

Jubilee Year FAQ

1) What is a Jubilee Year?

A Jubilee Year is a special invitation to receive and be transformed by God's holiness. In the Old Testament, the holy year marked a time to re-establish a proper relationship with God, with one another, and with all of creation. Pope Boniface VIII celebrated the first Jubilee Year in the Church in 1300 and in 1470, Pope Paul II declared that Jubilee Years would be celebrated every 25 years. Jubilee Years includes special celebrations and pilgrimages, strong calls for conversion and repentance, and special opportunities to experience God's grace through the sacraments, especially confession.

2) What is special about this Jubilee Year?

This year began on December 24, 2024 and will close on December 8, 2025. Pope Francis has announced that the theme for this jubilee year will be "Pilgrims of Hope." The theme emphasizes that our baptismal life is a pilgrimage toward our heavenly homeland. We are hopeful because we have an anchor in heaven, Jesus Christ, who intercedes on our behalf. The Holy Father has written a special prayer for this year. The link is below:

<https://www.iubilaeum2025.va/en/giubileo-2025/preghiera.html>

3) What is a pilgrimage?

A pilgrimage is a journey to a sacred place undertaken as an act of religious devotion. A pilgrimage may have many purposes: veneration of a certain saint, asking a spiritual favor, expressing thanks, or fulfilling a promise. It may also be an act of penance to receive a plenary indulgence.

4) What is a plenary indulgence?

When we sin, we divide ourselves from God and become more attached to our earthly life. While confession heals our relationship with God, we still need purification from our attachments. The soul still burdened by attachments needs time in purgatory. Alternatively, the Church provides indulgences, which free a soul from its time in purgatory. Reception of an indulgence always springs from sincere repentance, the desire to live a holy life, reception of the sacraments of Penance and Holy Communion as soon as possible and prayer for the Holy Father. An indulgence cannot be bought, nor can one be obtained by going through the motions without sincerity. A plenary indulgence removes all the punishment in purgatory for that attachment. During the Jubilee Year, pilgrims to selected sites receive a plenary indulgence.

5) Will there be an opening of the holy doors?

An iconic image of many Jubilee Years is the opening of the Holy Doors in dioceses across the world. Pilgrims have the opportunity to pass through these doors to receive a plenary indulgence. However, this year, the only Holy Doors opened are those in Rome.

6) What will we be doing at St. Bede's?

St. Bede's, by virtue of its being the Archdiocesan Shrine of St. Padre Pio, has been selected as a pilgrimage site for this Jubilee Year. That means that if they satisfy the standard requirements, pilgrims receive a plenary indulgence for coming here. We encourage pilgrims to contact our office at (215) 357-5720 to set up your trip so that a priest may be available to give a tour of our church and possibly hear confessions. In addition to being a pilgrimage site the entire year, the parish has planned several events to honor this Jubilee Year.

From Sunday, March 30th through Wednesday, April 2nd we will be having our Lenten Mission.

The theme for this year's mission is: "A Hope-Filled Renewal of our Faith."

In honor of the Jubilee Year, we will have a preached Triduum September 10th-12th, leading into our annual festival celebrating St. Padre Pio on September 13th and 14th.

We will host an exhibition of Eucharistic Miracles around the world created by Bl. Carlos Acutis on the weekend of October 25th-27th.