are invited to pause for a moment from the great work of volunteering and find rejuvenation in Christ Jesus, who longs to give his people an experience of divine grace. Take time at various points throughout the year for prayer and reflection. Seek out or renew your engagement with a spiritual director or companion. Refresh yourself in the warmth and embrace of the Christian community, which can strengthen us for the work ahead.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PILGRIM PREPARATION

One major element of the Jubilee celebration for Catholics is making pilgrimage. For some, that may involve going to Rome, where international pilgrims traditionally visit the Holy Doors of the four great basilicas (Saint Peter, Saint Paul Outside the Walls, Saint Mary Major, and Saint John Lateran). For most others, though, local Jubilee pilgrimages can be made to diocesan or eparchial cathedrals, churches, and/or religious sites.

If headed to Rome for the Jubilee of the World of Volunteering:

Should you, by yourself or with other volunteers, decide to travel to Rome, in particular for the Jubilee of the World of Volunteering (March 8-9, 2025), the following may be helpful:

- You can develop a trip on your own or go through a licensed tour operator that specializes or has experience in religious

travel. The latter option may cost extra, but it can save a local organizer time; additionally, those operators may have existing connections with vendors and may be able to advise on travel concerns. PLEASE NOTE: The USCCB does not endorse nor identify any licensed tour operator as the official U.S. tour operator.

- The official Jubilee events for volunteers include passage through Holy Doors and Mass with the Holy Father on Sunday, March 9. Pilgrims and groups may also consider taking part in additional activities, either planned on their own or events hosted by other apostolates/groups.
- Prepare for the trip with liturgies, retreats, devotional and service experiences, community building, catechesis, and fundraising, as needed. Take time for prayer, especially with the Blessed Sacrament, as well as practical travel planning (packing, supplies, water, etc.).
- Upon the return home, consider in advance ways to share the experience with others and put into practice the missionary lessons received during the Jubilee moments in Rome.

If coordinating a local pilgrimage within the United States:

It is highly recommended to make pilgrimage to one's own diocesan or eparchial cathedral or other church(es) or religious site(s) designated by the bishop or eparch.

- Plan for a local pilgrimage which can take place at any time of year or can be done at the same time as the events for volunteers in Rome (March 8-9, 2025). The timing, as well as the exact local destination, is at the discretion of the local organizer(s).



- Research the pilgrimage destination to ensure that your visit does not coincide with liturgical or local community events or is being done within the posted opening hours for the site. You may wish to contact someone in leadership at the location in advance, especially if you plan to bring a group.
- Before embarking on a local pilgrimage, consider taking time for prayer and community-building.
- After returning home (even if the trip was local), take time for prayer and theological reflection on the graces of God received during the pilgrimage experience. If you went as a group, continue to gather in the weeks and months following the trip to support one another and coordinate missionary actions.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CELEBRATING VOLUNTEERS LOCALLY

Suggestions for Parishes

- Use the weekend liturgies on March 8-9 to recognize all the volunteers in the parish community: in the homily, general intercessions, with a special blessing, or by inviting them to serve in key liturgical roles. An example of a petition for the Prayer of the Faithful might include:

For the lay women and men of our parish who serve with selfless devotion as volunteers in our ministries, in service work, and in the local community, that they may be signs of hope within our world today, we pray to the Lord.

- Have a reception or networking activity after all weekend Masses on March 8-9 for volunteers in the community (perhaps coordinating this with ministry leaders who

oversee volunteer engagement with particular ministerial areas in the life of the parish). During those gatherings, offer food and drink, opportunities to meet-and-mingle, and invitations for others to consider joining these groups.

- Plan a local pilgrimage for volunteers to the diocesan/eparchial cathedral or to another religious site or church in your area, using the ideas laid out in the previous section.
- Livestream or replay video of key Jubilee events (i.e., Mass with the Holy Father) taking place in Rome from March 8-9 at the parish (noting the time difference between Rome and your local area). You may also consider coordinating programs at the parish during the livestream viewings such as liturgies, Eucharistic adoration, confessions, catechesis, service projects, small groups, or socials.

Suggestions for Dioceses and Eparchies

- Celebrate a liturgy or host a prayer service for Catholic volunteers from parishes or who are volunteering in service work programs in or beyond the local area. Host it at the diocesan/eparchial cathedral during or around March 8-9, concurrent with or proximate to the Jubilee celebrations happening in Rome.
- Hold a diocesan/eparchial-wide Jubilee walking pilgrimage for all volunteers from the cathedral (or another site of your choosing) to religious sites, churches, and/or to a Catholic-led social services center or institution. Consider also inviting the bishop or eparch.
- Post stories about volunteers in parish or community life on the diocesan or eparchial website, social media channels, and communications (magazine, newspaper, newsletter, etc.) prior to and/or during the Jubilee of the World of Volunteers in March 2025.



- Host a special diocesan/eparchial-wide dinner or reception for volunteers, highlighting their service, charity, and work at some point during the Jubilee Year. Consider an award or recognition program for those who make key contributions to the life of the diocese/eparchy and/or society at large.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & DOCUMENTS

- [Evangelii Gaudium](#), Pope Francis (2013): an apostolic exhortation on evangelization and missionary discipleship, ideal for the lay faithful. Available in print and in e-book from several Catholic publishers and online.
- [Living as Missionary Disciples](#), United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis (2017): the U.S. Bishops' response to Pope Francis' *Evangelii Gaudium* and a basic resource guide outlining the principles of evangelization: encounter, accompaniment, community, and sending. Available online with additional resources from the Catholic Apostolate Center.
- [Lumen Gentium](#), Second Vatican Council (1964): Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, outlining the role the laity play in the life and mission of the Church. Available in print from several Catholic publishers and also available online.
- [Apostolicam Actuositatem](#), Second Vatican Council (1965): Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, guiding the laity in their work of Christian service in the world, rooted in the baptismal call to holiness. Available online.
- [Christifideles Laici](#) (Christ's Faithful Laity), St. John Paul II (1988): apostolic exhortation in response to the 1987 Synod of Bishops on the vocation and mission of the laity in the Church, encouraging the lay faithful to use their gifts to transform the world. Available online.
- [USCCB Laity Web Page](#), with resources for the laity and associations of the faithful, with links to additional content, including webinars, collaborating organizations, and more. Available online.
- [Catholic Volunteer Network \(CVN\)](#), national membership organization of Christian volunteer and mission programs that foster and promote national and international service opportunities. Available online.
- [Catholic Apostolate Center](#), a ministry of the Society of the Catholic Apostolate (the Pallottines), Immaculate Conception Province, to develop formation opportunities for the laity in their apostolic work in Church and in the world. Available online.

KEY SAINTS & BLESSED

Holy Companions for Lay Volunteers

- **St. Martha (first century, feast day July 29)**, sister of Mary and Lazarus of Bethany and friend of Jesus of Nazareth; she is known from the Scriptures for her service in the home and her bold friendship with the Lord. An advocate for hospitality, we know little of her life after the Resurrection.
- **St. Vincent de Paul (1581-1660, feast day September 27)**, patron of charities, volunteers, and hospitals and co-founder of the Congregation of the Mission (the Vincentians) and the Confraternity of Charity. A native of France, Vincent was a humble, compassionate priest who dedicated himself to serving the poor.
- **St. Vincent Pallotti (1795-1850, feast day January 22)**, founder of the Union of the Catholic Apostolate and the Society of the Catholic Apostolate (in 1835), who believed that all (ordained, consecrated, and lay alike) are called to be apostles, co-responsible for the Church's mission.



- **St. Zita (1212-1272, feast day April 27)**, patron of single laywomen, domestic workers, and service work; well-known for humility, meekness, and generosity, she was a domestic servant for a rich Italian household while also spending additional time serving the poor and sick in their homes in the community.
- **Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati (1901-1925, feast day July 4)**, lay volunteer, athlete, student, activist, member of the Third Order of Saint Dominic, beloved among the poor and marginalized, and declared the “Man of the Beatitudes”; engaged in regular acts of Christian charity, service, and support, especially for the sick and dying people of Turin, Italy. Died of polio at young adult age of 25 while ministering to polio victims.
- **Bl. Michael McGivney (1852-1890, feast day August 13)**, founder of the Knights of Columbus (in 1882) and filled with a “zeal for the proclamation of the Gospel and generous concern for his brothers and sisters” that “made him an outstanding witness of Christian solidarity and fraternal assistance.”
- **Dorothy Day (1897-1980)**, lay volunteer, journalist, activist, Catholic convert, co-founder of the Catholic Worker Movement, and candidate for sainthood; she was “a great witness to faith, hope and charity in the 20th century,” who served the poor and worked for justice and lived in New York and Chicago.

PRAYER FOR LAY VOLUNTEERS

Christifideles Laici Prayer

O Most Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Christ and Mother of the Church, with joy and wonder we seek to make our own your Magnificat, joining you in your hymn of thankfulness and love.

With you we give thanks to God, "whose mercy is from generation to generation", for the exalted vocation and the many forms of mission entrusted to the lay faithful.

God has called each of them by name to live his own communion of love and holiness and to be one in the great family of God's children. He has sent them forth to shine with the light of Christ and to communicate the fire of the Spirit in every part of society through their life inspired by the gospel. O Virgin of the Magnificat, fill their hearts with a gratitude and enthusiasm for this vocation and mission.

With humility and magnanimity, you were the "handmaid of the Lord"; give us your unreserved willingness for service to God and the salvation of the world.

Open our hearts to the great anticipation of the Kingdom of God and of the proclamation of the Gospel to the whole of creation.

Your mother's heart is ever mindful of the many dangers and evils which threaten to overpower men and women in our time.

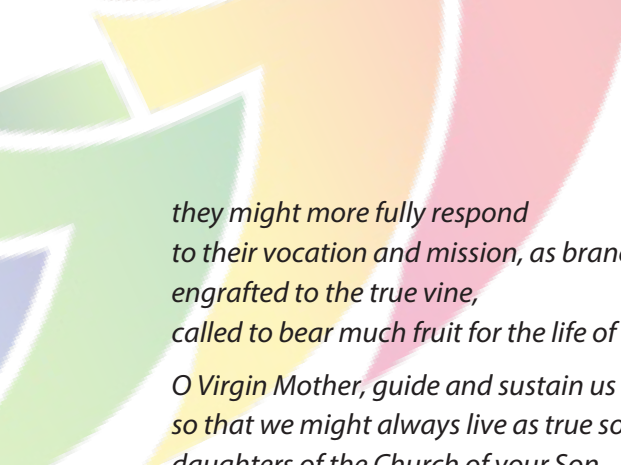
At the same time your heart also takes notice of the many initiatives undertaken for good, the great yearning for values, and the progress achieved in bringing forth the abundant fruits of salvation.

O Virgin full of courage, may your spiritual strength and trust in God inspire us, so that we might know how to overcome all the obstacles that we encounter in accomplishing our mission.

Teach us to treat the affairs of the world with a real sense of Christian responsibility and a joyful hope of the coming of God's Kingdom, and of a "new heaven and a new earth".

You who were gathered in prayer with the Apostles in the Cenacle, awaiting the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost, implore his renewed outpouring on all the faithful, men and women alike, so that





*they might more fully respond
to their vocation and mission, as branches
engrafted to the true vine,
called to bear much fruit for the life of the world.*

*O Virgin Mother, guide and sustain us
so that we might always live as true sons and
daughters of the Church of your Son.
Enable us to do our part in helping to establish on
earth the civilization of truth and love,
as God wills it, for his glory. Amen.*

(from *Christifideles Laici* by St. John Paul II, Libreria
Editrice Vaticana © 1988)





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Pilgrims on the way of Hope: A Resource for the Jubilee of the Sick and Health Care Workers

Jubilee 2025: Pilgrims of Hope

United States Conference of
Catholic Bishops

Jubilee of the Sick and Health Care Workers: Resource Packet

April 5-6, 2025

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

A Jubilee Year is an important and historical event in the life of the Church designed for the faithful to experience God's loving mercy in a special way. Traditionally, a Jubilee is proclaimed every twenty-five years, and the activities include pilgrimages, processions, special celebrations of Mass, and an invitation to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. This Jubilee's theme is "Pilgrims of Hope" and it begins on Christmas Eve, 2024 in Rome and concludes the following year on the Epiphany in 2026. The Jubilee's activities are meant to encourage Catholics to both receive God's mercy and invite participation in acts of mercy in our daily lives and communities. Pope Francis specifically asks us to consider working for peace and an end to conflicts, promoting human life, showing amnesty to prisoners,

upholding the dignity of migrants, healing the sick, and accompanying the elderly.

The Holy See has [designated a number of Jubilee Days](#) throughout 2025 to recognize and celebrate different groups of people and various ministries in the Church.



