



10 Questions about the Jubilee Year

What is the 2025 Jubilee Year all about? Find out below!

Fiona Duque PUBLISHED February 04, 2025

What is a Jubilee Year?

Jubilees are wonderful celebrations of significant milestones. You probably hear it most when people are talking about years of marriage. Catholic Jubilee Years encompass many practices and rituals. Pilgrims undertake journeys, often travelling to significant holy sites. The ritual opening of the Holy Door by the Pope. The focus on reconciliation allows forgiveness and healing. Liturgy and prayer offer moments of reflection, devotion communal worship, and strengthening of faith and beliefs that reinforce renewal and transformation that are central themes to the Jubilee Year.

What does the Bible say?

In Leviticus 25:10, we read that a jubilee is rooted in the idea of remission and universal pardon. The Jubilee Year in Jewish tradition is indeed a time of great joy and forgiveness. It marks the 50th year, during which debts are forgiven, enslaved people are freed, and land is returned to its original owners. The Jewish people call it Yovel, named after the ram's horn, that is blown signifying its start.

Why does the Catholic Church celebrate Jubilee Years?

The establishment of the first jubilee or "Holy Year" by Pope Boniface VIII in 1300 was a significant moment in history and continues to be so for the Catholic Church. The jubilee signifies a period of special grace and celebration. The fundamental idea remains the same as it does for the Jewish people – remission, renewal, and reconciliation. It also encompasses broader themes of solidarity, hope, and justice. It's a call to serve with joy and to live in peace with one another, and the opportunity for a deeper connection with God's grace.

When is it celebrated?

Within the Catholic Church, ordinary jubilees have generally been celebrated every 25 or 50 years, with extraordinary jubilees in addition depending on what needs there might be in the world. For example, Pope Francis called an Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy in 2016. This year's Jubilee started on 24 December 2024 with the Opening of the Holy Door of Saint Peter's Basilica. It will finish on 6 January 2026 the Feast of the Epiphany, with the closing of the Door.

How is it launched?

Within the Catholic Church, it is the opening of this Holy Door that is a threshold moment that holds deep symbolic meaning within the context of the Jubilee. The act of the Pope opening the door is a powerful moment, marking the start of the Holy Year and inviting the faithful to partake in the blessings and graces associated with it. It is a beautiful expression of the transformative power of faith and the hope it brings to millions worldwide.

Why is pilgrimage an important aspect of the Jubilee Year?

The Jubilee Year is a profound year of grace, mercy and conversion involving prayer, pilgrimage, and sacramental repentance. It calls for us to set out on a journey and to cross boundaries. It's a journey that nourishes the soul and brings the pilgrim closer to God, and the call God has on their life. Therefore, a pilgrimage during the Jubilee Year can be a profoundly enriching practice that encompasses personal transformation, communal faith, historical continuity, and spiritual renewal.

What is the theme of this year's Jubilee?

In Pope Francis' Papal Bull (a proclamation issued by the Pope) announcing the Jubilee Year, the initial words were 'hope does not disappoint'. And so, the call is to be Pilgrims of Hope (official theme) and in the words of Pope Francis: "A pilgrimage on foot is a great aid for rediscovering the value of silence, effort and simplicity of life." And in the words of Bishop Michael: "When we journey, we do not only change place physically, but we also change ourselves by allowing God's grace to touch us."

How can I get involved?

First and foremost, on Sunday 2 March there will be the Diocesan Launch. This will be a fantastic day of community where everyone from across the Diocese is invited to a pilgrimage, Mass and festival. On this day, more information will be available about other significant events on the calendar. There is also the opportunity to receive a Pilgrim Passport for those wishing to make the journey to as many of our local pilgrimage sites as possible. Read on to find out more...

What are the larger events on the calendar?

On 6 April, join with other churches in our area as we walk The Way of the Cross. On 8 Aug, there will be an aMeN caMiNo Experience for those who would like to support our Camino pilgrims. There is also an amazing opportunity to pilgrim with Bishop Michael following in the footsteps of St Paul and visiting Rome from 25 Sept-11 Oct. The NATSICC Assembly will be on 29 Sept-3 Oct, and the Australian Catholic Youth Festival on 30 Nov-2 Dec in Melbourne. For more information, email: mission@mn.catholic.org.au

Where are our local pilgrimage sites?

