

# What Is the Year of Jubilee 2025?

## (The following information is from Catholic Answers)

The Year of Jubilee is a biblical concept deeply rooted in Scripture and Tradition, offering the faithful a time of renewal, forgiveness, and celebration. Catholic Answers wants to provide resources for the Jubilee Year 2025 so you can make the most of the Holy Year, including navigating frequently asked questions.

**When Is the Next Year of Jubilee?** The next Catholic Jubilee Year is already here! It began on Christmas Eve (December 24), 2024, and ends on January 6, 2026, the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord. During this time, special blessings (including indulgences) will be available to the faithful who participate in designated pilgrimages, prayers, and sacraments.

**Jubilee in the Bible:** It originates from Leviticus 25:8-55, where God commands the Israelites to celebrate a year of Jubilee every fifty years, a time to rest the land and its agricultural workers, release slaves, and return land to its original owners. These verses underscore themes of freedom, mercy, and redemption, which remain central to the Catholic faith and life. Key passages include:

- **Lev. 25:10:** “Proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you.”
- **Isaiah 61:1-2:** “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me . . . to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”
- **Luke 4:18-19:** Jesus applies Isaiah’s prophecy, linking the Jubilee to his mission of salvation.

### Jubilee in the Catholic Church

In the Catholic Church, Jubilee years traditionally occur every twenty-five years. These are known as **Ordinary Jubilees** and are times of special grace, forgiveness, and renewal. The last Ordinary Jubilee was in the year 2000, which marked the two-thousandth anniversary of Christ’s birth. Now, in 2025, we celebrate the Jubilee theme *Pilgrims of Hope*.

**Pope Francis Jubilee 2025:** Many wonder why 2025 is a Jubilee year for Catholics. Pope Francis called this Catholic Jubilee 2025 to celebrate hope and invite Catholics worldwide to deepen their faith. Because it marks the 1,700th anniversary of the First Council of Nicaea, Jubilee 2025 also celebrates the fundamental Christian truth of the Incarnation, that Jesus is *both* true God and true man, a teaching always believed in the early Church but dogmatically defined at the Council to combat the Arian heresy.

Occasionally, a pope may declare an **Extraordinary Jubilee**, as Pope Francis did with the Jubilee of Mercy in 2015-2016. These are called to address specific themes or needs within the Church. Both types of Jubilees offer opportunities for pilgrimage, indulgences, and spiritual growth.

**The Theme for Jubilee Year 2025:** The theme “Pilgrims of Hope” emphasizes the journey of faith and the role of hope in navigating life’s challenges. As part of this theme, Catholics are encouraged to trust in God’s providence and extend that hope to others (see CCC 1817-1821).

**Catholic Answers Insight: What is the Significance of the “Pilgrims of Hope”** The theme *Pilgrims of Hope* for the Jubilee Year 2025 emphasizes the journey of faith, especially the hope found in Christ. As pilgrims, Catholics are called to embark on a spiritual journey, seeking renewal and deeper communion with God. This theme encourages us to trust in God’s promises and be beacons of hope in the world, reflecting the teaching of Romans 15:13: “*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.*” It invites us to live out our faith with joy and to inspire others through acts of love and mercy.

**Holy Year 2025 Preparation Checklist:** These practices help Catholics grow in holiness and experience God’s mercy. Participating in a Jubilee Year includes these spiritual practices:

1. **Visiting designated holy sites**, such as the four major basilicas in Rome or local churches in your dioceses, symbolizes a journey of faith and conversion.
2. **Sacrament of Reconciliation:** Confession is encouraged to receive God’s forgiveness and grace, as emphasized in John 20:21-23; and—along with receiving the Eucharist—this sacrament is necessary to **obtain** an indulgence.
3. **By fulfilling certain conditions**, including prayers, a pilgrimage, or acts of charity, Catholics can receive indulgences, which reduce or eliminate temporal punishment for sins.