The Jubilee of the Sick and Health Care Workers helps us to celebrate the important service of healthcare providers and to recognize that accompanying the sick is an important vocation. Whether due to our own health or the health of a loved one, each of us has interfaced with health care workers at some point in our lives, and experienced first-hand the value of their accompaniment. Not only this, but each of us has likely also cared for a sick loved one in some capacity, and so we know how taxing it can be. As the Catholic Health Association states, "Catholic health care, [is] a ministry of the church continuing Jesus' mission of love and healing today. [This] ministry is an enduring sign of health care rooted in our belief that every person is a treasure, every life a sacred gift, every human being a unity of body, mind, and spirit" ([Statement of Shared Identity](#)). While each of us are called to continue Jesus's mission of love and healing in our own way, we recognize that the unique vocation of health care workers during this Jubilee.



Responding to the Jubilee theme, “Pilgrims of Hope,” we are called to reflect on and discover hope in the signs of the times and in the realities of our daily lives. Pope Francis instructed, “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. ... 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” ([Spes non confundit](#), n.11).

The Jubilee year is an invitation to be agents of God’s mercy in our world. For those who are sick themselves or caring for someone who is ill, the mercy of God is especially important. Feeling God’s love and closeness during an uncertain time, like an illness, can provide strength and peace when the world around us feels tumultuous. The Jubilee year can bring us closer to God and deepen our experiences of God’s love and mercy.

Additional resources for the Jubilee of the Sick and Health Care Workers and other celebrations can be found online at the USCCB Jubilee Year web pages: available in English at <https://www.usccb.org/committees/jubilee-2025> and available in Spanish at <https://www.usccb.org/es/committees/jubileo-2025>.

SPIRITUAL REFLECTION

During the Jubilee of the Sick and Health Care Workers, we can all offer special prayers for those who are in need of healing. We pray they will feel God’s love with them during their

journey through the illness. We can offer prayers to experience God’s closeness – whether through their own life of prayer or through the presence of their community.

In Solidarity with Those Who Suffer

A prayer service from [Health Progress: The Journal of the Catholic Health Association of the United States, Winter 2017 Issue](#)

OPENING PRAYER

LEADER: It can be overwhelming when we see the amount of suffering by people throughout the world. Let us prayerfully reflect upon those who are in pain in our communities and in our world. May we find grace and strength to walk with them in their pain and to lessen their affliction when we are able.

READER 1: (Matthew 9:35-36)

Jesus went around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness. At the sight of the crowds, his heart was moved with pity for them because they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd.

Silent Reflection

LEADER: Let us take a moment in silent reflection, considering the reading we have heard.

READER 2: (Dorothy Day)

Love and ever more love is the only solution to every problem that comes up. If we love each other enough, we will bear with each other's faults and burdens. If we love enough, we are going to light that fire in the hearts of others. And it is love that will burn out the sins and hatreds that sadden us. It is love that will make us want to do great things for each other. No sacrifice and no suffering will then seem too much.

LEADER: For all who suffer from contagious disease and terminal illness.



ALL: (from Psalm 80): *Lord, let your face shine forth, and we shall be saved.*

LEADER: *For those whose lives are threatened by lack of clean water and sustainable crops.*

ALL: *Lord, let your face shine forth, and we shall be saved.*

LEADER: *For all who live in fear, oppression and the threat of violence.*

ALL: *Lord, let your face shine forth, and we shall be saved.*

LEADER: *For all people trapped in poverty, the unemployed and those who have lost hope.*

ALL: *Lord, let your face shine forth, and we shall be saved.*

CLOSING PRAYER

ALL: *Loving God, May we see the plight of all those who suffer in our midst. Give us courage and compassion to live in solidarity with the suffering. May our hearts, burning with love, bear the burdens of all in our care. And may our loving example ignite the hearts of others to accompany the vulnerable in their affliction. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.*

PARTICIPATE IN VIRTUAL PILGRIMAGE OPTIONS

One major element of the Jubilee celebration for Catholics is to make a pilgrimage. For some, that may involve going to Rome, where international pilgrims traditionally visit the Holy Doors of the four great basilicas (Saint Peter, Saint Paul Outside the Walls, Saint Mary Major, and Saint John Lateran). For most others, though, local Jubilee pilgrimages can be made to diocesan or eparchial cathedrals, churches, and/or religious sites. A pilgrimage doesn't need to be a long journey in order to be transformational.

There is even a [virtual pilgrimage](#) that was created so people from all over the world can

experience the beauty of making a pilgrimage to the sites in Rome.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CELEBRATING THE JUBILEE LOCALLY

There are many ways to make the jubilee come alive in a local setting, and usually within existing events or structures.

Suggestions for Parishes

One easy way is to include prayers of the faithful focused on the Jubilee of the Sick and Health Care Workers on the weekend of April 5, 2025. Connect with the person who prepares the Sunday liturgies at your parish and suggest including prayers of the faithful focused on the Jubilee.

Sample Prayers of the Faithful:

- *For the Church, that we may continue the healing work of Jesus in our own time, and reach out with compassion to those who are sick in body, mind, or spirit:*
- *For all medical professionals, caregivers, EMTs, chaplains, and all who work in health care, that they may carry out their life-saving work with wisdom and compassion:*
- *For all who are sick, that they may have access to quality health care, regardless of their race or economic status:*
- *For those recovering from, and those struggling with addiction, that they may feel the healing presence of God.*
- *For all of us, that we may be instruments of peace, hope, and healing in our homes, our workplaces, and our communities:*



Suggestions for Dioceses and Eparchies

- Contact local Catholic health care entities to offer a special Jubilee mass that honors those who are sick and health care professionals on or around the Jubilee weekend.
- An example of [Liturgy notes for hosting a Jubilee Mass for the Sick and Health Care Professionals](#) is available from the National Association of Catholic Chaplains.
- Invite the Archbishop/Bishop or presiders to offer a special blessing for all health care professionals and chaplains.

Suggestions for All

- Virtually celebrate a [Jubilee Mass for the Sick and Health Care Professionals](#) with the National Association of Catholic Chaplains on Saturday, April 5, 2025.
- Virtually attend the [National Association of Catholic Chaplains' free Jubilee webinar](#) on Saturday, April 5, 2025 for an afternoon centered on pastoral care.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & DOCUMENTS

- [The National Catholic Mental Health Campaign](#): Recognizing the toll that continued caregiving can take on the caregiver, learn more about the importance of mental health.
- [A Sign of Hope: A Pastoral Letter on Catholic Health Care](#), Joseph Cardinal Bernardin: This letter provides a theological, moral and social foundation for understanding what is distinctive about the Catholic health ministry. In it, the late Cardinal reflects on his illness and reiterates his support of the not-for-profit nature of health care delivery, asking for others to join him "in resisting efforts to make healthcare in our nation or our own ministry

merely another commodity, simply another item to be sold."

- [Resources in Recognition of Those Who Serve](#): These audio reflections offered by the Catholic Health Association provide those who serve in health care with moments of pause to contemplate their unique gifts in advancing Jesus' mission of love and healing. When used in a group, invite those in the room to extend their hands in blessing, creating a shared experience of support and affirmation. Available in English and Spanish.
- [National Nurse's Week](#): Each year from May 6-12 communities across the country recognize the invaluable work of nurses. As you work to honor health care workers in this jubilee, consider incorporating some of these in your activities. <https://www.chausa.org/nursing/national-nurses-week>
- [Inspired by the Saints](#): This collection of print and audio reflections on the lives of seven key saints for the Catholic health ministry invites users to make meaning of their work as ministry; respond to patients, co-workers and communities with greater compassion and awareness of God; and more deeply engage in [the core commitments of Catholic health care](#).

PRAYERS

Jubilee Prayer

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

*May your grace transform us
into diligent cultivators of the evangelical seeds*



*that make humanity and the cosmos rise
unto the confident expectation
of the new heavens and the new earth,
when with the powers of Evil overcome,
your glory shall be manifested eternally.*

*May the grace of the Jubilee
reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope,
the yearning for heavenly treasures
and pour over all the earth
the joy and peace of our Redeemer.
To you God blessed in eternity,
be praise and glory for ever and ever.*

Amen.

A Prayer in Times of Illness

*Lord Jesus, you came into the world to heal our
infirmities and to endure our sufferings.
You went about healing all and bringing comfort
to those in pain and need.*

*We come before you now in this time of illness
asking that you may be the source of our strength
in body, courage in spirit and
patience in pain.*

*May we join ourselves more closely to you on the
cross and in your suffering that through them we
may draw our patience and hope. Assist us and
restore us to health so that united more closely to
your family, the Church, we may give praise and
honor to your name.*

Amen.

A Prayer for the Sick

*Dearest and gentle Jesus,
You knew what it was to suffer, to feel pain,
to be afraid of what may come.*

*I know that in my most difficult moments, you are
nearer to me than my own breath, filling every
part of me with your deep and overwhelming
love.*

*Never allow me to forget, that your love is
wrapped around me like a soft warm blanket,
keeping me safe, giving me courage and comfort.*

*Lord, I ask you, watch over my loved ones and
those who care for me.*

*Lift them up when they grow weary, or when
patience grows thin.*

*Bless them and hold them close to your heart.
You are with us all in this journey.*

We are grateful.

Amen.





United States
Conference of
Catholic Bishops

Pilgrims on the Way of Hope: A Resource for the Jubilee of Teenagers

Jubilee 2025: Pilgrims of Hope

United States Conference of
Catholic Bishops

Jubilee of Teenagers: Resource Packet

April 25-27, 2025

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

The Holy See has designated a number of Jubilee Days throughout 2025 to recognize and celebrate different groups of people and various ministries in the Church. The Jubilee of Teenagers will be held from Friday, April 25, to Sunday, April 27; however, these resources can be used for engaging and celebrating teenagers at any time throughout the Jubilee Year.

This resource packet is for anyone who finds it beneficial. It can be used and/or adapted by dioceses, eparchies, parishes, schools, campuses, apostolates, movements, organizations, or individuals to plan their celebration of the Jubilee of Teenagers. It might also serve as a catalyst or inspiration for the creation and development of local or year-round resources for teenagers in your community.

For teenagers or ministries with teenagers that are making a Jubilee pilgrimage to Rome or to a particular Jubilee celebration in a diocese or eparchy within the United States during 2025, this packet can also serve as an aid in the preparation or experience of that trip.



Additional resources for the Jubilee of Teenagers and other celebrations can be found online at the USCCB Jubilee Year web pages: available in English at <https://www.usccb.org/committees/jubilee-2025> and available in Spanish at <https://www.usccb.org/es/committees/jubileo-2025>.

SPIRITUAL REFLECTION

In anticipation of the Jubilee of Teenagers, set within a yearlong celebration of hope, we remember the words of Saint Pope John Paul II in his message to young people for the 12th World Youth Day:

We are living in an era of great changes: the rapid decline of ideologies that seemed to promise a long resistance to the wear and tear of time; the tracing out on the planet of new confines and frontiers. Humanity often finds itself uncertain, bewildered and anxious (cf. Mt 9:36). But the word of God knows no



decline; throughout history and among changing events, it remains firm and gives light (cf. Mt 24:35). The faith of the Church is founded on Jesus Christ, the one Saviour of the world, yesterday and today and forever (cf. Heb 13:8). It gives Christ as reference for an answer to the questions rising up from the human heart in the face of the mystery of life and death. Only from Christ, indeed, can there be answers that do not deceive nor disappoint.

Do not be afraid! It is in Christ that we find our hope. Romans 5:1-5 tells us, "Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access [by faith] to this grace in which we stand, and we boast in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we even boast of our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, and endurance, proven character, and proven character, hope, and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the holy Spirit that has been given to us."

Every age and generation of teenagers that has gone before us has been faced with challenges and struggles in this world. But do not be alarmed because we have hope in Christ Jesus! By clinging to the joy of the Gospel and the witness of Christ, we can find the strength we need to face the adversities of our age.

Let us look at the lives of the young saints who have paved the way for us like Bl. Carlo Acutis whose devotion for the Eucharist evangelized countless people from around the world or Bl. Chiara Badano who radiated joy in her sufferings at the end of her life and looked with anticipation on being united to Christ. We must reclaim this joy that has been given to us by Christ to be witnesses to the world around us.

As you celebrate this beautiful Jubilee of Teenagers, radiate your joy and love for the Lord with all those whom you interact with on the internet and in real life. Remember these words from 1 Timothy 4:12, "Let no one have contempt for your youth, but set an example for those who believe, in speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity." You are the Church of now and Christ is dwelling in you! Witness to the joy and hope that is found in Christ Jesus so the world may know the reason for your joy.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PILGRIM PREPARATION

One major element of the Jubilee celebration for Catholics is making pilgrimage. For some, that may involve going to Rome, where international pilgrims traditionally visit the Holy Doors of the four great basilicas (Saint Peter, Saint Paul Outside the Walls, Saint Mary Major, and Saint John Lateran). For most others, though, local Jubilee pilgrimages can be made to diocesan or eparchial cathedrals, churches, and/or religious sites.

