

How can the Jubilee of Hope strengthen your faith?

Here's what you need to know

Almudena Martínez-Bordiú - Jan. 2, 2025

A jubilee is one of the most significant events of the Catholic Church that occurs only every 25 years.

With the beginning of the 2025 Jubilee Year of Hope, there are many questions the faithful may ask: What can the jubilee contribute to my life of faith? What is a Holy Door? What is a jubilee church? How can I participate if I don't go on pilgrimage to Rome? The answers to these and other questions will help Catholics understand the value of this exceptional time of grace.

The importance of a jubilee

Why is the jubilee such an important event for Catholics? The answer is simple: It offers an extraordinary opportunity to attain salvation and experience that God's holiness can transform us. Ultimately, it is a gift that helps us reach heaven.

Why? Because it makes available to the faithful all the easy means to obtain benefits from the "treasury" of the Church, for example, a plenary indulgence, which returns the soul to the state it was in when it received baptism.

Speaking with ACI Prensa, CNA's Spanish-language news partner, Father Giuseppe Bonomo, an Italian priest at the Atri Cathedral in Teramo, Italy — where there is a Holy Door instituted by Pope St. Celestine V — emphasized that the jubilee is also a unique time for "personal and community conversion."

In fact, during each month of the year, one or more jubilees dedicated to different groups will be celebrated in Rome. In January, for example, there is the Jubilee of the World of Communications, in February the Jubilee of Artists, in April the Jubilee of Teenagers, in May the Jubilee of Confraternities.

Two indulgences in one day?

In the sacrament of penance sins are forgiven. However, the temporal punishment required by divine justice remains. The indulgence grants the remission of all temporal punishment in purgatory, so that if a person dies after receiving this gift, he or she goes directly to heaven.

The immense value and profound significance that this "treasure" contains makes it a privilege reserved for specific places and times designated for it to be granted. This is where the greatness of the jubilee year lies, a time when the opportunities to obtain it are multiplied — even twice in one day!

Although there is a rule that only one plenary indulgence can be obtained per day, during the jubilee year a second one can be obtained if it is done for the souls in purgatory, i.e., the second one will be applicable only to the deceased.

Requirements to obtain the jubilee indulgence

To obtain the jubilee indulgence it is important first to know how it is granted (the requirements) and second, where (the specific place or times) it is granted. With the arrival of the Jubilee of Hope, the Vatican noted the three usual conditions:

"All the faithful, who are truly repentant and free from any affection for sin, who are moved by a spirit of charity and who, during the holy year, purified through the sacrament of penance and refreshed by holy Communion, pray for the intentions of the supreme pontiff, will be able to obtain from the treasury of the Church a plenary indulgence, with remission and forgiveness of all their sins, which can be applied in suffrage to the souls in purgatory," the document states.

How can one experience the Jubilee 2025 without going on pilgrimage to Rome?

During the year 2025, Catholics will be able to obtain the indulgence on pilgrimages to any holy place of the jubilee, those churches designated for this purpose. In Rome, in addition to the four main basilicas, there are 13 other churches.

The Eternal City is undoubtedly the center of the 2025 Jubilee, and during the year it expects to welcome 30 million people. However, if one cannot go on pilgrimage to Rome, there are many other ways to obtain the indulgence and experience a true conversion and strengthening of faith.

Bonomo explained to ACI Prensa that any Catholic who wishes can do so in his or her own city. "You must ask your bishop how many churches there are in your diocese" with these qualifications, he explained.

"There are many jubilee churches! And of course you can obtain the plenary indulgence in these churches," he said.

You can also obtain it if you visit sacred places such as Marian shrines or other basilicas.

It can also be received by performing works of mercy and penance, such as visiting those in need or in difficulty (the sick, prisoners, the lonely elderly, etc.), even by abstaining, at least for one day, from "trivial distractions," such as social media and "superfluous consumption."

In addition, those who cannot participate in pilgrimages for "serious reasons" can gain the indulgence if they recite "the Our Father, the Profession of Faith in any approved form, and other prayers in conformity with the objectives of the holy year ... offering up their sufferings or the hardships of their lives."

What is a Holy Door and how many are there in the world?

Pope Francis officially inaugurated the 2025 Jubilee of Hope by opening the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica on Dec. 24, 2024. Passing through a Holy Door

during the jubilee symbolizes entry into a new life in Christ and the beginning of a journey of conversion.

Bonomo noted that Holy Doors “can be permanent or not.” The first category includes only nine in the whole world: “The most famous is that of St. Peter in the Vatican, followed by those of the three major basilicas in Rome: St. John Lateran, St. Paul Outside the Walls, and St. Mary Major.”

“But there are also others outside Rome, such as the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela [Spain], the Basilica of Santa Maria di Collemaggio in L’Aquila [Italy], the Basilica-Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Québec [Canada], the Atri Cathedral [Italy], and Sacred Heart Cathedral in New Delhi [India],” he added.

Furthermore, the Italian priest explained that “the basilicas with permanent Holy Doors have their own statutes.” For example, “the Basilica of Atri is open every year from Aug. 14–22, while those in Rome are open only during a jubilee year,” he continued.

In the case of Santiago de Compostela, a holy year occurs when July 25, the saint’s feast day, falls on a Sunday. During that year, the plenary indulgence can be obtained at the cathedral.

The ‘nonpermanent’ Holy Doors

Nonpermanent Holy Doors are those that are opened only for a specific jubilee year, as on Dec. 26, 2024, when for the first time in the jubilee tradition, Pope Francis opened a Holy Door in the Rebibbia prison, located on the outskirts of Rome.

Ten years ago, during his trip to the Central African Republic, Pope Francis opened the Holy Door of the Bangui cathedral, a gesture made shortly after the beginning of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy to encourage “peace in this country and the world.” In addition, on Dec. 18 of that year he opened the Holy Door of Charity in a reception center in Termini in Rome.

During the Extraordinary Jubilee of 2015, Pope Francis granted the opening of the Holy Door also in cathedral churches and allowed the dioceses to establish Holy Doors. This, however, will not happen in 2025, since this year the rules for an ordinary jubilee are followed and not an extraordinary one.

Source: <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com>