



United States  
Conference of  
Catholic Bishops

# Pilgrims on the Way of Hope: A Resource for the Jubilee of the Missionaries of Mercy

## Jubilee 2025: Pilgrims of Hope

United States Conference  
of Catholic Bishops

## Jubilee of the Missionaries of Mercy: Resource Packet

March 28-30, 2025

## INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

The Holy See has designated a number of Jubilee Days throughout 2025 to recognize and celebrate different groups of people and various ministries in the Church. The Jubilee of the Missionaries of Mercy will be March 28-30, 2025; however, these resources can be used for engaging and celebrating the Missionaries of Mercy at any time throughout the Jubilee Year. These resources might serve as an inspiration and reflection material for the Missionaries of Mercy in preparation for their Jubilee and for the creation and development of other resources.

Additional information for the Jubilee of the Missionaries of Mercy can be found on the official Vatican Jubilee Website: <https://www.iubilaeum2025.va/en/pellegrinaggio/calendario-giubileo/GrandiEventi/Giubileo-dei-Missionari-della-Misericordia.html>.

## SPIRITUAL REFLECTION

*Missionaries of Mercy: Bearers of  
Hope in the Jubilee Year*

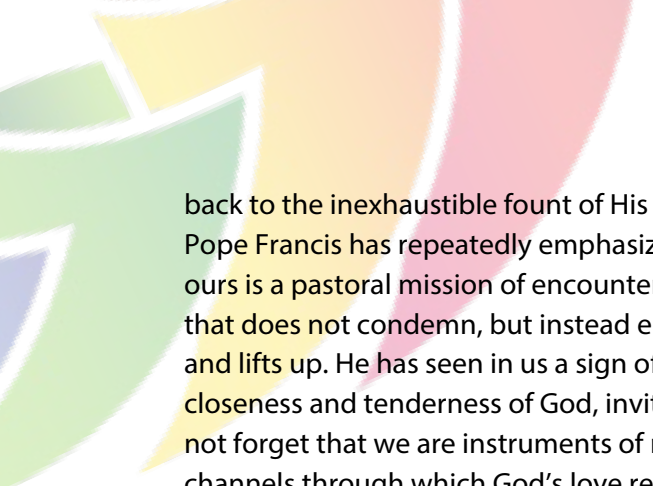


As we enter the Jubilee of Hope, Pope Francis invites us to contemplate the profound link between mercy and hope—two pillars of our Christian faith that must guide our ministry. The Holy Father reminds us that hope does not disappoint, because it is firmly rooted in the love of God poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5). The Jubilee, then, is not merely a celebration; it is a renewed call for the Church to become a beacon of mercy and a wellspring of hope in a world longing for healing and reconciliation.

Pope Francis, in his Bull of Indiction *Spes Non Confundit*, speaks to the heart of this mission telling us that hope is born of love and based on the love springing from the pierced heart of Jesus upon the cross. His is a love that does not disappoint, that transcends all our expectations, and that always opens up new and unanticipated horizons (cf. *Spes Non Confundit*, 2-3).

As Missionaries of Mercy, we are entrusted with a special task in this Jubilee Year: to rekindle hope in those who feel lost, broken, or burdened by sin. We are called to be living signs of the Father's tenderness, leading souls





back to the inexhaustible fount of His mercy. Pope Francis has repeatedly emphasized that ours is a pastoral mission of encounter, one that does not condemn, but instead embraces and lifts up. He has seen in us a sign of the closeness and tenderness of God, inviting us to not forget that we are instruments of mercy, channels through which God's love reaches people's hearts (cf. *Address to the Missionaries of Mercy*, 2022).

#### *Mercy and Hope: The Heart of the Jubilee*

In his reflections to us, the Holy Father highlights that the work of a Missionary of Mercy is fundamentally a work of hope. Each time we extend God's forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we are proclaiming the victory of grace over sin, healing over wounds, and light over darkness.