If headed to Rome for the Jubilee of Teenagers:

Should you or your ministry/group/community decide to travel to Rome for the Jubilee of Teenagers (April 25-27, 2025), the following may be helpful:

- You can develop a trip on your own or go through a licensed tour operator that specializes or has experience in religious travel. The latter option may cost extra, but it can save a local organizer time; additionally, those operators may have existing connections with vendors and may be able to advise on travel concerns. PLEASE NOTE: The USCCB does not endorse nor identify any licensed tour operator as the official U.S. tour operator.



- The official Jubilee website for the Jubilee of Teenagers can be found [here](#).
- Pilgrims and groups may also consider additional programs and gatherings, either planned on their own or events hosted by organizations, apostolates, episcopal conferences, or movements.
- Prepare in a manner similar to World Youth Day, with liturgies, retreats, devotional and service experiences, community building, catechesis, and fundraising, as needed. Take time for prayer, especially in front of the Blessed Sacrament.
- Practical travel preparation will be essential, especially since the Jubilee of Teenagers in Rome is expected to draw very large crowds.
- Pilgrims should bring backpacks, comfortable shoes, appropriate spring clothing, necessary medications and supplies, and resources that aid in pilgrim prayer. Packing light is essential.
- After returning home or to the United States, take time for prayer and theological reflection on the graces of God received during the pilgrimage to Rome. If you went as a group, continue to gather in the weeks and months following the trip to support one another and coordinate missionary activity.

If coordinating a local pilgrimage within the United States:

It is highly recommended to make pilgrimage to one's own diocesan or eparchial cathedral or other church(es) or religious site(s) designated by the bishop or eparch.

- Planning for a local pilgrimage can take place at any time of year, or it can be done at the same time as Divine Mercy Sunday when the events for teenagers in Rome will

take place (April 25-27, 2025). The timing, as well as the exact local destination, is at the discretion of the local organizer(s).

- Research the pilgrimage destination to ensure that your visit does not coincide with liturgical or local community events or is being done within the posted opening hours for the site. You may wish to contact someone in leadership at the location in advance, especially if you plan to bring a group.
- After returning home (even if the trip was local), take time for prayer and theological reflection on the graces of God received during the pilgrimage experience. If you went as a group, continue to gather in the weeks and months following the trip to support one another and coordinate missionary activity.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CELEBRATING TEENAGERS LOCALLY

Suggestions for Parishes

- Use the weekend liturgies on Divine Mercy Sunday, April 26-27, 2025, to recognize all the teenagers in the community: in the homily, general intercessions, with a special blessing, or by inviting teenagers to serve in key liturgical roles. An example of a petition for the Prayer of the Faithful might include:

For the teenagers in our parish community, that they be enlivened by the witness of the life of Blessed Carlo Acutis to boldly proclaim the truth of the faith to a world in desperate need of a savior. Let us pray to the Lord.

- Host a Jubilee Eucharistic Holy Hour at your parish during Divine Mercy Sunday, inviting the teenagers to lead and witness their faith to the larger community.



- Plan a local pilgrimage for teenagers to your diocesan/eparchial cathedral or to another religious site or beautiful church in your area, using the ideas laid out in the previous section.

Suggestions for Dioceses and Eparchies

- Hold a diocesan/eparchial-wide Jubilee walking pilgrimage for teenagers and their families from the cathedral (or another site of your choosing) to religious shrines, churches, universities/schools, and/or to a Catholic-led social services center or institution. Consider also inviting the bishop or eparch on this journey.
- Post stories about teenagers and ministry leaders accompanying teenagers on the diocesan or eparchial website, social media channels, and communications (magazine, newspaper, newsletter, etc.) prior to and/or during the Jubilee of Teenagers April 25-27, 2025.
- Host a diocesan/eparchial-wide Jubilee gathering of teenagers with the bishop/eparch. This can be a Eucharistic Holy Hour, liturgy, dinner, meet-and-greet social, and/or a virtual event, providing teenagers across the diocese/eparchy with the opportunity to engage with their episcopal shepherd.
- Encourage all diocesan/eparchial offices and departments to feature, celebrate, or recognize teenagers during April 2025, centered around the global Jubilee celebration. This might need to be preceded by a workshop or meeting with diocesan/eparchial staff to coordinate efforts.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & DOCUMENTS

- [Christus Vivit \(Christ is Alive\)](#), Pope Francis (2019): an apostolic exhortation to and about

young people, which was the response of the Holy Father to the 2018 Synod on “Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment” and which laid a new foundation for the Catholic Church’s current work with youth and young adults. Available in print and in e-book from several Catholic publishers and online.

- [Listen, Teach, Send: A National Pastoral Framework for Ministries with Youth and Young Adults](#), United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2024): the U.S. Bishops’ response to Pope Francis’ *Christus Vivit* and a summons to the Church in the United States to reinvigorate its approach to young people. The document uses the Emmaus story (Lk 24:13-25) as the inspiration to ground ministries with youth and young adults in a three-movement process: listening, teaching, and sending. Available in print from Our Sunday Visitor and online.
- [Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Youth Ministry](#), United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (1997): the U.S. Bishops’ pastoral framework provided as a blueprint for the continued development of effective ministry with youth and adolescents in local communities of faith. Available online.
- [USCCB Ministry with Youth Web Page](#), with resources for ministry with youth and links to additional content, including webinars, collaborating organizations, and more. Available online.
- [USCCB Global Celebration of Youth and Young Adults Web Page](#), with resources for the annual celebration of young people on Christ the King Sunday, including guidebooks, webinars, links, and more. Available online.
- [National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry \(NFCYM\)](#), the largest youth ministry



organization in the United States and they provide a foundation for synodal dialogue about the needs and concerns of those who minister to youth. Available online.

- [National Catholic Committee on Scouting \(NCCS\)](#), an organization serving as an advisory committee to the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) that provides guidance and structure for the integration of Catholic teaching into BSA programs at parishes and Catholic schools nationwide, recognizing that Catholic scouting is a form of youth ministry. Available online.
- [National Catholic Educational Association \(NCEA\)](#), in service of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, NCEA strengthens Catholic school communities by convening all stakeholders and providing professional development, data, public policy and resources to support faith and intellectual formation. Available online.
- [National Catholic Network de Pastoral Juvenil Hispana \(LaRED\)](#), an organization nurturing the mission of PJH by incarnating the Gospel's message of love among youth and young adults in order to strengthen and further the mission of LaRED. Available online.

KEY SAINTS & BLESSEDS

Companions of Teenagers

- **Bl. Carlo Acutis (1991-2006, feast day October 12)**, patron saint of the internet and the first millennial saint, lived a life of heroic holiness and deep devotion to the Eucharist. He built a website tracking Eucharistic miracles and evangelized his family and friends during his short life before dying from leukemia at the age of 15.
- **Bl. Chiara Badano (1971-1990, feast day October 29)**, patroness of athletes, Chiara was a member of the Focolare movement in Italy and an incredibly joyful young woman even

until her final days of life as she passed away from cancer. She is attributed with telling people not to shed tears for her as she died because she was going to Jesus.

- **St. Jose Sanchez del Rio (1913-1928, feast day February 10)**, captured in Mexico during the Cristero War, St. Jose was tortured and killed, refusing to denounce Christ, instead he proclaimed, "Vivo Cristo Rey!" He is a beautiful witness to faith amid persecution.
- **St. Dominic Savio (1842-1857, feast day March 9)**, patron saint of choirboys and juvenile delinquents, St. Dominic was a student of St. John Bosco who lived a short life of deep devotion and piety, spending hours in prayer, before dying at the age of 14 due to poor health.
- **Bl. Laura Vicuna (1891-1904, feast day January 22)** expressed a deep inner piety and devotion to the Lord after the reception of her First Communion. She died of pulmonary tuberculosis after growing weak from physical abuse suffered from her mother's boss and offered up her life for her mother's salvation on her deathbed.

PRAYERS

Prayer for Youth

"Let the children come to me." (Mt. 19:14)

*Loving Father,
you look with compassion on all your children,
especially those who are vulnerable.
May we work to create a world in which every child
has access to food, clean water, shelter, education,
health care, and all other basic rights.
May we teach youth about their role in working for
peace, justice and the common good.
May we act together to ensure that the lives and
dignity of children everywhere can be respected.
Amen.*



As children of one heavenly Father we pray, "Our Father..."

(From USCCB handout for World Day of Peace 2012)

Prayer for Students

*Lord our God,
in your wisdom and love
you surround us with the mysteries of the universe.
Send your Spirit upon these students
and fill them with your wisdom and blessings.
Grant that they may
devote themselves to their studies
and draw ever closer to you,
the source of all knowledge.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R/. Amen.*

(USCCB Prayer for Students)

Christ the King Prayer

*Jesus Christ, King of the Universe,
to you we turn in humble prayer.
Look with favor upon all young adults,
bearers of hope for the Church and the world.*

*Jesus Christ, companion of young adults,
bless the paths of discovery and discernment,
through times of joy and experiences of hardship,
with the constant love and support of your Church.*

*Jesus Christ, alive in the hearts of all your people,
grant that we may "journey together, young and
old... to nourish our enthusiasm, cause dreams to
emerge, awaken prophesies and enable hope to
blossom."*

*Jesus Christ, Redeemer of all humankind,
open our hearts to encounter all young adults,
to accompany and be in community together,
and as one Church, embark upon our holy mission.*

*Jesus Christ, in the company
of the Father and the Holy Spirit,
graciously hear our prayer
and be with us forevermore. Amen.*

(Adapted from "A Prayer for Youth and Young Adults," from *A National Pastoral Resource Guidebook for the Global Celebration of Young People: for the Annual Celebration of Youth and Young Adults in the United States of America on the Solemnity of Christ the King*, USCCB © 2021; quotation within prayer from Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, no. 199)

Pope Francis' Prayer for Young People

*Lord Jesus... your Church turns her attention
to all the young people in the world.
We pray that they might boldly take charge of their
lives, aim for the most beautiful and profound things
of life and always keep their hearts unencumbered.*

*Accompanied by wise and generous guides,
help them respond to the call you make to each of
them, to realize a proper plan of life and achieve
happiness. Keep their hearts open to dreaming great
dreams and make them concerned for the good of
others.*

*Like the Beloved Disciple, may they stand at the foot
of the Cross, to receive your Mother as a gift from You.
May they be witnesses to your Resurrection
and be aware that you are at their side
as they joyously proclaim you as Lord. Amen.*

(Adapted from "Prayer for Young People, in view of the forthcoming Synod of Bishops 2018: Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment" by Pope Francis, *Libreria Editrice Vaticana* © 2017)





United States
Conference of
Catholic Bishops

Pilgrims on the Way of Hope: A Resource for the Jubilee of People with Disabilities

Jubilee 2025: Pilgrims of Hope

United States Conference of
Catholic Bishops

Jubilee of People with Disabilities: Resource Packet

April 28-29, 2025

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

The Holy See has designated a number of Jubilee Days throughout 2025 to recognize and celebrate different groups of people and various ministries in the Church. The Jubilee of People with Disabilities will be held from Monday, April 28, to Tuesday, April 29; however, these resources can be used for engaging and celebrating persons with disabilities at any time throughout the Jubilee Year.

This resource packet is for anyone who finds it beneficial. It can be used and/or adapted by dioceses, eparchies, parishes, schools, campuses, apostolates, movements, organizations, or individuals to plan their celebration of the Jubilee of People with Disabilities. It might also serve as a catalyst or inspiration for the creation and development of local or year-round resources for persons with

disabilities in your community.

For persons with disabilities or ministries with persons with disabilities that are making a Jubilee pilgrimage to Rome or to a particular Jubilee celebration in a diocese or eparchy within the United States during 2025, this packet can also serve as an aid in the preparation or experience of that trip.



Additional resources for the Jubilee of People with Disabilities and other celebrations can be found online at the USCCB Jubilee Year web pages: available in English at <https://www.usccb.org/committees/jubilee-2025> and available in Spanish at <https://www.usccb.org/es/committees/jubileo-2025>.

SPIRITUAL REFLECTION

In anticipation of the Jubilee of People with Disabilities, set within a yearlong celebration of hope, we remember the words of Pope Francis in his message to people with disabilities on the 2022 International Day of Persons with Disabilities:

*We come to realize that we exist as
an us and not a them whenever
disability, whether temporary or due to*



natural aging, affects ourselves or someone for whom we care. Then we begin to look at reality with new eyes and we see the need to break down even those barriers that at first seemed insignificant. Nothing, however, can detract from our certainty that no disability – temporary, acquired or permanent – can change the fact that we are all children of the one Father and enjoy the same dignity. The Lord loves us all with the same tender, fatherly and unconditional love.

