



My Dear Parishioners,

Praise Be Jesus Christ! As you may have heard in the news, 2025 is a Jubilee Year in the Catholic Church. This week, I share a bit of what that means and encourage you to learn more about this special year.

Peace,

Fr. Rogers

What is a jubilee? A jubilee year, also known as a “holy year,” is a special year in the life of the church currently celebrated every 25 years. The most recent ordinary jubilee was in 2000, with Pope Francis calling for an Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy in 2015-2016. Jubilee years have been held on regular intervals in the Catholic Church since 1300, but they trace their roots to the Jewish tradition of marking a jubilee year every 50 years. According to the Vatican website for the jubilee, these years in Jewish history were “intended to be marked as a time to re-establish a proper relationship with God, with one another, and with all of creation, and involved the forgiveness of debts, the return of misappropriated land, and a fallow period for the fields.”

Connection with Doors: Jubilee 2025 opens Christmas Eve, Dec. 24, at 7 p.m., with the rite of the opening of the Holy Door at St. Peter’s Basilica in the Vatican immediately before Pope Francis celebrates midnight Mass. Holy Doors will also be opened at Rome’s three other major basilicas: St. John Lateran on Dec. 29, St. Mary Major on Jan. 1, and St. Paul’s Outside the Walls on Jan. 5. A Holy Door will also be opened Dec. 26 at Rebibbia Prison, a Roman prison Pope Francis has visited twice before to celebrate Mass and wash inmates’ feet on Holy Thursday.

The doors represent the passage to salvation Jesus opened to humanity. In 1423, Pope Martin V opened the Holy Door in the Basilica of St. John Lateran — the Diocese of Rome’s cathedral — for the first time for a jubilee. For the Holy Year of 1500, Pope Alexander VI opened Holy Doors at Rome’s four main basilicas. At the end of a holy year, the Holy Doors are formally closed and then bricked over by masons.

Jubilee 2025 theme: The theme of the Holy Year is “Pilgrims of Hope.” The papal bull, issued May 9, that introduced the coming Jubilee Year is titled “Spes Non Confundit,” or “Hope does not disappoint,” drawn from Romans 5:5. *“Everyone knows what it is to hope,”* Pope Francis wrote. *“In the heart of each person, hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come, despite our not knowing what the future may bring. Even so, uncertainty about the future may at times give rise to conflicting feelings, ranging from confident trust to apprehensiveness, from serenity to anxiety, from firm conviction to hesitation and doubt,”* he continued. *“Often we come across people who are discouraged, pessimistic and cynical about the future, as if nothing could possibly bring them happiness. For all of us, may the Jubilee be an opportunity to be renewed in hope. God’s word helps us find reasons for that hope.”* Pope Francis also hopes the year draws Catholics toward patience, which he described in “Spes Non Confundit” as a “virtue closely linked to hope,” yet can feel elusive in “our fast-paced world, we are used to wanting everything now.”

Maria Wiering is senior writer for OSV News.