But hope is not just about consolation; it is also a call to action. The Jubilee Year reminds us that hope must be proclaimed and lived, especially in the face of a world burdened by despair. Pope Francis challenges us saying that for all of us, may the Jubilee be an opportunity to be renewed in hope. May we become a Church that transmits hope, a Church that does not close its doors, a Church that does not allow itself to be robbed of joy (cf. *Spes Non Confundit*, 4).

In our mission, we must be missionaries of joy as well as missionaries of mercy. True hope is contagious, it spreads when people encounter the love of God in a tangible, life-changing way.

#### *The Jubilee: A Time to Welcome and Restore*

The Holy Father has given the Missionaries of Mercy the gift of faculties that extend beyond the ordinary, allowing us to absolve sins that are usually reserved to the Holy See. This is not simply a privilege; it is a responsibility. We are to seek out those who feel far from God, those who believe they are beyond forgiveness. As he

has told us: Let us not forget that God never tires of forgiving us; it is we who tire of asking for forgiveness (Cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 3).

In this Jubilee of Hope, we must redouble our efforts to ensure that no one remains in the shadow of despair. Whether through missions, confessions, preaching, or simple acts of presence, we are called to bring the light of God's mercy into the darkest corners of the world.

#### *Becoming Wellsprings of Mercy and Hope*

As we embark on this sacred year, let us renew our commitment to being true Missionaries of Mercy, men of patience, compassion, and unwavering hope. The people we encounter must see in us the face of Christ and hear from us words that restore trust in God's love.

May this Jubilee not only deepen our own faith but also inspire a new wave of mercy in the Church, where every person, no matter their past, knows they have a home in the Father's heart. Let us go forth, as missionaries of mercy and hope, bringing to all the joy of the Gospel and the certainty that, in Christ, hope does not disappoint.

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR PILGRIM PREPARATION**

### *For the Missionaries of Mercy and their Jubilee in Rome*

One of the major elements of the Jubilee celebration is the act of pilgrimage. For Missionaries of Mercy, this pilgrimage to Rome is a profound opportunity to renew their mission and experience the grace of the Jubilee Year. Pilgrims will visit the Holy Doors of the four major basilicas (Saint Peter's, Saint Paul Outside the Walls, Saint Mary Major, and Saint John Lateran), participate in the official Jubilee rites, and deepen their identity as ministers of God's mercy.



## Before Departure: Spiritual and Practical Preparation

### ● Deepen Your Missionary Identity

- Reflect on the call to be a Missionary of Mercy by revisiting *Misericordiae Vultus* and *Miserando atque Eligendo*.
- Engage in a personal retreat or days of recollection centered on mercy, forgiveness, and the role of a missionary priest.
- Seek the sacrament of reconciliation and spend time in Eucharistic adoration to spiritually prepare.

### ● Engage in Community Preparation

- Gather with fellow Missionaries of Mercy to pray and discuss expectations for the Jubilee.
- Read and meditate on the works of St. John Paul II (*Dives in Misericordia*) and Pope Francis (*Evangelii Gaudium*) on the theme of mercy.
- Offer a series of catechesis or homilies on the meaning of pilgrimage and the Jubilee to prepare spiritually and share insights with others.

### ● Health and Well-being

- Rome can be crowded and requires extensive walking; pack comfortable shoes and lightweight, breathable clerical clothing.
- Carry any necessary medications and familiarize yourself with basic health precautions, especially in warm or crowded conditions.
- Stay hydrated and be mindful of the physical demands of pilgrimage.

## During the Pilgrimage: Entering the Jubilee Experience

### ● Participate Fully in the Jubilee Rites

- Walk the traditional pilgrimage route to the Holy Doors, entering with a spirit of conversion and renewal.
- Take part in the penitential services and opportunities for confession.
- Participate in the major celebrations, including the Papal Mass and gatherings specifically for the Missionaries of Mercy.

### ● Engage in Pilgrimage with a Missionary Heart

- Be available to hear confessions, offering the sacrament of reconciliation to fellow pilgrims as an act of mercy.
- Meet and exchange experiences with other Missionaries of Mercy from around the world to strengthen fraternity and support.
- Seek moments of silence and personal prayer amid the busy schedule to reflect on how God is working through this experience.