Let us take these words from Pope Francis as an inspiration to look at reality with new eyes and see how the Lord is at work in our lives. We are all called to be active members of the Church community, and we all belong to the Body of Christ. It is in Christ that we find our hope and our joy for our lives. All persons with disabilities are a great gift to the Church and help to inspire hope and joy in the other members of our communities.

Let us also work to recognize the beautiful gifts and talents of all the faithful in the Body of Christ, especially those persons with disabilities who bring their unique gifts and talents to the community. During this Jubilee of People with Disabilities, let us work to highlight persons with disabilities in our specific dioceses, schools, and parishes who bring hope and joy. When we lift up and recognize the most vulnerable members of our communities with joy and appreciation, we highlight their dignity and worth in a beautiful way for others to welcome them personally as well.

We look to Christ as the source of our hope and invite Him to radiate within each of us a deeper love for one another and cultivate a place of belonging for all the faithful in our Churches. It is the hope we have in Christ that urges us to live charity towards one another.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PILGRIM PREPARATION

One major element of the Jubilee celebration for Catholics is making pilgrimage. For some, that may involve going to Rome, where international pilgrims traditionally visit the Holy Doors of the four great basilicas (Saint Peter, Saint Paul Outside the Walls, Saint Mary Major, and Saint John Lateran). For most others, though, local Jubilee pilgrimages can be made to diocesan or eparchial cathedrals, churches, and/or religious sites.

If headed to Rome for the Jubilee of People with Disabilities:

Should you or your ministry/group/community decide to travel to Rome for the Jubilee of People with Disabilities (April 28-29, 2025), the following may be helpful:

- You can develop a trip on your own or go through a licensed tour operator that specializes or has experience in religious travel. The latter option may cost extra, but it can save a local organizer time; additionally, those operators may have existing connections with vendors and may be able to advise on travel concerns. PLEASE NOTE: The USCCB does not endorse nor identify any licensed tour operator as the official U.S. tour operator.
- The official Jubilee website for the Jubilee of People with Disabilities can be found [here](#).
- Pilgrims and groups may also consider additional programs and gatherings, either planned on their own or events hosted by organizations, apostolates, episcopal conferences, or movements.
- Prepare with liturgies, retreats, devotional and service experiences, community building, catechesis, and fundraising, as needed. Take



time for prayer, especially in front of the Blessed Sacrament.

- Consider collaborating with other diocesan offices, families, and local groups to include more persons with disabilities who are interested in attending and invite others who can aid in caring for the persons with disabilities in your group while you are on the pilgrimage together.
- After returning home or to the United States, take time for prayer and theological reflection on the graces of God received during the pilgrimage to Rome. If you went as a group, continue to gather in the weeks and months following the trip to support one another and coordinate missionary activity.

If coordinating a local pilgrimage within the United States for persons with disabilities:

It is highly recommended to make pilgrimage to one's own diocesan or eparchial cathedral or other church(es) or religious site(s) designated by the bishop or eparch.

- Planning for a local pilgrimage can take place at any time of year, or it can be done at the same time as the Jubilee of People with Disabilities (April 28-29, 2025). The timing, as well as the exact local destination, is at the discretion of the local organizer(s).
- Research the pilgrimage destination to ensure that your visit does not coincide with liturgical or local community events or is being done within the posted opening hours for the site. You may wish to contact someone in leadership at the location in advance, especially if you plan to bring a group.

- After returning home (even if the trip was local), take time for prayer and theological reflection on the graces of God received during the pilgrimage experience. If you went as a group, continue to gather in the weeks and months following the trip to support one another and coordinate missionary activity.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CELEBRATING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES LOCALLY

Suggestions for Parishes

- Use the weekend liturgies on the weekend preceding the Jubilee of People with Disabilities (April 26-27, 2025) to recognize all the people with disabilities in the community: in the homily, general intercessions, with a special blessing, or by inviting people with disabilities to serve in key liturgical roles. An example of a petition for the Prayer of the Faithful might include:

For all persons with disabilities in our local community, that they may know God's immense love for them and our gratitude to God for their presence and active participation in our community as members of the Body of Christ. We pray to the Lord...

- Host a Jubilee Eucharistic Holy Hour at your parish during the week of the Jubilee of People with Disabilities, inviting persons with disabilities to lead and witness their faith to the larger community.
- Plan a local pilgrimage for persons with disabilities to your diocesan/eparchial cathedral or to another religious site or beautiful church in your area, using the ideas laid out in the previous section.



Suggestions for Dioceses and Eparchies

- Post stories about persons with disabilities and ministry leaders accompanying persons with disabilities on the diocesan or eparchial website, social media channels, and communications (magazine, newspaper, newsletter, etc.) prior to and/or during the Jubilee of People with Disabilities April 28-29, 2025.
- Host a diocesan/eparchial-wide Jubilee gathering of persons with disabilities with the bishop/eparch. This can be a Eucharistic Holy Hour, liturgy, dinner, meet-and-greet social, and/or a virtual event, providing persons with disabilities across the diocese/eparchy with the opportunity to engage with their episcopal shepherd.
- Encourage all diocesan/eparchial offices and departments to feature, celebrate, or recognize persons with disabilities during April 2025, centered around the global Jubilee celebration. This might need to be preceded by a workshop or meeting with diocesan/eparchial staff to coordinate efforts.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & DOCUMENTS

- [Dignitas Infinita](#), Declaration of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith on Human Dignity, (2024): A declaration on human dignity, a central theme in Christian thought, applying to all the faithful in the life of the Church, and maintaining “awareness of human dignity amid the complex historical moment in which we are living.” Available online.
- [Pastoral Statement of U.S. Catholic Bishops on Persons with Disabilities](#), United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (1978): a pastoral statement calling all the faithful to embrace their responsibility to care for their brothers and sisters with disabilities. Available online.
- [Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities, Revised Edition](#), United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2017): a revised and expanded version of the guidelines to reiterate the essential work of making all forms of the liturgy completely accessible to persons with disabilities. Available online.
- [Welcome and Justice for Persons with Disabilities: A Framework of Access and Inclusion](#), United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (1998): a moral framework based upon Catholic documents which serves as a guide for contemplation and action among the faithful. Available online.
- [USCCB Evangelization and Catechesis, Catechesis with People with Disabilities Web Page](#), with resources for catechesis with persons with disabilities, guidelines for celebrating the sacraments with persons with disabilities, and webinars on how to teach prayer to persons with disabilities. Available online.
- [National Catholic Partnership on Disability \(NCPD\)](#) works with dioceses, parishes, ministers, and laity to promote the full and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in the life of the Church. Available online.
- [National Catholic Office for the Deaf \(NCOD\)](#) is the national voice that expresses the spiritual needs of the American Catholic Deaf Community, focuses on updating the knowledge and skills of pastoral workers with Deaf persons, and acts as a support group for pastoral workers. Available online.



KEY SAINTS & BLESSEDS

Companions of Persons with Disabilities

- **St. Germain Cousin (1579-1601, feast day June 15)** was born with a misshapen right hand and paralysis in her hand. She was treated poorly because of her disability and was not permitted to go to school. St. Germain grew in love for the Lord despite her difficult life of ill treatment and died at a very young age. Her body was found incorrupt, and miracles started to be attributed to her once her body was exhumed.
- **St. Joseph of Cupertino (1603-1663, feast day September 18)**, patron saint for people with developmental disabilities, grew up poor and never seemed to fit in as a child. He became a priest with the Franciscan friars and lived a life of beautiful union with God and holiness, known for his levitations and ecstasies and miraculous curing of the sick. He was forced to live a solitary life because of the crowds who were drawn to him.
- **Bl. Alexius Kim Si-U (1782-1815, feast day September 20)**, one of the Korean blessed martyred during the Eulhae Persecution, became Catholic at a young age and taught the other people in his village about the Catholic faith. He was born paralyzed and was unable to work, thus relying on the charity of others, and he volunteered himself when the police came and arrested the Catholics in his town. He died from starvation in prison but never gave up sharing the faith with everyone around him.
- **St. Kateri Tekakwitha (1656-1680, feast day July 14)**, patroness of the environment, was the first Native American to be recognized as a saint. She converted to Catholicism at age 19 and took a vow of chastity. St. Kateri was very devout and suffered from smallpox at the age of four which killed her family and left her with a badly scarred face and impaired vision.

PRAYERS

Prayer for People with Disabilities

(Diocese of San Angelo)

*Lord Our God,
you make every person in your divine image.*

*You know our needs and you fulfill our desires.
You protect us when we are fragile
and give us courage for each new day.*

*Help us to understand the power
and wisdom of human vulnerability.
Open our hearts to accept our weakness in
your strength.*

*Give us the courage to break down the barriers
that separate us from one another.*

*Enable us to reach out lovingly to all your
children, so that, together, we may all
participate fully in parish life and worship.*

*Make us grateful for the talents and abilities
that all people can share with the Church.
Guide our actions to create truly welcoming
communities that are open to the gifts of each
individual, celebrating our interdependence
with respect for all life.*

*Help us to appreciate all those, living with
disabilities, who contribute their time and
talents, even in the face of obstacles or
misunderstanding.*

*We look to the future with optimism and with
faith in you, as we pursue our call to provide
justice and fullness of life for all people with
disabilities.*

*We pray that every man, woman, and child
may develop their potential.*

*We offer you these prayers as one flock,
following the same shepherd, Jesus Christ, your
Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with
you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God,
forever and ever. Amen.*



Prayer for Persons with Disabilities

(Diocese of Green Bay)

God our Father, who created all people in your image: give persons with physical, cognitive, or emotional disabilities opportunities to do all that they are able to, and strengthen them to overcome challenges.

Jesus, who showed great compassion for those who suffer: comfort all who feel like their gifts are not used or that their value is not understood, so that they might take courage in your affection.

Holy Spirit, who fills believers with all good gifts: help me to reach out to persons with disabilities through friendship, care, and working to be sure that our church includes them in everything that we do and to break down barriers to inclusion in society.

We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.





United States
Conference of
Catholic Bishops

Pilgrims on the Way of Hope: A Resource for the Jubilee of Workers

Jubilee 2025: Pilgrims of Hope

United States Conference of
Catholic Bishops

Jubilee of Workers: Resource Packet

May 1-4, 2025

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

A Jubilee Year is an important and historical event in the life of the Church designed for the faithful to experience God's loving mercy in a special way. Traditionally, a Jubilee is proclaimed every twenty-five years, and the activities include pilgrimages, processions, special celebrations of Mass, and an invitation to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. This year's Jubilee theme is "Pilgrims of Hope" and it begins on Christmas Eve 2024, in Rome, and concludes the following year on the Epiphany in 2026. The Jubilee's activities are meant to encourage Catholics to both receive God's mercy and invite participation in acts of mercy in our daily lives and communities. Pope Francis specifically asks us to consider working for peace and an end to conflicts, promoting

human life, showing amnesty to prisoners, upholding the dignity of migrants, healing the sick, and accompanying the elderly.

The Holy See has designated a number of Jubilee Days throughout 2025 to recognize and celebrate different groups of people and various ministries in the Church. In the Catholic tradition, one of the ways we live out the call to discipleship is through honoring the inherent human dignity of each person. Human labor requires special honor too. Dignified work is a reflection of our God-given human dignity, and it allows us to share in the ongoing work of creation while providing the resources we need to build and sustain families. So, in celebrating workers during the Jubilee Year, we are celebrating the dignity of each person and their contributions to this world.

The Jubilee of Workers will be held from Thursday, May 1, to Sunday, May 4, 2025; however, these resources can be used for engaging and celebrating workers at any time throughout the Jubilee Year.

Additional resources for the Jubilee of Workers and other celebrations can be found online at the USCCB Jubilee Year web pages: available in English at <https://www.usccb.org/committees/jubilee-2025> and available in Spanish at <https://www.usccb.org/es/committees/jubileo-2025>.



SPIRITUAL REFLECTION

The Jubilee of Workers reminds us that we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers and have a responsibility to ensure that the dignity of all workers across all sectors is upheld. "Let us recommit ourselves to building together a society that honors the human dignity of all who labor. Through the treasure of Catholic social teaching, we have a long history of proclaiming the essential role labor plays in helping people to live out their human dignity" (USCCB [Labor Day Statement 2024](#)).

This Jubilee Year is an opportunity to celebrate God's love and mercy in our world. We pray that we will be strengthened by this experience of God's love to pursue economic reality that allows all people to participate and to thrive.

