

JUBILEE FAQS



1 What is a Jubilee year?

In the Catholic Church, a Jubilee or Holy Year is a special year of forgiveness and reconciliation, in which people are invited to come back into right relationship with God, with one another, and with all of creation.

2 How often is a Jubilee year?

A Jubilee Year is celebrated by the Church every 25 years. This has been the case since 1470, when Pope Paul II changed it from every 50 years. A Pope can also proclaim an Extraordinary Jubilee, like the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy which Pope Francis inaugurated in 2015.

3 When does the Jubilee start and finish?

The 2025 Jubilee Year begins on Christmas Eve 2024 and concludes on 6 January 2026.

4 How can schools and parishes get involved?

There are lots of opportunities to be involved including through prayer, learning and action. Visit sciaf.org.uk/jubilee for more information.

5 What is the theme for the Jubilee 2025?

The theme is Pilgrims of Hope. Pope Francis has invited Catholics to renew our hope and discover a vision that can “restore access to the fruits of the earth to everyone”. We are also invited to rediscover a spirituality of God’s creation in which we understand ourselves as “pilgrims on the earth” rather than masters of the world.

6 What is the Biblical background for the Jubilee Year?



The word Jubilee comes from the Hebrew word yobel, which is a ram's horn. This wind instrument is blown to mark the start of a Jubilee Year in the Bible (Leviticus 25:9). In the Bible the Jubilee Year occurred every 50 years and involved the cancelling of debts, a period of rest for people and the earth, and land being restored to the landless.

In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus makes clear his own mission is to bring Jubilee. In the synagogue at Nazareth he reads from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah, proclaiming the year of the Lord's favour:

The Spirit of the Lord has been given to me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim the Lord's year of favour." (Luke 4:18-19)

After reading, Jesus announces: "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." Jesus shows us what God's Kingdom of justice, compassion and freedom looks like. He invites us to join him in making it a reality.

7 What is a Papal Bull of Indiction?

The term 'bull' originates from the lead seal, known as bulla in Latin. It refers to a Papal decree which outlines the purpose and spirit of the Holy Year.

8 What is the Papal Bull for Jubilee 2025 called?

The Bull is titled "Spes non confundit" (Hope does not disappoint) and urges us to look for signs of hope in the world around us and work for peace and justice.

9 What is a Holy Door?

The beginning of the Jubilee Year is marked by the opening of the Holy Door of St Peter's Basilica in the Vatican. It is only during a Jubilee Year that these doors are opened.

10 What do Catholics do in a Jubilee year?

The Jubilee Year is an opportunity to respond to God's call to turn to him and to pursue justice, to renew our relationship with God, with our neighbours, and with the earth itself. Often people will go on pilgrimage during a Jubilee year, to Rome or another holy site.