### ● Encounter the Church in Rome

- Beyond the Jubilee events, take time to visit key sites of Christian pilgrimage in Rome, such as the tombs of the apostles and the Catacombs.
- Participate in Vespers or Mass at a religious community known for its work in mercy, such as the Missionaries of Charity or Sant' Egidio Community.



## Returning Home: Living the Fruits of the Jubilee

### ● Reflect and Share the Grace of the Pilgrimage

- Take time for theological reflection on the experiences of Rome and how they have deepened your calling as a Missionary of Mercy.
- Gather with fellow pilgrims or local clergy to discuss insights and lessons learned.
- Write a personal reflection or offer a homily on the impact of the Jubilee pilgrimage on your ministry.

### ● Continue the Mission of Mercy

- Renew pastoral initiatives in your diocese, especially in outreach to the marginalized, the poor, and those in need of reconciliation.
- Encourage and mentor other priests in the charism of mercy, sharing experiences from the Jubilee.
- Organize local pilgrimages to your diocesan cathedral to extend the Jubilee graces to those unable to travel to Rome.

### ● Stay Connected with the Global Missionaries of Mercy Community

- Maintain relationships formed in Rome through communication and ongoing formation opportunities.
- Be attentive to any follow-up initiatives from the Vatican for the Missionaries of Mercy.
- Continue to deepen your spiritual life and missionary zeal through prayer, study, and pastoral action.

As Missionaries of Mercy, this pilgrimage to Rome for the Jubilee is not only a personal renewal but a recommitment to the Church's mission of mercy in the world. Let this sacred journey strengthen our witness and zeal in proclaiming the boundless mercy of God.

## Official Program for the Jubilee of the Missionaries of Mercy (March 28-30, 2025)

### Friday March 28th

- 9:00 AM: Opening Prayer
- 9:30 AM - 10:00 AM: Training Session 1  
*Location: Paul VI Audience Hall*
- 10:30 AM: Coffee Break
- 11:00 AM - 11:30 AM: Training Session 2  
*Location: Paul VI Audience Hall*
- 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM: "24 Hours for the Lord" Celebration  
*Location: Jubilee Churches (language groups)*

### Saturday, March 29th

- 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM: Pilgrimage to the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica
- 12:00 PM: Meeting with the Holy Father  
*Location: Paul VI Audience Hall*

### Sunday, March 30th

- 10:00 AM: Holy Mass
- 6:00 PM: Symphonic Concert – "Missa Papae Francisci"  
*Location: Church of Sant'Ignazio*



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & DOCUMENTS

### Key Papal and Vatican Documents on Mercy and Mission

- **[Misericordiae Vultus \(The Face of Mercy\)](#), Pope Francis (2015)**: The official papal bull that proclaimed the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy in 2015-2016, which laid the theological and pastoral foundation for the role of Missionaries of Mercy.
- **[Misericordia et Misera](#), Pope Francis (2016)**: An apostolic letter issued at the conclusion of the Jubilee of Mercy, in which Pope Francis extended the mission of the Missionaries of Mercy beyond the Holy Year.
- **[Evangelii Gaudium \(The Joy of the Gospel\)](#), Pope Francis (2013)**: A foundational apostolic exhortation on the missionary transformation of the Church, which highlights mercy as the heart of evangelization.
- **[Dives in Misericordia \(Rich in Mercy\)](#), St. John Paul II (1980)**: An encyclical letter on divine mercy, deeply influential on the Church's understanding of mercy in pastoral ministry.

### USCCB Resources on Mercy and Evangelization

- **[Preaching the Mystery of Faith: The Sunday Homily](#), United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2013)**: A USCCB document that provides guidance on effective preaching, with a focus on making the message of God's mercy tangible for the faithful.
- **[Go and Make Disciples: A National Plan and Strategy for Catholic Evangelization in the United States](#), United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2002)**: A key pastoral document on the mission of evangelization in the United States, emphasizing the call to witness through mercy and reconciliation.