Bishop Michael particularly wishes to highlight parish communities who have offered their Churches as sites of pilgrimage for the Jubilee Year. The official sites are as follows: Sacred Heart Cathedral-Newcastle West, St Mary Star of the Sea-Newcastle, St John the Baptist Shrine-Maitland, St Joseph's-East Maitland, St Joseph's-Murrurundi, Blessed Virgin Mary Queen of Peace-Scone, Our Lady of the Rosary Church-Taree and Saints Patrick & Brigid-Cooranbong (you could make this last one part of your support to the Camino pilgrims). Keep watching for more events to follow as the year goes on...

Join us!

Bishop Michael invites all to celebrate the Jubilee Year with a special event on Sunday 2 March! It will start with a Diocesan pilgrimage from Nobby's Beach at 8am to Sacred Heart Cathedral, culminating in Mass at 10am and a Festival at 11am in the Cathedral precinct grounds. All corners of the Diocese are encouraged to get involved as we celebrate Pope Francis' theme - Pilgrims of Hope.

To help our parishes celebrate this special event please read over the page.



For more information

Celebrating the Diocesan Jubilee Pilgrimage on Sunday 2nd March 2025 For the Parishes of Boolaroo, Booragul, Morisset and Toronto.

With the Jubilee of Hope being launched at the Sacred Heart Cathedral Hamilton on Sunday 2nd March, all parishioners are both invited and encouraged to attend this major event (as it only happens once every 25 years).

How can I get to the Cathedral?

With many people expected to attend the events, parking will be difficult. To assist our parishioners getting there, we have ordered buses (free of charge). There are two ways of being part of the pilgrimage:

- for those who are able to walk from Nobby's Beach foreshore to the Cathedral (about 4kms), the pilgrimage walk will begin at 8am.
- for those unable to walk that distance and still want to be part of the pilgrimage, we have arranged for you to be dropped off closer to the Cathedral.

Early bus to Nobby's Beach

Morisset	6.30am
Toronto	6.50am
Boolaroo	7.05am
Warners Bay	7.15am
Nobbys Beach	7.45am

Later bus to the Cathedral

Morisset	8.15am
Toronto	8.35am
Boolaroo	8:50am
Warners Bay	9.05am
Sacred Heart Cathedral	9.30am

Mass will be celebrated at 10am followed by stalls, displays, kids' entertainment and free food outlets. The event is expected to finish around 1pm and our buses will be ready to take us home at that time.

To assist us with our bus planning could you please mark on the sheets in the churches or via the [form](https://forms.office.com/r/fLHfRBe0uj) (https://forms.office.com/r/fLHfRBe0uj) if you will be attending and which bus (time and place) you will be joining.

Changes to Masses for the 1st/2nd March 2025

To encourage as many people as possible to attend there will be only one Sunday morning Mass in the 4 parishes which will be held at St Mary's Warners Bay at 9.00am. It will be live streamed, as will the Jubilee Mass at the Cathedral for those who cannot attend.

All Vigil Masses will remain the same Our Lady Help of Christians Boolaroo (5.30pm) and St John Vianney Morisset (5.00pm). Please note that there will also be an additional Vigil Mass this weekend at St Joseph's Toronto (5.30pm).

Jubilee Indulgence

Bishop Michael writes: *This year provides an opportunity for personal and communal renewal and calls us to be "tangible signs of hope for those of our brothers and sisters who experience hardship of any kind" (Spes non confundit, 10). As part of this renewal, it is customary during years of Jubilee for the Church to make indulgences available for the faithful. Indulgences are gifts of grace of God's mercy and can be acquired through pilgrimage, visiting sacred places and works of mercy. When making a pilgrimage or visiting a designated diocesan church of pilgrimage during the Jubilee Year the faithful will be able to obtain a Jubilee Indulgence.*

All pilgrims who comply with the usual conditions for an indulgence ie. receive the Sacrament of Penance, attend Mass, receive the Most Holy Eucharist and pray for the intentions of the Holy Father (all preferably on the same day or otherwise close to the day) will receive a full Jubilee Indulgence upon pilgrimage to any of the churches designated above.

If you have any questions please contact the parish offices stmarythecross@mn.catholic.org.au or morparish@mn.catholic.org.au

May this Holy Year be marked by a hope that does not fade and spreads to all who need it in our world.