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Respect for workers is an important and long-held aspect of the Church's social tradition. For more than a century, popes have issued encyclical letters explaining the social teaching of the Church. Pope Leo XIII's landmark encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*, helped lay the foundation for the modern-day social tradition of the Church, which condemned the unjust distribution of wealth created in the early industrial revolution, defended the right of every worker to a living wage and promoted the right of workers to form trade unions and collectively bargain for their rights on the job. Subsequent popes continued the thread of social teaching about the important rights of workers, and on their right to organize in labor unions.

In anticipation of the days celebrating the Jubilee of Workers, set within this yearlong celebration of hope, we remember the encouragement of Pope Francis,

"We live in an era that, despite technological advances—and sometimes precisely because of that perverse system defined as technocracy (cf. Laudato Si', 106-114)—has to some extent disappointed expectations of justice in the labor sphere. And this calls first of all for a fresh start in the value of labor, as a place where personal vocation and the social dimension meet. Working allows the person to realize him- or herself, to experience fraternity, to cultivate social friendship and to improve the world" ([Address of Pope Francis to managers and delegates of the Italian General Confederation of Labor](#)).

As the Holy Father says, in our society today, the relationship between humanity and work has been turned upside down from how God intended; we have come to believe that humankind was made for work, instead of work for humankind. Work, at its best, allows us to meaningfully contribute to the wider society, while also providing sufficiently for our individual and family needs. Work has dignity because *we have dignity* as creatures made in God's divine image. Through our work both in and outside of the home, we enter into God's creative enterprise. Living out our vocation gives glory to God. However, when our humanity and dignity is disrespected—or even exploited—in the workplace, God grieves with us. This occurs when wages are withheld, workers are mistreated or underpaid, and safety is threatened.

Our celebration of the dignity of work calls us to think about how the decisions we make every day might support a just economy and workplace for all those who have a hand in creating the goods we consume. In this Jubilee Year, we find an opportunity to remember the appropriate place of work in our lives and recommit to working together for dignified work for all our sisters and brothers.



PARTICIPATE IN (VIRTUAL) PILGRIMAGE OPTIONS

One major element of the Jubilee celebration for Catholics is to make a pilgrimage. For some, that may involve going to Rome, where international pilgrims traditionally visit the Holy Doors of the four great basilicas (Saint Peter, Saint Paul Outside the Walls, Saint Mary Major, and Saint John Lateran). For most others, though, local Jubilee pilgrimages can be made to diocesan or eparchial cathedrals, churches, and/or religious sites. A pilgrimage doesn't need to be a long journey in order to be transformational.

There is even a [virtual pilgrimage](#) that was created so people from all over the world can experience the beauty of making a pilgrimage to the sites in Rome.

It is highly recommended to make pilgrimage to one's own diocesan or eparchial cathedral or other church(es) or religious site(s) designated by the bishop. Planning for a local pilgrimage can take place at any time of year, or it can be done at the same time as the events for workers (around May 1-4). The timing, as well as the exact local destination, is at the discretion of the local organizer(s).

SUGGESTIONS FOR CELEBRATING WORKERS LOCALLY

Suggestions for Parishes

- Use the weekend liturgies on May 3-4 to recognize the various work fields and sectors represented in your community: in the homily, general intercessions, with a special blessing, or by inviting someone to share a personal testimony about how they have experienced a recognition of (or attack on) their dignity through their specific work. Sample Prayers of the Faithful for such a liturgy are included at the end of this resource.

- Have a reception or networking activity after all weekend Masses on May 3-4 to allow parishioners to connect with people in similar work sectors as them. Make a concerted effort to have diverse sectors represented and build solidarity across job fields and backgrounds. Possible discussion questions include:
 - How has the changing landscape of work affected you or your family and friends?
 - Where is the dignity of work or the rights of workers violated or protected—both in your place of work, your community and around the world?
 - How can our personal choices (e.g. where/how we shop or eat) impact whether others' rights are violated or protected?
- Host an educational session on or around May 1st (the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker) to learn about and discuss the Catholic Social Teaching principal on the Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers. Use USCCB resources ([CST 101: Dignity of Work and Rights of Workers Video](#) and Discussion Guide (in [English](#) & [Spanish](#))) for this session.
- Join the [Catholic Labor Network](#) for a virtual liturgy or webinar event drawing together people from all around the country at the intersection of faith and labor.

Suggestions for Dioceses and Eparchies

- Celebrate a liturgy or host a prayer service honoring workers at the diocesan/eparchial cathedral between May 1-4, concurrent with the Jubilee celebrations happening in Rome.
- Hold a diocesan/eparchial-wide Jubileewalking pilgrimage for parishes from the cathedral (or another site of your choosing) to religious sites within the diocese. Consider choosing a path that passes by noteworthy landmarks where the dignity of work is being both upheld or violated. Make



time to pray, celebrate, and/or lament at these locations. Consider also inviting the bishop or eparch on this journey.

- Post vocation stories featuring workers from diverse sectors for whom their faith inspires their work. These stories can be shared on the diocesan or eparchial website, social media channels, and communications (magazine, newspaper, newsletter, etc.) prior to and/or during the Jubilee of Workers in April and May 2025.
- Host a diocesan/eparchial-wide Jubilee of Catholic union members and labor leaders with the bishop/eparch. This can be a presentation, dialogue/discussion, meet-and-greet social, meal, liturgy, and/or a virtual event, allowing every day working people across the diocese/eparchy to engage with their episcopal shepherd.
- Encourage all diocesan/eparchial offices and departments to feature, celebrate, or acknowledge workers, especially low-income and essential workers from late April to mid-May, centered around the global Jubilee celebrations. This might need to be preceded by a workshop or meeting with diocesan/eparchial staff to coordinate efforts.

Suggestions for Catholic Members of a Union

- Host a guest speaker from the Catholic diocese/eparchy or a local parish to present on Catholic Social Teaching on the Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers to your union.
- Write an op-ed for the diocesan/eparchial newspaper or other media outlets telling your story of the value that union membership has brought to you and your family, and how you draw inspiration from—or make connections with—your Catholic faith.

- Invite Catholic leaders (lay, clergy, and religious) to a “labor lunch” with labor leaders during or around May 1-4.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND DOCUMENTS

- USCCB [Annual Labor Day Statements and Educational Materials](#)
- USCCB [Primer on Labor in Catholic Social Thought](#)
- [CST 101: Dignity of Work and Rights of Workers Video](#) and discussion guide ([English](#))([Spanish](#))
- USCCB, [Economic Justice for All: Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy, 1986](#)
- USCCB, [Catholic Framework for Economic Life, 1996](#)
- [Catholic Labor Network \(CLN\)](#): The Catholic Labor Network educates and gathers community around the principle of Catholic Social Teaching on the Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers. It is a place for Catholics — lay, religious and clergy — who find inspiration in Catholic Social Teaching on labor and work to be in solidarity with all who strive for the common good. More information, including how to sign up for their newsletter or join as a member can be found at <https://catholiclabor.org/>.
- [World Movement of Christian Workers \(MMTC\)](#): World Movement of Christian Workers (Mouvement Mondial des Travailleurs Chrétiens, or MMTC) is the Catholic Church's officially recognized association for Catholic recognized association for Catholic workingmen and women. It is a member organization of the [Vatican's International Associations of the Faithful](#).



KEY SAINTS AND BLESSEDS

Holy Companions for Workers and those working to uphold the dignity of work

- **St. Joseph the Worker (c. 1st century BC-1st century AD, feast days March 19 and May 1)**, Husband of Mary and earthly father of Jesus. Joseph was known to be a humble carpenter who provided for his family by the work of his hands. In 1955, Pope Pius XII declared May 1 as an additional feast day honoring St. Joseph, recognizing that May 1 is also celebrated internationally as International Workers' Day.
- **St. Zita (1212-1278, feast day April 27)**, patron saint of domestic workers. Though born into a poor, Italian family, Zita saw her work as a way to glorify God and therefore dutifully fulfilled her work tasks with joy and dedication, while making time for daily Mass and prayer. St. Zita was canonized in 1696 by Pope Innocent XII.
- **St. Notburga (ca. 1264-ca. 1313, feast day September 13)**, patron saint of poor peasants and servants. Canonized by Pope Pius IX in 1862, Notburga is known for her dedication to the poor, even at the cost of her job. Poor herself, she became a servant for Count Henry of Rattenberg but was dismissed when she disobeyed orders and gave leftovers to the poor. Her life was marked by a spirit of humble service.
- **Blessed Fr. Anton Maria Schwartz (1852-1928, anniversary of death September 15)**, Founder of the Congregation for the Devout Workers of St. Joseph Calasanz and the Catholic Apprentices' Association. Beatified by Pope St. John Paul II in 1998, Bl. Anton Schwartz dedicated his life and priesthood in Austria to the service of the poor and vulnerable, particularly to factory workers enduring horrific conditions. His work preceded and embodied the message of *Rerum Novarum* (1891), the first social encyclical by Pope Leo XIII on the dignity of work.
- **Servant of God Dorothy Day (1897-1980)**, Co-Founder, Catholic Worker Movement. A convert to Catholicism upon the birth of her daughter, Tamar, Dorothy Day dedicated her life fighting for justice for those without housing in New York City and co-founded, along with Peter Maurin, both a *Catholic Worker* newspaper and a community by the same name that became a movement founded on the tenets of radical hospitality, nonviolence, and return to the land. Day's life was marked by fidelity to the Scriptures, voluntary poverty, the works of mercy and work for peace and justice. Her cause for canonization is currently under way.
- **St. Alberto Hurtado, SJ (1901-1952, feast day August 18)**, patron of laborers and founder, Hogar de Cristo. Beatified by Pope St. John Paul II in 1994 and canonized by Pope Benedict XVI in 2005, Alberto Hurtado remains beloved among the people of Chile for his work to establish the Trade Union Association of Chile, as well as Hogar de Cristo, an organization for poor and abandoned youth.
- **César Chávez (1927-1963, commemorated annually on March 31)**, Founder, United Farm Worker Movement. César Chávez organized the first successful union of farmworkers in U.S. history. He was not only one of the great labor leaders of this century, he was also a heroic example of Catholic moral leadership, striving throughout his life to secure just treatment for migrant workers.

PRAYERS

Prayer for the Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

Lord God, Master of the Vineyard,

How wonderful that you have invited us
who labor by the sweat of our brow
to be workers in the vineyard
and assist your work
to shape the world around us.



As we seek to respond to this call,
make us attentive to those who seek work but
cannot find it.

Help us listen to the struggles of those who work
hard to provide for their families but still have
trouble making ends meet.

Open our eyes to the struggles of those
exploited and help us speak for just wages and
safe conditions, the freedom to organize, and
time for renewal.

For work was made for humankind
and not humankind for work.

Let it not be a vehicle for exploitation
but a radiant expression of our human dignity.

Give all who labor listening hearts that we may
pause from our work to receive your gift of rest.

Fill us with your Holy Spirit that you might work
through us to let your justice reign.

Amen.

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Pope Francis, Prayer during Meeting with Workers

"Lord God look down upon us! Look at this
city . . . Look upon our families.
Lord, you were not without a job, you were a
carpenter, you were happy.
Lord, we have no work.

The idols want to rob us of our dignity. The
unjust systems want to rob us of hope.

Lord, do not leave us on our own. Help us to help
each other; so that we forget our selfishness a
little and feel in our heart the 'we', the we of a
people who want to keep on going.

Lord Jesus, you were never out of work, give us
work, and teach us to fight for work and bless us
all. In the name of the Father, of the Son and of
the Holy Spirit."

Give me honesty and patience;
So that I can work with other workers.
Bring forth song and celebration;
So that the spirit will be alive among us.

Let the spirit flourish and grow;
So we will never tire of the struggle.
Let us remember those who have died for justice; For
they have given us life.

Help us love even those who hate us;
So we can change the world.

(Pope Francis, [Meeting with Workers](#), September 22,
2013)

Sample Prayers of the Faithful

We pray for a renewal of spirit for the men and women
who work in jobs that ignore the dignity of their
personhood. *We pray to the Lord.*

We pray for all essential workers who labor in the
agricultural, manufacturing, and public service sectors.
That they are provided safe working conditions and
access to affordable healthcare. *We pray to the Lord.*

We pray for the men and women who have recently
lost employment. We pray for their continued
perseverance and determination as they continue to
seek ways in which to participate in God's creative
work. *We pray to the Lord.*

We pray for the men and women who own companies,
who lead companies, and who make decisions
regarding safe work conditions and adequate wages.
We pray that these leaders will act in the best interests
of their laborers. *We pray to the Lord.*

We pray that as we are reminded that it is right and
just to receive a fair wage for work, we may strive to
promote dignity and respect for all in the workplace.
We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who have lost their lives while
working, that they might be welcomed into the
heavenly kingdom; and for their families, that they
might be comforted and find security. *We pray to
the Lord.*





Pilgrims on the way of Hope: A Resource for the Jubilee of Musical Bands

Jubilee 2025: Pilgrims of Hope

United States Conference of
Catholic Bishops

Jubilee of Musical Bands: Resource Packet

May 10-11, 2025

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

Jubilee 2025 invites you to be a pilgrim of hope. For Christians, hope is anchored in the encounter with Jesus whose life, death, and resurrection reveals God's transforming love. Our hope in God is renewed constantly in the gift of the Holy Spirit, the love of the Father and the Son, who is given, even now, to the community of believers.