4. **Acts of Mercy:** Engaging in corporal and spiritual works of mercy, like feeding the hungry or comforting the sorrowful, reflects Christ's love.
5. **Prayer and Reflection:** Deepening one's prayer life and reflecting on Scripture strengthens one's relationship with God.

**Jubilee Year Indulgences: A Catholic Answer Primer on What They Are and Aren't:** The Church offers special indulgences, which are remissions of the temporal punishment of *already forgiven* sins, *not* a "get out of jail free card" for future sins. Remitting that punishment—or aftereffects of forgiven sin—includes purifying us of our "unhealthy attachment to creatures" and other created things (CCC 1472). Indulgences are outlined in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC 1471-1479). They are either partial or plenary, remitting some (partial) or the complete (plenary) temporal punishment due to one's sins, including, again, that associated with our unhealthy attachments to ourselves, other persons, and things—attachments which *necessarily cannot exist* in heaven (see Rev. 21:27). Indulgences can be obtained for oneself or for one who has died (the faithful departed). Pilgrimages to designated holy sites, doing acts of charity, and receiving the sacrament of reconciliation are emphasized. The Jubilee is a reminder of God's mercy and the call to live out the gospel more fully.

### **Catholic Answers Holy Door Jubilee Explainer**

Holy Doors are significant in Jubilee Years. They are special doors in major basilicas, such as St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City, which Rome encompasses. The doors are sealed and only opened during a Jubilee. Passing through a Holy Door symbolizes entering a deeper relationship with Christ, as mentioned in John 10:9, where Jesus says, "I am the door." It represents a spiritual journey and renewal. Pilgrims who pass through a Holy Door can receive a plenary indulgence, under the usual conditions: 1) performance of a designated act; (2-3), reception of the sacraments of confession/reconciliation and Holy Communion; 4) prayer for the pope's intentions; and 5) detachment from all sin. Passing through a Holy Door is a powerful reminder of God's mercy and the call to conversion.

**Pilgrimages and Holy Doors in 2025:** A significant aspect of the Jubilee Year is an invitation to make a pilgrimage to Rome. Catholic pilgrimages to Italy in 2025 focus on visits to the Vatican and Rome, including passing through the opened Holy Doors of Rome's major basilicas (St. Peter's Basilica, St. Paul Outside the Walls, St. John Lateran; and St. Mary Major). Passing through a Holy Door symbolizes crossing into God's grace and mercy. For those unable to travel, many dioceses worldwide offer local opportunities to gain Jubilee indulgences, thereby reinforcing the universality of the Church.

**Catholic Answers Quick Guide on Obtaining Indulgences in the Year of Jubilee:** This is Catholic Answers Jubilee Year quick guide on how to obtain plenary indulgences during the Jubilee Year by fulfilling specific spiritual acts. These are:

1. Making a pilgrimage to a designated site.
2. Participating in confession
3. Receiving the Eucharist.
4. Praying for the pope's intentions.
5. Being detached from all sin, even venial sin.

**Jubilee Year Events and Celebrations:** Jubilee 2025 will include many Vatican celebrations, such as papal Masses, catechetical events, and other opportunities for prayer. The Jubilee of Youth 2025 and events for families will highlight the Church's commitment to nurturing faith across generations.

### **FAQs About the Year of Jubilee**

- **What does Jubilee mean in the Bible?** Jubilee signifies a time of liberation, restoration, and renewal, rooted in God's covenant with his people. The land was given *rest* from planting and harvesting, those sold into servitude were *released* and restored to their families, and lands sold during economic difficulties were *returned* to their original owners.
- **Is the Year of Jubilee every Seven years?** Seven is indeed the biblical number of perfection, and a Jubilee highlighted that numerological perfection in being celebrated every fifty years in the Old Covenant (7 x 7 + 1; see Lev. 25:8-12). Meanwhile, Catholic Jubilees are declared periodically by the pope.
- **When was the last Jewish Year of Jubilee?** The exact timing is debated, but the biblical practice ended after the destruction of the Second Temple (A.D. 70).

