

Year of the Jubilee 2025



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 the right relationship with God, with one another, and with all of creation.

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.

What is the theme of the Jubilee Year in 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.

When does the Jubilee Year start and finish?

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

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 join him in making it a reality.

What does the Catholic Church say about debt and the Jubilee Year?

We now face the most acute global debt crisis in history with 3.3 billion people living in countries that spend more on debt servicing than on health, education or climate measures. Despite facing significant poverty burdens, countries are having to make huge repayments on high-interest loans to wealthy banks, institutions and governments, leaving them unable to properly fund essential services.

An important part of the Jubilee tradition was the cancellation of debts, giving those who had become overwhelmed by unpayable debts a fresh start (Deuteronomy 15). Pope Francis has identified debt cancellation as a vital element of 2025 Jubilee celebrations saying: "More than a question of generosity, this is a matter of justice."

CAFOD will be pressing the UK government for action to address the debt crisis throughout 2025.

What is the 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.

What does the Papal Bull for the 2025 Jubilee Year tell us?

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. In the document Pope Francis writes:

"If we really wish to prepare a path to peace in our world, let us commit ourselves to remedying the remote causes of injustice, settling unjust and unpayable debts, and feeding the hungry." (#16)

What is a Holy Door?

A Holy Door is one of the usually sealed entrances that lead into the major basilicas of Rome. 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. St Cuthbert's holy door is the entrance to our Chapel.

What is the Year of Prayer in 2024?

In preparation for the 2025 Jubilee Year, Pilgrims of Hope, 2024 has been designated a Year of Prayer by Pope Francis. He asks us all to join in a great "symphony of prayer", "to renew our desire to be in the presence of the Lord, to listen to him and to adore him".

"Pilgrimage is of course a fundamental element of every Jubilee event. Setting out on a journey is traditionally associated with our human quest for meaning in life."

What do Catholics do during a Jubilee Year?

The Jubilee Year is an opportunity to respond to God's call to turn to him and to pursue justice. In the Jubilee Year of 2000 many Christians joined together to call for cancellation of debt owed by the world's poorest countries.

Often people will go on pilgrimage during a Jubilee year, to Rome or another holy site. Pope Francis writes:

"Pilgrimage is of course a fundamental element of every Jubilee event. Setting out on a journey is traditionally associated with our human quest for meaning in life. A pilgrimage on foot is a great aid for rediscovering the value of silence, effort and simplicity of life." (Spes non confundit #5)

Please see the table below to find out how St Cuthbert's and St George's are celebrating the Year of Jubilee, 2025.



**St Cuthbert's and St George's Catholic Primary Schools
Year of Jubilee 2025
Pilgrims of Hope**

Month	Themes and activities
Advent 2024	<i>What is the Year of Jubilee?</i> Whole school assembly
January 2025	<i>Open the doors</i> 'God lies beyond this door' <u>Launch date for schools – Friday Jan 2025</u> Whole school assembly and creating a 'Holy Door' in school
February	<i>What is Hope?</i> Whole school assembly
March	<i>Signs of Hope</i> Parent/Carer Workshops in school 'Crosses of Hope' Pilgrims of Hope Whole school assembly Class pilgrimages
April	<i>Taking Hope Home</i> Home/School linked activity – 'Hope Chest'
May	Signs of Hope Whole school art project
June	<i>Friday 27 June 2025 - Jubilee Day across the Diocese</i>
July	Positive affirmation of hope Whole school Mass led by Year 5
September	<i>Hopes for the coming year</i> Whole school Mass led by Year 6
October	Global pilgrimages Activity TBC
November	Youth Friday Friday 21 November 2025 Jubilee Finale Activity TBC
December	Advent mission - passing hope forward Activity TBC