The Holy See has designated a number of Jubilee Days throughout 2025 to recognize and celebrate different groups of people and various ministries in the Church. The Jubilee of Musical Bands will be held on Saturday, May 10, and Sunday, May 11, 2025; however, these resources can be used for engaging and celebrating musical bands at any time throughout the Jubilee Year.

It should be noted that the official language used for this celebration on the Vatican Calendar is the Jubilee of Marching Bands.

Marching bands are historically associated with military service, performing in parades or city squares. In the U.S., marching bands are also associated with schools and universities, performing at athletic events and show competitions that take place on a field. This USCCB resource uses the term "musical bands" to be inclusive of a wider variety of musical ensembles.



This resource packet is for anyone who finds it useful. It can be used and/or adapted by dioceses, eparchies, parishes, schools, campuses, apostolates, movements, organizations, or individuals to plan their celebration of the Jubilee of Musical Bands. It might also serve as a catalyst or inspiration for the creation and development of local or year-round resources for the music community.

For musical bands that are making a Jubilee pilgrimage to Rome, a Holy Door, or a particular Jubilee celebration in a diocese or eparchy within the United States during 2025, this packet can also serve as an aid in the preparation or experience of that trip.



Additional resources for the Jubilee Days for Musical Bands and other celebrations can be found online at the USCCB Jubilee Year web pages: available in English at <https://www.usccb.org/committees/jubilee-2025> and available in Spanish at <https://www.usccb.org/es/committees/jubileo-2025>.

SPIRITUAL REFLECTIONS

The hearing and making of sound are part of the human experience. Music has an important, natural role for humanity, and sacred music adds a sacramental quality to this.

Music as the Beauty of Paradise touching hearts

Our Holy Father Pope Francis has a great love and appreciation for music and the work of musicians. In an audience in November 24, 2018, he said to an international gathering of choirs: “Your music and your song are a true instrument of evangelization insofar as you witness to the profoundness of the Word of God that touches the hearts of people, and allow a celebration of the sacraments, especially of the Holy Eucharist, which makes one sense the beauty of Paradise.”

Music as accompaniment and unity

“Never stop this commitment, such an important commitment to the life of our communities... In moments of joy and sadness, the Church is called to always be close to people, to offer them the company of faith.”

Music inspired by Scripture

Addressing musicians at the 4th International Conference on Music, Feb. 9-10, 2021, Pope Francis spoke about the inspiration that Sacred Scripture has given to many musical works.

Cultivation of listening and synodality

“The alternation between sound and silence is fruitful and allows for listening, which plays a

fundamental role in every dialogue.”

“Is the silence we live empty or are we in the process of listening? Is it empty or are we in the process of listening? Will we allow, afterwards, the emergence of a new song?”

Music as harmony, consolation, beauty

On June 8, 2024, Pope Francis addressed musicians at an audience: “Music creates harmony, thereby reaching everyone, consoling those who suffer, rekindling enthusiasm in the downhearted, and bringing forth wonderful values such as beauty and poetry, which reflect God’s harmonious light.”

Music as creation

God therefore called man into existence, committing to him the craftsman’s task. Through his “artistic creativity” man appears more than ever “in the image of God”, and he accomplishes this task above all in shaping the wondrous “material” of his own humanity and then exercising creative dominion over the universe which surrounds him. With loving regard, the divine Artist passes on to the human artist a spark of his own surpassing wisdom, calling him to share in his creative power. Obviously, this is a sharing which leaves intact the infinite distance between the Creator and the creature, as Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa made clear: “Creative art, which it is the soul’s good fortune to entertain, is not to be identified with that essential art which is God himself, but is only a communication of it and a share in it.”

That is why artists, the more conscious they are of their “gift,” are led all the more to see themselves and the whole of creation with eyes able to contemplate and give thanks, and to raise to God a hymn of praise. This is the only way for them to come to a full understanding of themselves, their vocation and their mission.

(Letter to Artists, John Paul II, n. 1)



Music as beauty

A noted Polish poet, Cyprian Norwid, wrote that “beauty is to enthuse us for work, and work is to raise us up.”

The theme of beauty is decisive for a discourse on art. It was already present when I stressed God's delighted gaze upon creation. In perceiving that all he had created was good, God saw that it was beautiful as well. The link between good and beautiful stirs fruitful reflection. In a certain sense, beauty is the visible form of the good, just as the good is the metaphysical condition of beauty. This was well understood by the Greeks who, by fusing the two concepts, coined a term which embraces both: kalokagathía, or beauty-goodness. On this point Plato writes: “The power of the Good has taken refuge in the nature of the Beautiful.”

It is in living and acting that man establishes his relationship with being, with the truth and with the good. The artist has a special relationship to beauty. In a very true sense it can be said that beauty is the vocation bestowed on him by the Creator in the gift of “artistic talent.” And, certainly, this too is a talent which ought to be made to bear fruit, in keeping with the sense of the Gospel parable of the talents (Mt. 25:14-30).

Here we touch on an essential point. Those who perceive in themselves this kind of divine spark which is the artistic vocation—as poet, writer, sculptor, architect, musician, actor and so on—feel at the same time the obligation not to waste this talent but to develop it, in order to put it at the service of their neighbor and of humanity as a whole.

(Letter to Artists, John Paul II, n. 3)

Music as service

The particular vocation of individual artists decides the arena in which they serve and points as well to the tasks they must assume, the hard work they must endure and the responsibility

they must accept. Artists who are conscious of all this know too that they must labor without allowing themselves to be driven by the search for empty glory or the craving for cheap popularity, and still less by the calculation of some possible profit for themselves. There is therefore an ethic, even a “spirituality” of artistic service, which contributes in its way to the life and renewal of a people. It is precisely this to which Cyprian Norwid seems to allude in declaring that “beauty is to enthuse us for work, and work is to raise us up.”

(Letter to Artists, John Paul II, n. 4).

Music as an expression of interior reality and beauty

Every genuine artistic intuition goes beyond what the senses perceive and, reaching beneath reality's surface, strives to interpret its hidden mystery. The intuition itself springs from the depths of the human soul, where the desire to give meaning to one's own life is joined by the fleeting vision of beauty and of the mysterious unity of things. All artists experience the unbridgeable gap which lies between the work of their hands, however successful it may be, and the dazzling perfection of the beauty glimpsed in the ardor of the creative moment: what they manage to express in their painting, their sculpting, their creating is no more than a glimmer of the splendor which flared for a moment before the eyes of their spirit...

Every genuine art form in its own way is a path to the inmost reality of man and of the world. It is therefore a wholly valid approach to the realm of faith, which gives human experience its ultimate meaning. That is why the Gospel fullness of truth was bound from the beginning to stir the interest of artists, who by their very nature are alert to every “epiphany” of the inner beauty of things.

(Letter to Artists, John Paul II, n. 6).



Beauty elevates the soul

While architecture designed the space for worship, gradually the need to contemplate the mystery and to present it explicitly to the simple people led to the early forms of painting and sculpture. There appeared as well the first elements of art in word and sound. Among the many themes treated by Augustine we find *De Musica*; and Hilary of Poitiers, Ambrose, Prudentius, Ephrem the Syrian, Gregory of Nazianzus and Paulinus of Nola, to mention but a few, promoted a Christian poetry which was often of high quality not just as theology but also as literature. Their poetic work valued forms inherited from the classical authors, but was nourished by the pure sap of the Gospel, as Paulinus of Nola put it succinctly: “Our only art is faith and our music Christ”. A little later, Gregory the Great compiled the *Antiphonarium* and thus laid the ground for the organic development of that most original sacred music which takes its name from him. Gregorian chant, with its inspired modulations, was to become down the centuries the music of the Church's faith in the liturgical celebration of the sacred mysteries. The “beautiful” was thus wedded to the “true”, so that through art too souls might be lifted up from the world of the senses to the eternal.

(Letter to Artists, John Paul II, n. 7)

Religious music continues to inspire and be inspired

Even in the changed climate of more recent centuries, when a part of society seems to have become indifferent to faith, religious art has continued on its way. This can be more widely appreciated if we look beyond the figurative arts to the great development of sacred music through this same period, either composed for the liturgy or simply treating religious themes. Apart from the many artists who made sacred music their chief concern—how can we forget Pier Luigi da Palestrina, Orlando di Lasso, Tomás

Luis de Victoria?—it is also true that many of the great composers—from Handel to Bach, from Mozart to Schubert, from Beethoven to Berlioz, from Liszt to Verdi—have given us works of the highest inspiration in this field.

(Letter to Artists, John Paul II, n. 9)

Art bridges culture with faith through beauty

You know, however, that the Church has not ceased to nurture great appreciation for the value of art as such. Even beyond its typically religious expressions, true art has a close affinity with the world of faith, so that, even in situations where culture and the Church are far apart, art remains a kind of bridge to religious experience. In so far as it seeks the beautiful fruit of an imagination which rises above the everyday, art is by its nature a kind of appeal to the mystery. Even when they explore the darkest depths of the soul or the most unsettling aspects of evil, artists give voice in a way to the universal desire for redemption.

(Letter to Artists, John Paul II, n. 10)

The faith of musicians nourishes the faith of others

The Church also needs musicians. How many sacred works have been composed through the centuries by people deeply imbued with the sense of the mystery! The faith of countless believers has been nourished by melodies flowing from the hearts of other believers, either introduced into the liturgy or used as an aid to dignified worship. In song, faith is experienced as vibrant joy, love, and confident expectation of the saving intervention of God.

(Letter to Artists, John Paul II, n. 12)

Back to creation, the breath of God

The Holy Spirit, “the Breath” (*ruah*), is the One referred to already in the Book of Genesis: “The earth was without form and void, and darkness was on the face of the deep; and the Spirit of



God was moving over the face of the waters" (1:2). What affinity between the words "breath - breathing" and "inspiration"! The Spirit is the mysterious Artist of the universe. Looking to the Third Millennium, I would hope that all artists might receive in abundance the gift of that creative inspiration which is the starting-point of every true work of art.

Dear artists, you well know that there are many impulses which, either from within or from without, can inspire your talent. Every genuine inspiration, however, contains some tremor of that "breath" with which the Creator Spirit suffused the work of creation from the very beginning. Overseeing the mysterious laws governing the universe, the divine breath of the Creator Spirit reaches out to human genius and stirs its creative power. He touches it with a kind of inner illumination which brings together the sense of the good and the beautiful, and he awakens energies of mind and heart which enable it to conceive an idea and give it form in a work of art. It is right then to speak, even if only analogically, of "moments of grace", because the human being is able to experience in some way the Absolute who is utterly beyond.

(Letter to Artists, John Paul II, n. 15)

SUGGESTIONS FOR PILGRIM PREPARATION

One major element of the Jubilee celebration for Catholics is making pilgrimage. For some, that may involve going to Rome, where international pilgrims traditionally visit the Holy Doors of the four great basilicas (Saint Peter, Saint Paul Outside the Walls, Saint Mary Major, and Saint John Lateran). For most others, though, local Jubilee pilgrimages can be made to diocesan or eparchial cathedrals, churches, and/or religious sites.

If headed to Rome for the Jubilee of Musical Bands:

Should you or your ministry/group/community decide to travel to Rome, in particular for the Jubilee of Musical Bands (May 10-11, 2025), the following may be helpful:

- You can develop a trip on your own or go through a licensed tour operator that specializes or has experience in religious travel. The latter option may cost extra, but it can save a local organizer time; additionally, those operators may have existing connections with vendors and may be able to advise on travel concerns. PLEASE NOTE: The USCCB does not endorse nor identify any licensed tour operator as the official U.S. tour operator.
- The official Jubilee events for musical bands, beginning May 10 ([see here](#)), include the Opening Mass, Jubilee rites through Holy Doors, the Day of Reconciliation, an Evening Vigil, and the Closing Mass. Participating in these activities will offer pilgrims the full Jubilee experience.
- Pilgrims and groups may also consider additional activities, either planned on their own or events hosted by organizations, apostolates, episcopal conferences, or movements.
- Prepare in a manner similar to a World Youth Day, with liturgies, retreats, devotional and service experiences, community building, catechesis, and fundraising, as needed. Take time for silent prayer, with the Blessed Sacrament, but also musical prayer for which the Liturgy of the Hours is especially suited. Recommended resources can include: *The Abbey Psalms and Canticles* and *The Divine Office Hymnal*. These texts provide musical sources for prayer and reflection.