- **[Missionary Disciples Going Forth with Joy: National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministry](#)**: A key document approved by U.S. bishops to strengthen ministries among Hispanic Catholics over the next ten years. It emphasizes evangelization, community building, and the integration of Hispanic cultural contributions within the Catholic Church in the United States, a useful resource for the missionaries of mercy.
- **[USCCB Evangelization and Catechesis Web Page](#)**: A hub of resources related to evangelization, catechesis, and the missionary call of all disciples, with special attention to missionary discipleship and pastoral outreach.

### Key Collaborating Organizations and Formation Resources

- **[Dicastery for Evangelization \(Section for Fundamental Questions regarding Evangelization in the World\)](#)**: The Dicastery serves the work of evangelization, so that Christ, the light of the nations, may be known and witnessed to by word and deed, and the Church, his mystical Body, may be built up. The Dicastery is competent for fundamental questions regarding evangelization and oversees the Missionaries of Mercy.
- **[Catholic Apostolate Center](#)**: A key partner of the USCCB that offers resources, webinars, and formation materials related to missionary discipleship and the spiritual life of clergy.
- **[Institute for Priestly Formation \(IPF\)](#)**: A resource for spiritual renewal and deepening the interior life of priests, with retreats and programs focused on pastoral mercy.



## KEY SAINTS

### Saints Who Inspire the Missionaries of Mercy

The Missionaries of Mercy are called to be living witnesses of God's boundless mercy. Throughout history, the Church has been blessed with saints whose lives exemplify compassion, forgiveness, and evangelization. These holy men and women serve as models and intercessors for those entrusted with the ministry of mercy.

### Saints of Divine Mercy and Confession

- **St. Faustina Kowalska (1905–1938, feast day October 5)** – The Apostle of Divine Mercy, who received the revelations of Jesus recorded in her Diary, inspiring the devotion to the Divine Mercy.
- **St. John Vianney (1786–1859, feast day August 4)** – The Curé of Ars, known for spending countless hours in the confessional, leading souls to reconciliation with God.
- **St. Leopold Mandic (1866–1942, feast day May 12)** – A Capuchin friar dedicated to the sacrament of reconciliation, renowned for his gentle and compassionate approach to penitents.

### Missionary Saints of Mercy

- **St. Francis Xavier (1506–1552, feast day December 3)** – A tireless Jesuit missionary who brought the Gospel to Asia, embodying mercy through evangelization and service.
- **St. Damien of Molokai (1840–1889, feast day May 10)** – The priest who ministered to lepers in Hawaii, offering them dignity and the love of Christ.
- **St. Teresa of Calcutta (1910–1997, feast day September 5)** – Founder of the Missionaries of Charity, who saw the face of Christ in the poor and abandoned.

### Saints Who Lived Through Service to the Poor

- **St. Vincent de Paul (1581–1660, feast day September 27)** – A champion of charity, serving the poor and inspiring generations to works of mercy.
- **St. Peter Claver (1580–1654, feast day September 9)** – Ministered to enslaved people in Colombia, offering them the love of Christ through care and baptism.
- **St. Josephine Bakhita (1869–1947, feast day February 8)** – A former slave who became a religious sister, offering witness to forgiveness and God's healing mercy.

### Saints of Reconciliation and Peacemaking

- **St. Charles Borromeo (1538–1584, feast day November 4)** – A reformer who emphasized the importance of confession and spiritual renewal in his diocese.
- **St. Maximilian Kolbe (1894–1941, feast day August 14)** – A Franciscan priest who offered his life in Auschwitz, embodying the mercy of Christ in self-sacrifice.
- **St. Oscar Romero (1917–1980, feast day March 24)** – A voice for justice and peace in El Salvador, calling for mercy and reconciliation in a time of conflict.

