

Pope Francis proclaims Year of Jubilee themed around 'hope'

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by Ruth Gledhill

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Pope Francis yesterday proclaimed a new Jubilee year, to start in December, and themed around “hope”.

Promulgating the Bull of Indiction at St Peter’s in Rome, titled *Spes non confundit* or “Hope does not disappoint”, the Pope said: “Everyone knows what it is to hope. In the heart of each person, hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come, despite our not knowing what the future may bring.

“Even so, uncertainty about the future may at times give rise to conflicting feelings, ranging from confident trust to apprehensiveness, from serenity to anxiety, from firm conviction to hesitation and doubt. Often, we come across people who are discouraged, pessimistic and cynical about the future, as if nothing could possibly bring them happiness. For all of us, may the Jubilee be an opportunity to be renewed in hope.”

The title is taken from St Paul’s letter to the Romans, 5:5. Traditionally, the Pope proclaims a Jubilee every 25 years. The first Jubilee was proclaimed in 1300. Hundreds of thousands of “pilgrims of hope” from all over the world are expected to travel to Rome during the Year of Jubilee, and it will also be celebrated in parishes worldwide.

“For everyone, may the Jubilee be a moment of genuine, personal encounter with the Lord Jesus,” Pope Francis said.

Renewing his pleas for peace through diplomacy, the Pope added: “The first sign of hope should be the desire for peace in our world, which once more finds itself immersed in the tragedy of war. Heedless of the horrors of the past, humanity is confronting yet another ordeal, as many peoples are prey to brutality and violence. What does the future hold for those peoples, who have already endured so much?”

Linking hope to the practice of patience, Pope Francis also said: “In our fast-paced world, we are used to wanting everything now. We no longer have time simply to be with

others; even families find it hard to get together and enjoy one another's company. Patience has been put to flight by frenetic haste, and this has proved detrimental, since it leads to impatience, anxiety and even gratuitous violence, resulting in more unhappiness and self-centredness."

He also critiqued the internet, saying it did not leave much place for patience because of the prevalence of the "now".

He said: "Were we still able to contemplate creation with a sense of awe, we might better understand the importance of patience. We could appreciate the changes of the seasons and their harvests, observe the life of animals and their cycles of growth, and enjoy the clarity of vision of Saint Francis."

Pope Francis urged people to strive towards a future filled with the laughter of babies and children, "in order to fill the empty cradles in so many parts of our world". He also pleaded for the young, for older people and for a welcome for migrants, as well as for forgiveness of debt and a general embrace of the concept of forgiveness.

In his proclamation, Pope Francis stipulated that on Sunday, 29 December, in every cathedral and co-cathedral, diocesan bishops are to celebrate Mass as the solemn opening of the Jubilee Year. The Holy Year will conclude on Sunday, 28 December 2025.

Raymond Field, chief executive of Csan, was among those to welcome the Jubilee. He said, "It is incredibly powerful, a heartfelt call for personal and societal renewal."