- If your ensemble performs a type of repertoire that is fitting for a concert inside of a church, it may be worth making arrangements to schedule a musical performance in a church in Rome or the surrounding area.
- Practical travel preparation will be essential, especially since the Jubilee of Musical Bands (and other Jubilee events in 2025) in Rome are expected to draw very large crowds. This particular event will also take place in a hot and humid time of year, so it is important that pilgrims recognize causes, symptoms, and support for dehydration, sickness, and heat exhaustion should they arise.
- Pilgrims should bring backpacks, comfortable shoes, appropriate summer clothing, necessary medications and supplies, and resources that aid in pilgrim prayer. Packing light is essential.
- After returning home or to the United States, take time for prayer and theological reflection on the graces of God received during the pilgrimage to Rome. If you went as a group, continue to gather in the weeks and months following the trip to support one another and coordinate missionary actions.

If coordinating a local pilgrimage within the United State for musicians:

It is highly recommended to make pilgrimage to one's own diocesan or eparchial cathedral or other church(es) or religious site(s) designated by the bishop or eparch.

- Planning for a local pilgrimage can take place at any time of year, or it can be done at the same time as the events for musical bands in Rome (May 10 and 11, 2025). The timing, as well as the exact local destination, is at the discretion of the local organizer(s).

- Research the pilgrimage destination to ensure that your visit does not coincide with liturgical or local community events or is being done within the posted opening hours for the site. You may wish to contact someone in leadership at the location in advance, especially if you plan to bring a group.
- Before embarking on the local pilgrimage, consider taking time for prayer and community-building similar to the type of spiritual preparation one would take for an international journey (i.e. to Rome or World Youth Day).
- Prepare with a walking pilgrimage within or around the parish, campus, or local community, in particular if the journey to the cathedral or other major site involves some walking. In fact, consider adding a walking component if one is not naturally part of the program, as the spirituality of physical movement is a key ingredient to a spiritual pilgrimage.
- If your ensemble performs a type of repertoire that is fitting for a concert inside of a church, it may be worth making arrangements to schedule a musical performance in a church or outside on church or school grounds.
- After returning home (even if the trip was local), take time for prayer and theological reflection on the graces of God received during the pilgrimage experience. If you went as a group, continue to gather in the weeks and months following the trip to support one another and coordinate missionary actions.



SUGGESTIONS FOR CELEBRATING MUSICAL BANDS LOCALLY

Suggestions for Parishes

- Host a sacred music concert series where local musicians can share their musical talents with others in the community. Or if there is a suitable space on the church grounds, outside or in a hall, host a non-sacred music concert series.
- Use the weekend liturgies on May 10 and 11 to recognize all the musical bands in the community: in the homily, general intercessions, with a special blessing, or by inviting musicians to serve in key liturgical roles.
- Celebrate and thank those who regularly use their musical gifts to lead music at weekend Masses.
- An example of a petition for the Prayer of the Faithful might include:
 - *For musicians in this parish, in our families, in the wider community, and those who remain distant from the faith, that they may share their gifts to bring glory to God and joy into the world, we pray to the Lord.*
- Have a reception or networking activity after all weekend Masses on May 10 and 11 and make a concerted effort to invite musicians to attend. During those gatherings, offer food and drink, opportunities to meet-and-mingle, and invitations to deeper faith engagement.
- Host a Jubilee prayer service, held at the parish at some point between May 10 and 11, that recognizes all musicians, their gifts, and their contributions to society and to the Church.
- Use the Jubilee celebration as an opportunity to engage the wider parish community and parish leadership in the accompaniment and evangelization of musicians. This can include hosting a training workshop for parishioners and leaders on music; developing a parish-wide musical mentorship program, promoting musical education among children and youth; holding small group conversations based on

St. John-Paul II's *Letter to Artists*; or inviting key leaders in the community to a reception or dinner dialogue with musicians in the local area, including those who are both active churchgoers and those who are less active in the practice of the Catholic faith.

- Plan a local pilgrimage for musical bands to the diocesan/eparchial cathedral or to another religious site or church in your area, using the ideas laid out in the previous section.
- As the sacrament of Reconciliation figures largely in the nature and purpose of a Jubilee Year, help musicians find resources to prepare and receive that sacrament.
- Invite active churchgoing musicians in your parish to engage in "acts of hope" during the Jubilee Year, which can include visits with marginalized communities, evangelizing outreach to those who are disaffiliated from the Church, and/or engagement with their families on issues of faith.
- Livestream or replay video of key Jubilee events (i.e., Opening Mass, Vigil, or Closing Mass) taking place in Rome May 10-11 at one or more musician gatherings held at the parish (noting the time difference between Rome and your local area). You may also consider coordinating music programs at the parish during the livestream viewings such as liturgies, Eucharistic adoration, confessions, catechesis, service projects, small groups, or social activities.

Suggestions for Dioceses and Eparchies

- Celebrate a liturgy or host a prayer service aimed at musicians at the diocesan/eparchial cathedral between May 10-11, concurrent with the Jubilee celebrations happening in Rome. Invite all parishes across the diocese to attend and encourage passage through the cathedral's confessional.



- Hold a diocesan/eparchial-wide Jubilee walking pilgrimage for musicians from the cathedral (or another site of your choosing) to religious sites, churches, universities/schools, and/or to a Catholic services center or institution. Consider also inviting the bishop or eparch on this journey.
- Post stories about music ministry leaders accompanying musicians on the diocesan or eparchial website, social media channels, and communications (magazine, newspaper, newsletter, etc.) prior to and/or during the Jubilee of Musical Bands in May 2025.
- Host a diocesan/eparchial-wide Jubilee gathering of musicians with the bishop/eparch. This can be a presentation, dialogue/discussion, meet-and-greet social, meal, liturgy, and/or a virtual event, allowing musicians across the diocese/eparchy to engage with their episcopal shepherd.
- Encourage all diocesan/eparchial offices and departments to feature, celebrate, or acknowledge musicians during May 2025, centered around the global Jubilee celebrations. This might need to be preceded by a workshop or meeting with diocesan/eparchial staff to coordinate efforts.
- Inaugurate a diocesan/eparchial initiative for musicians beginning with the Jubilee celebrations. This might include an area-wide evangelization effort (for example, around key moments of return for musicians such as Ash Wednesday); an annual award or recognition ceremony; an annual liturgy with the bishop; scholarship funds for college or graduate students; or an annual pilgrimage, etc.

RESOURCES & DOCUMENTS

- [Musicam Sacram](#), Second Vatican Council and Sacred Congregation of Rites, 1967: This document addresses sacred music and its use in the liturgy, the official prayer of the Church. Music in the liturgy brings about an inspiration through beauty and the unison of voices in song, brings about a union also of minds and hearts.
- [Letter to Artists](#), St. John-Paul II, 1999: Music is an art, and music and musicians are mentioned in this document no less than 11 times. Beauty, its role in the prayer of the Church, the inspiration of scripture, the inspiration of others, and participation in the creating work of God, are important themes in this text.
- [Chirograph on Sacred Music](#), St. John-Paul II, 2003: Written to commemorate the 100-year anniversary of St. Pius X's motu proprio on sacred music, *Tra le sollecitudini*, this letter underlines the special place of sacred music in the Church. It connects how sacred music is integral to Christian prayer and facilitates active participation.
- [Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship](#), USCCB, 2007, updated 2013: This pastoral guideline from the Committee on Divine Worship provides a practical outline of the importance of music and how it is used in our prayer.
- [The Abbey Psalms and Canticles](#), USCCB, 2018: This revision of the Grail Psalter forms the basis for Psalm texts in current and future liturgical books. This is the translation that will be used in *The Liturgy of the Hours, Second Edition* and *The Lectionary for Mass*.



- [The Divine Office Hymnal](#), USCCB, 2023: This hymnal contains English translations of the wealth of Latin hymns that will be found in the Liturgy of the Hours, Second Edition. Each English text is set to both a modern metrical melody and the chant melody of the original Latin text.

NOTABLE MUSICAL SAINTS AND BLESSED

- **St. Cecilia (c.200-c.235, feast day November 22)** is the patron of music and musicians. It is recounted that while the musicians played at her wedding, Cecilia sang in her heart to the Lord.
- **Bl. Bartolo Longo (1841-1926)** experienced a great conversion. He promoted the recitation of the Rosary. He played violin, flute, and piano, and directed a band. He encouraged bands, especially among young people.
- **St. Catherine of Bologna (1413-1463, feast day March 9)** was an abbess for the Poor Clares in Italy. She played the viola on her deathbed and was known as a talented painter and poet.
- **St. Elizabeth of the Trinity (1880-1906, feast day November 8)** played the piano for hours before entering religious life. Her playing won awards. She could have become a concert pianist but chose the contemplative life of the Carmel.
- **Bl. Carlo Acutis (1991-2006)** was recently beatified. He taught himself to play the saxophone. He is more widely known for his skill as a web designer, and his great devotion to the Eucharist.
- **St. Ephrem the Syrian (306-373, feast day June 9)** wrote over 400 hymns. He was called the Harp of the Spirit. He used his prolific hymn writing to teach the faith and correct errors.
- **St. Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179, feast day September 17)** was prioress of a Benedictine community. She is recognized as a mystic, philosopher, visionary, and composer. She was recognized as a doctor of the Church in 2012.
- **Bl. Miguel Pro (1891-1927)** was a Jesuit priest who was martyred during the Cristero War in Mexico. He played the guitar and mandolin to lift the spirits of the people.
- **St. Peter Claver (1581-1654, feast day September 9)** was a Jesuit priest who served enslaved people in Colombia. He formed a choir who sang so beautifully that it inspired tears and conversions to the faith.
- **Bl. Solanus Casey (1870-1957)** was a Capuchin priest from the United States who played the violin. What he lacked in skill, he made up with heart to cheer his brothers.
- **St. Venantius Fortunatus (535-605, feast day December 14)** was a wandering bard for many years. He converted to the faith and eventually became a bishop. Some of his poetry and hymns are still used in the liturgy today.



SPIRITUAL READING

From a discourse on the psalms by Saint Augustine, Bishop and Doctor

(Ps. 32, sermon 1, 7-8: CCL 38, 253-254)

Sing to God with songs of joy

Praise the Lord with the lyre, make melody to him with the harp of ten strings! Sing to him a new song. Rid yourself of what is old and worn out, for you know a new song. A new man, a new covenant – a new song. This new song does not belong to the old man. Only the new man learns it: the man restored from his fallen condition through the grace of God, and now sharing in the new covenant, that is, the kingdom of heaven. To it all our love now aspires and sings a new song. Let us sing a new song not with our lips but with our lives.

Sing to him a new song, sing to him with joyful melody. Every one of us tries to discover how to sing to God. You must sing to him, but you must sing well. He does not want your voice to come harshly to his ears, so sing well, brothers!

If you were asked, “Sing to please this musician,” you would not like to do so without having taken some instruction in music, because you would not like to offend an expert in the art. An untrained listener does not notice the faults a musician would point out to you. Who, then, will offer to sing well for God, the great artist whose discrimination is faultless, whose attention is on the minutest detail, whose ear nothing escapes? When will you be able to offer him a perfect performance that you will in no way displease such a supremely discerning listener?

See how he himself provides you with a way of singing. Do not search for words, as if you could find a lyric which would give God pleasure. Sing to him “with songs of joy.” This is singing well to God, just singing with songs of joy.

But how is this done? You must first understand that words cannot express the things that are sung by the heart. Take the case of people singing while harvesting in the fields or in the vineyards or when any other strenuous work is in progress. Although they begin by giving expression to their happiness in sung words, yet shortly there is a change. As if so happy that words can no longer express what they feel, they discard the restricting syllables. They burst out into a simple sound of joy, of jubilation. Such a cry of joy is a sound signifying that the heart is bringing to birth what it cannot utter in words.

Now, who is more worthy of such a cry of jubilation than God himself, whom all words fail to describe? If words will not serve, and yet you must not remain silent, what else can you do but cry out for joy? Your heart must rejoice beyond words, soaring into an immensity of gladness, unrestrained by syllabic bonds. Sing to him with songs of joy.