### American Saints of Mercy

- **Blessed Solanus Casey (1870–1957, feast day July 30)** – A humble Capuchin friar known for his healing ministry and compassion for the poor.
- **St. Junípero Serra (1713–1784, feast day July 1)** – A missionary priest who brought the Gospel to California, advocating for indigenous peoples.
- **Blessed Michael McGivney (1852–1890, feast day August 13)** – Founder of the Knights of Columbus, dedicated to charity, unity, and mercy in service to the Church and the poor.



These saints remind Missionaries of Mercy that their work is deeply rooted in the mission of the Church, to bring the love, forgiveness, and healing of Christ to all. May their intercession strengthen the Missionaries in their Jubilee pilgrimage and beyond.

## PRAYERS

*Prayers for the Missionaries of Mercy*

### **Prayer of Consecration for the Missionaries of Mercy**

*Lord Jesus Christ, You have called us to be Missionaries of Your Divine Mercy, to be living signs of the Father's love and compassion. As we embark on this holy pilgrimage, we consecrate ourselves anew to Your Sacred Heart. Fill us with the fire of Your Spirit, that we may proclaim Your mercy to all people. Make our words gentle, our hearts humble, and our hands instruments of healing. Let us be fearless in offering reconciliation, steadfast in our mission, and always anchored in the grace of Your divine mercy. May we, like St. John Vianney, be tireless in the confessional, like St. Faustina, be apostles of Your merciful love, and like St. Damien, embrace the abandoned with Your tender care. We ask this through the intercession of Mary, Mother of Mercy. Amen.*

### **Litany of Mercy for Missionaries**

Lord Jesus Christ, sent to heal the brokenhearted,  
*R. Lord, have mercy on us.*  
Christ Jesus, Who forgave sinners and welcomed them home,  
*R. Lord, have mercy on us.*  
Holy Spirit, fire of love and mercy,  
*R. Lord, have mercy on us.*  
God the Father, rich in compassion,  
*R. Lord, have mercy on us.*  
For priests struggling in their ministry,  
*R. Lord, have mercy on us.*

For all who seek reconciliation and peace,  
*R. Lord, have mercy on us.*

For those burdened by sin and despair,  
*R. Lord, have mercy on us.*

For the sick and the dying in need of Your mercy,  
*R. Lord, have mercy on us.*

For all Missionaries of Mercy, that they may be faithful witnesses,  
*R. Lord, have mercy on us.*

Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world,  
*R. Lord, have mercy on us.*

Lamb of God, Who opens wide the doors of mercy,  
*R. Have mercy on us.*

Lamb of God, Who sends forth laborers into the harvest,  
*R. Grant us Your peace.*

Let us pray:

O God, You sent Your Son to bring mercy and salvation to the world. Strengthen Your Missionaries of Mercy to be channels of Your compassion and forgiveness. May they, like Christ, seek the lost, heal the wounded, and proclaim the joy of reconciliation. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **Prayer for Priests by St. Thérèse of Lisieux**

*O Jesus, I pray for your faithful and fervent priests;  
for your unfaithful and tepid priests;  
for your priests laboring at home  
or abroad in distant mission fields.  
for your tempted priests;  
for your lonely and desolate priest  
for your young priests;  
for your dying priests;  
for the souls of your priests in Purgatory.  
But above all, I recommend to you  
the priests dearest to me:  
the priest who baptized me;  
the priests who absolved me from my sins;  
the priests at whose Masses I assisted*



*and who gave me  
Your Body and Blood in Holy Communion;  
the priests who taught and instructed me;  
all the priests to whom I am indebted  
in any other way (especially ...).  
O Jesus, keep them all close to your heart,  
and bless them abundantly in time and in eternity.  
Amen.*

### **Prayer for Priests**

*O Jesus, Eternal Priest, keep Thy priests  
within the shelter of Thy Sacred Heart,  
where none may touch them.  
Keep unstained their anointed hands,  
which daily touch Thy Sacred Body.  
Keep unsullied their lips,  
daily purpled with Thy Precious Blood.  
Keep pure and unworldly their hearts,  
sealed with the sublime mark of the priesthood.  
Let Thy Holy Love surround them  
from the world's contagion.  
Bless their labors with abundant fruit,  
and may the souls to whom they minister  
be their joy and consolation here  
and their everlasting crown hereafter.  
Mary, Queen of the Clergy, pray for us:  
obtain for us numerous and holy priests. Amen.*