# Divine Mercy in my Soul, Reflection 214: A Complete Pardon

Imagine that you were guilty of a serious crime and faced life in prison. You were sorry for what you had done and fully confessed to it. On the day of your sentencing you came in handcuffed from where you were being held knowing that you would soon return. Instead, the judge ordered that your shackles be removed, that you were to receive a full pardon and that you were being granted a complete restoration to your former life. Certainly you would be filled with gratitude. But we must realize that God has not only done this, He has done even more. He also elevates us the status as His sons and daughters, a new status that we do not deserve in the order of grace. The Mercy of God is amazing and beyond what we can comprehend. All we have to do is repent and entrust ourselves to the benevolence of this good Judge. This is especially done through Confession and trusting in the abundance of Mercy offered to those who specifically go to Confession in honor of Divine Mercy Sunday (See *Diary* #1109).

Can you admit to your sin? Are you aware of your sin? If so, then you are one step away from receiving a full pardon from the Most Merciful Judge. God longs to not only wipe away your sins, He also longs to elevate you to the glorious heights of Mercy. Do you want this? If so, do not hesitate in believing in the glorious Sacrament of Confession, and do not hesitate to trust in His Mercy poured out on Divine Mercy Sunday each year. Seek His pardon, especially on that glorious day.

*Lord, give me the grace of knowing my sins and confessing them in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. May I have great courage to face Your Mercy in that Sacrament so as to be elevated to the glorious status of Your sons and daughters. And may I especially trust in the Mercy You bestow on Divine Mercy Sunday. Thank You for the graces bestowed on this most holy day. Jesus, I trust in You.*

## St. Ignatius' 5 Steps to Prepare for a General Confession

As a young man in Spain around the turn of the 16th century, St. Ignatius of Loyola prayed alone in a cave for several months and developed distinctive spiritual practices. After starting the Jesuit order around 15 years later, he codified these exercises, and all novitiates complete them upon entering the order. (The term "exercise" encompasses a range of spiritual activities, including an examination of conscience, meditation, contemplation, vocal and mental prayer.) Principally, the exercises allow one to navigate a path toward God and the fullness of life Jesus promises. The first stage of these exercises is the preparation for a general confession.

### The Five Exercises to Prepare for a General Confession

In preparation for making a general confession, St. Ignatius suggests removing yourself from your daily life as much as possible. This way, to use his words, "The mind is not engaged in many things, but can give its whole attention to one single interest, that is, to the service of its Creator and its spiritual progress."

He lays out five separate exercises, summarized below, and recommends performing them over the course of one day: the first at midnight, the second upon rising, the third before or after Mass (before lunch), the Fourth at Vespers (early evening), and the Fifth an hour before supper.

Since these were written in first person, I'm summarizing them here in first person as well.

#### • The First Exercise

I begin with a prayer asking God that this exercise might be oriented toward him.

Next, I complete two preludes:

First, I meditate on "sin." A visual Ignatius offers is a knight coming before a king and court after he's done something shamefully wrong, and after the king has given him many favors. (This visual gets at the kind of person Ignatius was.)

Second, I ask for the grace to be ashamed of occasions of sin.

The meat of this exercise entails meditating on the single sin of the angels that caused them to be cast into hell and the single sin of Adam and Eve that brought about the fallen state of the entire human race.

Then I consider those who've led far better lives than I, who've sinned far less, yet who have incurred punishment and damnation.

Finally, I close with a colloquy; a natural conversation with Jesus. After meditating on Him on the Cross, I answer these questions: "What have I done for Christ?" "What am I doing for Christ?" "What ought I to do for Christ?"

#### • The Second Exercise

The second exercise begins with the same preparatory prayer.

This is followed by a prelude, this time asking for the grace of intense sorrow for sin.

