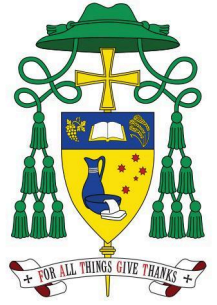


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BGM:rw/712b

22 November 2024

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Pope Francis has proclaimed that 2025 will be a Holy Year of Jubilee, a special year of grace and conversion, involving prayer, pilgrimage and sacramental repentance, ordinarily held every 25 years. The goal of a Jubilee year is to inspire and encourage holiness of life among the faithful and therefore to strengthen the Church's witness to God's loving mercy in and for the world.

The spiritual theme for the 2025 Holy Year of Jubilee is 'Pilgrims of Hope'.

The Jubilee year will commence with the Opening of the Holy Door of Saint Peter's Basilica on December 24. As will be the case in Dioceses around the world, I will open the Holy Year in the Diocese of Wollongong on Sunday the 29th of December at the celebration of 10.30am Mass at St Francis Xavier Cathedral, Wollongong. The Jubilee will conclude on Sunday 28th December 2025.

In choosing the motto '*Pilgrims of Hope*' for the Jubilee, Pope Francis noted that 'We must fan the flame of hope that has been given to us and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart and far-sighted vision. The forthcoming Jubilee can contribute greatly to restoring a climate of hope and trust as a prelude to the renewal and rebirth that we so greatly desire'(1).

It is just on twelve months ago that I promulgated *Come and See, Go and Make – A vision for Parishes*. In rearticulating the mission of our Diocese and painting a picture of the parish I see, I extoll the faithful to embrace this vision, its key principles and foundations, noting the need for all of us to be 'overwhelmed not by fear, but by hope!' (2)

I regard it as most providential, that having commenced this journey of renewal in the Church of Wollongong, that we are being invited by Pope Francis to embrace renewed hope, and to continue to progress the elements of this diocesan vision for parishes under the great graces that will come from this Jubilee Year.

For all things give thanks.

1 THESS 5:18

In response to Pope Francis' encouragement to embrace the historic tradition of pilgrimage, I have designated the following places within the Diocese of Wollongong as Jubilee Pilgrimage sites for the Holy Year:

1. St Francis Xavier Cathedral, Wollongong
2. Immaculate Conception Parish Church, Unanderra
3. Our Lady Help of Christians Parish Church, Rosemeadow
4. St Mary Star of the Sea Parish Church, Milton
5. St Joseph's Catholic Church, Kangaroo Valley
6. Shrine of Our Lady of Mercy, Penrose Park

According to the Apostolic Penitentiary Decree, the faithful who are "truly repentant and free from any affection for sin, moved by a spirit of charity and who, during the Holy Year, purified through the sacrament of penance and refreshed by Holy Communion, and praying for the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff" can obtain the Jubilee Indulgence. Pope Francis explained that the indulgence is a way of "discovering the unlimited nature of God's mercy".

A plenary indulgence with remission and forgiveness of all their sins, the Jubilee Indulgence also requires "devoutly visiting any Jubilee site and there, for a suitable period of time, engage in Eucharistic adoration and meditation, concluding with the Our Father, the Profession of Faith in any legitimate form, and invocations to Mary, the Mother of God." It is also recommended that pilgrims, either personally or communally, recite the Holy Year Pilgrim's Prayer. (3)

Each Jubilee Pilgrimage Church site will host opportunities at advertised times during the Holy Year. I encourage you as individuals, families, and as communities to visit these sites of pilgrimage throughout the course of the year. During the Holy Year, I will visit each of the Jubilee Pilgrimage Churches to preside at a sacred liturgical celebration or devotion and, on that occasion, "impart the Papal Blessing with the ascribed plenary indulgence, obtainable by all the faithful who receive this Blessing under the usual conditions." (4) These visits will be advertised in due course on the Diocesan website and via the weekly communications notices.

The Diocesan Website will in due course provide a variety of pertinent information about the Jubilee year, including a list of key events in these places of pilgrimage.

As we enter this Advent season of hope and expectation, preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus, the hope of the world, I ask that we as a community, pray together the Jubilee Year Prayer, so that each one of us is inspired as believers to spread hope through our actions and words, encouraging others to trust in God's promises and love.

Fraternally,



Most Rev Brian G Mascord DD
Bishop of Wollongong

Given at Wollongong on, 22 November 2024, to be published and made available in the Churches and mass Centres of the Diocese.

References

1. Letter of +Francis to Msgr. R Fisichella, President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelisation for the Jubilee 2025.
2. Come and See, Go and Make – A vision for Parishes, para 69, Most Rev Brian G Mascord DD.
3. Decree on the Granting of Indulgences during the Jubilee of 2025, Given at Rome by the Apostolic Penitentiary, 13th May 2024.
4. Ibid.

Resources attached to this Correspondence.

1. Letter of the Holy Father for the Jubilee Year 2025
2. Papal Bull of Jubilee Year 2025
3. Decree on the Granting of Jubilee 2025 indulgence
4. Jubilee Prayer
5. Jubilee-Logo
6. Jubilee Song Pilgrims-of-Hope
7. Towards the Jubilee 2025