### **A Prayer for Priests by John Cardinal O'Connor**

*O loving Mother Mary, Mother of Priests, take to  
your heart your sons who are close to you because  
of their priestly ordination and because of the  
power which they have received to carry on the  
work of Christ in a world which needs them so  
much. Be their comfort, be their joy, be their  
strength, and especially help them to live and to  
defend the ideals of consecrated celibacy.  
Lord Jesus, we your people pray to You for our  
priests. You have given them to us for OUR needs.  
We pray for them in their needs.*

*We know that You have made them priests in the  
likeness of your own priesthood. You have  
consecrated them, set them aside, anointed them,  
filled them with the Holy Spirit, appointed them to  
teach, to preach, to minister, to console, to forgive,  
and to feed us with Your Body and Blood.*

*Yet we know, too, that they are one with us and  
share our human weaknesses. We know too that  
they are tempted to sin and discouragement as are  
we, needing to be ministered to, as do we, to be  
consoled and forgiven, as do we. Indeed, we thank  
You for choosing them from among us, so that  
they understand us as we understand them, suffer  
with us and rejoice with us, worry with us and trust  
with us, share our beings, our lives, our faith.*

*We ask that You give them this day the gift You  
gave Your chosen ones on the way to Emmaus:  
Your presence in their hearts, Your holiness in  
their souls, Your joy in their spirits. And let them  
see You face to face in the breaking of the  
Eucharistic bread.*

*We pray to You, O Lord, through Mary the mother  
of all priests, for Your priests and for ours. Amen.*

### **Prayers before Hearing Confessions**

#### **Prayer for Humility and Guidance**

*Lord Jesus,  
You who are the source of all mercy,  
help me to listen with a heart of love  
and compassion.  
Grant me the humility  
to reflect Your mercy,  
and the wisdom to guide each soul  
according to Your will.  
May Your grace flow through me,  
so that all who come seeking forgiveness  
may experience Your loving embrace.  
Amen.*





### **Prayer for the Grace to Forgive**

*Heavenly Father,  
I stand before You as a humble servant,  
asking for Your grace  
to guide my words and actions  
as I minister in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.  
Grant me the grace  
to be a true instrument of Your forgiveness,  
that all who come seeking absolution  
may feel Your mercy in their hearts.  
May Your Holy Spirit lead me,  
so I may reflect Your boundless love and healing.  
Amen.*

### **Prayer for Strength and Sensitivity**

*Lord of Mercy,  
I approach this holy sacrament  
with reverence and love.  
Strengthen me in my weakness,  
and give me the sensitivity to understand  
the struggles of those who come before me.  
Help me to speak Your words of healing  
and to listen with a compassionate heart.  
May I be a vessel of Your mercy,  
reflecting Your patience and understanding,  
so that those who seek Your forgiveness  
may find peace.  
Amen.*

### **Prayer for an Open Heart**

*Lord Jesus,  
I place myself before You in humility,  
asking for an open heart  
as I listen to the confessions of Your people.  
Fill me with Your Holy Spirit,  
that I may understand  
the deepest needs of each soul  
and offer Your mercy  
with gentleness and truth.  
Let my words be instruments of healing,  
so that all who confess  
may encounter Your love and forgiveness.  
Amen.*

### **Prayer for Strength in Ministry**

*Gracious God,  
Bless me with the strength and clarity I need  
as I prepare to hear confessions.  
May Your love be reflected in my actions and  
words, so that those who seek Your forgiveness  
may feel welcomed, understood, and healed.  
Grant me the grace to be both firm and gentle,  
so I can offer Your mercy  
without hesitation or judgment.  
I entrust this ministry to You, O Lord,  
and pray that through me, Your mercy  
will touch the hearts of many.  
Amen.*