(Second Reading from the “Office of Readings” for the Memorial of St. Cecilia, November 22, *The Liturgy of the Hours*, Catholic Book Publishing Corp. © 1975)





United States
Conference of
Catholic Bishops

Pilgrims on the Way of Hope: A Resource for the Jubilee of Confraternities

Jubilee 2025: Pilgrims of Hope

United States Conference of
Catholic Bishops

Jubilee of Confraternities: Resource Packet

May 16-18, 2025

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

The Holy See has designated a number of Jubilee Days throughout 2025 to recognize and celebrate different groups of people and various ministries in the Church. The **Jubilee of Confraternities** will be held from **Friday, May 16, to Sunday, May 18, 2025**; however, these resources can be used for engaging and celebrating confraternities at any time throughout the Jubilee Year.

Confraternities are Christian voluntary associations, often coordinated by lay women or lay men to promote charitable works, devotional life, or a particular mission in the Church. Well-known examples include the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Knights of Columbus, National Council of Catholic Women, Catholic Daughters

of the Americas, Order of Malta, and Knights of Peter Claver, among many others.

This resource packet is for anyone who finds it useful. It can be used and/or adapted by dioceses, eparchies, parishes, schools, campuses, apostolates, movements, organizations, or individuals to plan their celebration of the Jubilee of Confraternities. It might also serve as a catalyst or inspiration for the creation and development of local or year-round resources for those active in these associations.



For members of confraternities who are making a Jubilee pilgrimage to Rome or to a particular Jubilee celebration in a diocese or eparchy within the United States during 2025, this packet can also serve as an aid in the preparation or experience of that trip.

Additional resources for the Jubilee of Confraternities and other celebrations can be found online at the USCCB Jubilee Year web pages: available in English at <https://www.usccb.org/committees/jubilee-2025> and available in Spanish at <https://www.usccb.org/es/committees/jubileo-2025>.



SPIRITUAL REFLECTION

The active and engaged mission of the lay faithful are essential to the work of the Church. While each of us on our own are called to this missionary fervor, it is also helpful for members of the lay apostolate to come together under a common charism, history, purpose, or passion for charity, devotion, or spirituality. This synodal “journeying together” can thus enrich the cultures in which the laity find themselves.

Pope Francis shared this message with members of confraternities: “I encourage you to cultivate, with creative and dynamic effort, your life as an association and your charitable presence, which are based on the gift of Baptism and which involve a journey of growth under the guidance of the Holy Spirit” ([Address of His Holiness Pope Francis to Members of Various Italian Confraternities](#), January 16, 2023). Regardless of the origins or foundations upon which your ministries rest, the Holy Father’s exhortation is for lay women and men in their associations to always look forward with evangelism, synodality, and a missionary spirit.

The Second Vatican Council called on all the laity to “work for the sanctification of the world from within as a leaven” (Vatican II, Dogmatic Constitution [Lumen Gentium](#), no. 31.) And when the laity walk together, they can be a united force of hope in society, something that is yearned for by both Catholics and non-Catholics alike. Working side by side offers a diversity of gifts to be used as a force for good in the world, transforming it ever closer to the realization of God’s kingdom.

The popular piety at work in confraternities also constitutes a powerful witness of the spirituality of the Catholic Church. Continue to share that spirituality with your families, friends, colleagues, and neighbors in a way that is inviting and in so doing, can offer a hope to those who are seeking God’s graces in their lives.

Draw close to Christ, the source of your own hope, in this Jubilee Year, by drawing closer together as a community of the laity and closer to the charism, charity, or common bond that inspires your actions. Allow the love of Jesus to flow from you, both as an individual and together as a confraternity or association. In this way, you will be messengers of hope to the world.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PILGRIM PREPARATION

One major element of the Jubilee celebration for Catholics is making pilgrimage. For some, that may involve going to Rome, where international pilgrims traditionally visit the Holy Doors of the four great basilicas (Saint Peter, Saint Paul Outside the Walls, Saint Mary Major, and Saint John Lateran). For most others, though, local Jubilee pilgrimages can be made to diocesan or eparchial cathedrals, churches, and/or religious sites.

If headed to Rome for the Jubilee of Confraternities:

Should you or your confraternity decide to travel to Rome, in particular for the Jubilee of Confraternities (May 16-18, 2025), the following may be helpful:

- You can develop a trip on your own or go through a licensed tour operator that specializes or has experience in religious travel. The latter option may cost extra, but it can save a local organizer time; additionally, those operators may have existing connections with vendors and may be able to advise on travel concerns. PLEASE NOTE: The USCCB does not endorse nor identify any licensed tour operator as the official U.S. tour operator.



- The official Jubilee events for confraternity members include passage through Holy Doors and Mass with the Holy Father on Sunday, May 18. Pilgrims and groups may also consider taking part in additional activities, either planned on their own or events hosted by other apostolates/groups.
- Prepare for the trip with liturgies, retreats, devotional and service experiences, community building, catechesis, and fundraising, as needed. Take time for prayer, especially with the Blessed Sacrament, as well as practical travel planning (packing, supplies, water, etc.).
- Upon the return home, consider in advance ways to share the experience with others and put into practice the missionary lessons received during the Jubilee moments in Rome.

If coordinating a local pilgrimage within the United States:

It is highly recommended to make pilgrimage to one's own diocesan or eparchial cathedral or other church(es) or religious site(s) designated by the bishop or eparch.

- Plan for a local pilgrimage which can take place at any time of year or can be done at the same time as the events for confraternities in Rome (May 16-18, 2025). The timing, as well as the exact local destination, is at the discretion of the local organizer(s).
- Research the pilgrimage destination to ensure that your visit does not coincide with liturgical or local community events or is being done within the posted opening hours for the site. You may wish to contact someone in leadership at the location in advance, especially if you plan to bring a group.
- Before embarking on a local pilgrimage, consider taking time for prayer and community-building.

- After returning home (even if the trip was local), take time for prayer and theological reflection on the graces of God received during the pilgrimage experience. If you went as a group, continue to gather in the weeks and months following the trip to support one another and coordinate missionary actions.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CELEBRATING CONFRATERNITIES LOCALLY

Suggestions for Parishes

- Use the weekend liturgies on May 17-18 to recognize all members of Catholic confraternities or associations: in the homily, general intercessions, with a special blessing, or by inviting them to serve in key liturgical roles. An example of a petition for the Prayer of the Faithful might include:

For lay people in this parish and around the world who are active in Catholic confraternities and associations of the faithful (including _____ in our own community), that they, working together, may be signs of hope within our world today, we pray to the Lord.*

**Insert any particular confraternities active in your parish, such as the Knights of Peter Claver, the Knights of Columbus, the Council of Catholic Women, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, etc.*

- Have a reception or networking activity after all weekend Masses on May 17-18 for those active in confraternities and associations, as well as lay parishioners. During those gatherings, offer food and drink, opportunities to meet-and-mingle, and invitations for others to consider joining these groups.
- Plan a local pilgrimage for members of the parish's confraternities or associations to the diocesan or eparchial cathedral or to another religious site or church in your area, using the ideas laid out in the previous section.



- Livestream or replay video of key Jubilee events (i.e., Mass with the Holy Father) taking place in Rome from May 16 to 18 at the parish (noting the time difference between Rome and your local area). You may also consider coordinating programs at the parish during the livestream viewings such as liturgies, Eucharistic adoration, confessions, catechesis, service projects, small groups, or socials.

Suggestions for Dioceses and Eparchies

- Celebrate a liturgy or host a prayer service for members of confraternities or associations active in the area at the diocesan/eparchial cathedral between May 16 and 18, concurrent with the Jubilee celebrations happening in Rome.
- Hold a diocesan/eparchial-wide Jubilee walking pilgrimage for confraternity/association members from the cathedral (or another site of your choosing) to religious sites, churches, and/or to a Catholic-led social services center or institution. Consider also inviting the bishop or eparch.
- Post stories about active confraternity or association members on the diocesan or eparchial website, social media channels, and communications (magazine, newspaper, newsletter, etc.) prior to and/or during the Jubilee of Confraternities in May 2025.
- Host a special diocesan/eparchial-wide dinner or reception for members of confraternities and associations, highlighting the charitable, devotional, or spiritual activities of each group and their members at some point during the Jubilee Year. Consider an award or recognition program for those who make key contributions to the life of the diocese/eparchy and/or society at large.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & DOCUMENTS

- [*Evangelii Gaudium*](#), Pope Francis (2013): an apostolic exhortation on evangelization and missionary discipleship, ideal for the lay faithful. Available in print and in e-book from several Catholic publishers and online.
- [*Living as Missionary Disciples*](#), United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis (2017): the U.S. Bishops' response to Pope Francis' *Evangelii Gaudium* and a basic resource guide outlining the principles of evangelization: encounter, accompaniment, community, and sending. Available online, with additional resources from the Catholic Apostolate Center.
- [*Lumen Gentium*](#), Second Vatican Council (1964): Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, outlining the role the laity play in the life and mission of the Church. Available in print from several Catholic publishers and also available online.
- [*Apostolicam Actuositatem*](#), Second Vatican Council (1965): Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, guiding the laity in their work of Christian service in the world, rooted in the baptismal call to holiness. Available online.
- [*Christifideles Laici*](#) (Christ's Faithful Laity), St. John Paul II (1988): apostolic exhortation in response to the 1987 Synod of Bishops on the vocation and mission of the laity in the Church, encouraging the lay faithful to use their gifts to transform the world. Available online.
- [*Address of His Holiness to Members of Various Confraternities*](#), Pope Francis (2023): a brief exhortation to a recent gathering of Italian confraternities and associations, with worldwide applications. Available online.



- [USCCB Laity Web Page](#), with resources for the laity and associations of the faithful, with links to additional content, including webinars, collaborating organizations, and more. Available online.

KEY SAINTS AND BLESSEDS

Holy Companions for Confraternities and Associations

- **Mary, Queen of the Apostles** (can be celebrated at Pentecost), the Blessed Mother who joins in prayer with the Apostles in the Upper Room (the Cenacle) at Pentecost, where the outpouring of the Holy Spirit occurred, and the Church began her mission in the world (see Acts 2:1-47).
- **St. Vincent de Paul (1581-1660, feast day September 27)**, patron of charities, volunteers, and hospitals and co-founder of the Congregation of the Mission (the Vincentians) and the Confraternity of Charity. A native of France, Vincent was a humble, compassionate priest who dedicated himself to serving the poor.
- **St. Vincent Pallotti (1795-1850, feast day January 22)**, founder of the Union of the Catholic Apostolate and the Society of the Catholic Apostolate (in 1835), who believed that all (ordained, consecrated, and lay alike) are called to be apostles, co-responsible for the Church's mission.
- **Bl. Michael McGivney (1852-1890, feast day August 13)**, founder of the Knights of Columbus (in 1882) and filled with a "zeal for the proclamation of the Gospel and generous concern for his brothers and sisters" that "made him an outstanding witness of Christian solidarity and fraternal assistance."

PRAYERS

Prayer for Confraternities and Associations

Christifideles Laici Prayer

*O Most Blessed Virgin Mary,
Mother of Christ and Mother of the Church,
With joy and wonder we seek to make our
own your Magnificat, joining you in your hymn of
thankfulness and love.*

*With you we give thanks to God,
"whose mercy is from generation to generation",
for the exalted vocation and the many forms of
mission entrusted to the lay faithful.*

*God has called each of them by name
to live his own communion of love and holiness
and to be one in the great family of God's children.
He has sent them forth to shine with the light of
Christ and to communicate the fire of the Spirit in
every part of society through their life
inspired by the gospel.*

*O Virgin of the Magnificat,
fill their hearts with a gratitude and enthusiasm
for this vocation and mission.*

*With humility and magnanimity,
you were the "handmaid of the Lord";
give us your unreserved willingness for service to
God and the salvation of the world.
Open our hearts to the great anticipation of the
Kingdom of God and of the proclamation of the
Gospel to the whole of creation.*

*Your mother's heart is ever mindful of the many
dangers and evils which threaten
to overpower men and women in our time.*

*At the same time your heart also takes notice of the
many initiatives undertaken for good,
the great yearning for values,
and the progress achieved in bringing forth
the abundant fruits of salvation.*



O Virgin full of courage, may your spiritual strength and trust in God inspire us, so that we might know how to overcome all the obstacles that we encounter in accomplishing our mission. Teach us to treat the affairs of the world with a real sense of Christian responsibility and a joyful hope of the coming of God's Kingdom, and of a "new heaven and a new earth".

You who were gathered in prayer with the Apostles in the Cenacle, awaiting the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost, implore his renewed outpouring on all the faithful, men and women alike, so that they might more fully respond to their vocation and mission, as branches engrafted to the true vine, called to bear much fruit for the life of the world.

O Virgin Mother, guide and sustain us so that we might always live as true sons and daughters of the Church of your Son.

Enable us to do our part in helping to establish on earth the civilization of truth and love, as God wills it, for his glory. Amen.

(from Christifideles Laici by St. John Paul II, Libreria Editrice Vaticana © 1988)