Next, I record my sins, going over my life year by year, focusing on where I lived, my dealings with others and the positions I held. I look at my sins altogether, and then I look at myself compared to the almighty God. I look with awe on all of creation for having permitted me to commit these sins: the angels, other humans, the saints, all of nature. (“Why have the angels, though they are the swords of God’s justice, tolerated me, guided me, and prayed for me!”)

Finally, I end with a colloquy, speaking to God and thanking him for his mercy.

#### • The Third Exercise

The third exercise begins with the preparatory prayer.

Next, I repeat the first and second exercises, focusing on which aspects bring consolation, and which desolation. (Consolation occurs when “an interior movement is aroused in the soul by which it is inflamed with love of its Creator and Lord.” Desolation, rather, is “a darkness of soul, turmoil of spirit, inclination to what is low and earthly, relentlessness rising from many disturbances.”)

I finish with three colloquies, first to the Blessed Virgin, asking for self-knowledge, a new sense of priorities, and separation from worldly dangers. Then I make the same requests of Jesus and God the Father.

#### • The Fourth Exercise

The fourth exercise repeats the third, like a cow chewing on its cud, and closes with the same colloquies.

#### • The Fifth Exercise

The fifth exercise begins with the preparatory prayer.

Next, I meditate on hell, using all the five senses: seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and feeling the flames. One helpful description here is from St. Teresa of Avila's *Book of her Life*, a spiritual memoir she wrote around the age of 50.

While I was in prayer one day, I suddenly found that, without knowing how, I had seemingly been put in hell....the entrance it seems to me was similar to a very long and narrow alleyway, like an oven, low and dark and confined; the flow seemed to me to consist of dirty, muddy water emitting a foul stench and swarming with putrid vermin. At the end of the alleyway a hole that looked like a small cupboard was hollowed out in the wall; there I found I was placed in a cramped condition.

All this was delightful to see in comparison with what I felt there. What I felt, it seems to me, cannot even begin to be exaggerated, nor can it be understood. I experienced a fire in the soul that I don't know how I could describe. The bodily pains were so unbearable that though I had suffered excruciating ones in this life and according to what doctors say, the worst that can be suffered on earth...these were all nothing in comparison with the ones I experienced there. I saw furthermore that they would go on without end and without ever ceasing.

This, however was nothing next to the soul's agonizing: constriction, a suffocation, an affliction so keenly felt and with such a despairing and tormenting unhappiness that I don't know how to word it strongly enough. To say the experience is as though the soul were continually being wrested from the body would be insufficient, for it would make you think somebody else is taking away the life, whereas here it is the soul itself tears itself in pieces. I felt myself burning and crumbling; and I repeat the worst was that interior fire and despair the Lord wanted me to actually feel those spiritual torments and afflictions, as though the body were suffering. (St. Ignatius of course doesn't include this excerpt in his exercises, but I have found it's a pretty thorough description, and so helpful for a meditation.)

Next, I ask for a sense of pain that the lost suffer, and for a fear of hell, an appreciation of its reality as a motivation to live an upright life.

I close with a colloquy, talking with Jesus about those who are condemned and thanking Him that he's been merciful to me.

And that wraps up the five steps: after completing these, anyone is pretty well prepared to make a general confession. Most priests are available to hear confessions at least once a week. And although for most of us, a general confession could easily take 60-90 minutes, it needn't include every detail. Limiting the confession to serious sins and categorizing them by “themes” (i.e. sloth, envy etc.) helps to speed things along in the confession line.

St. Ignatius makes a few comments on penance. He suggests giving up food, sleep, and practicing forms of asceticism that make you uncomfortable but that don't hurt you physically (like taking cold showers, for example). He says that identifying suitable penance is a discernment process, and recommends talking it over with God to determine what is best for you.

Source: <https://thingsfallapart.substack.com/p/how-and-why-to-make-a-general-confession>