



United States
Conference of
Catholic Bishops

Pilgrims on the Way of Beauty: A Resource for the Jubilee for Artists

Jubilee 2025: Pilgrims of Hope

United States Conference of
Catholic Bishops

Jubilee for Artists: Resource Packet

February 16-18, 2025

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

Jubilee 2025 invites you to be a pilgrim of hope. For Christians, hope is anchored in the encounter with Jesus whose life, death, and resurrection reveals God's transforming love. Our hope in God is renewed constantly in the gift of the Holy Spirit, the love of the Father and the Son, who is given, even now, to the community of believers.

The Holy See has designated various Jubilee Days throughout 2025 to welcome and celebrate different groups of people and various ministries in the Church. One of these Jubilee Days invites artists, and those who support and nurture artists, to a renewed hope in God. By making a Jubilee pilgrimage of hope you give thanks to God for your vocation as an artist and join in celebrating the many creative gifts that artists have

given to the Church and to the world. This is a graced opportunity to join with artists of every race, language, and culture to discover or re-discover your vocation to beauty that renews the world with the gift of hope.



The Jubilee for Artists will be held from Sunday, February 16, to Tuesday, February 18, 2025. Individual artists and groups of artists are invited to journey on the "way of beauty," the *via pulchritudinis*, to encounter Jesus Christ, "the image (icon) of the invisible God" (Col 1:15). Jesus is the sure foundation of Christian hope, the one who reveals God's love to all people.

This resource is offered to artists as well as those who support and inspire artists. It is also offered to anyone who finds in the arts a place where personal inspiration, joy, and hope abound. Anyone who is led to encounter God through beauty, expressed in the arts and crafts across cultures, is welcome to explore this resource in preparation for the Jubilee for Artists. These reflections and resources can be used and/or adapted by dioceses, eparchies, parishes, schools, campuses, apostolates, and lay movements. Organizations dedicated to the arts and artists or individuals may use it to plan local



pre- and post-pilgrimage celebrations to mark the Jubilee for Artists. And it may serve as a catalyst or inspiration for the creation and development of year-round resources for individuals or communities of artists.

For artists or organizations of artists who plan to make a pilgrimage to Rome or to a particular Jubilee celebration within the United States during 2025, this resource can serve as an aid in the preparation and experience of that pilgrimage. Additional resources for the Jubilee for Artists and other Jubilee celebrations can be found online at the USCCB Jubilee Year web pages: available in English at <https://www.usccb.org/committees/jubilee-2025> and available in Spanish at <https://www.usccb.org/es/committees/jubileo-2025>.

SPIRITUAL REFLECTION

In preparation for the Jubilee for Artists, set within a year-long renewal of Christian hope, we recall the words of St. John Paul II in his *Letter to Artists* (LA):

Artists of every age, captivated by the hidden power of sounds and words, colors and shapes, you have admired the work of your inspiration, sensing in it some echo of the mystery of creation with which God, the sole creator of all things, has wished in some way to associate you. (Letter to Artists, no. 1).

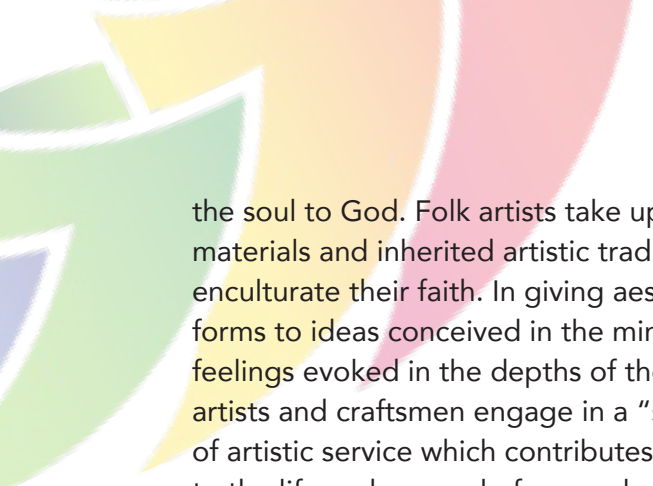
God is the divine artist. The beauty of the natural world, the beauty of artistic works made by human hands, and the beauty of each human life finds its source in God, the divine artist. And it is God who gives to artists—poets, writers, painters, sculptors, architects, musicians, actors, craftsmen and many others—a special vocation to beauty in the gift of artistic creativity.

The work of artists is invaluable for society and for the Church since artistic creativity is an act of hope. A creative person can be a powerful agent of hope in the world. To encounter and to be transformed by art on the “way of beauty” guides one to the path of hope. For as St. Paul VI once said, “this world in which we live needs beauty in order not to sink into despair. It is beauty, like truth, which brings joy to the human heart and is that precious fruit which resists the wear and tear of time, which unites generations and makes them share things in admiration. And all of this is through your hands.” (*Message to Artists*, Sistine Chapel, 1964). Similarly, Pope Francis notes that, “artists remind us that the dimension in which we move, even unconsciously, is always that of the Spirit. Your art is like a sail swelling with the wind of the Spirit and propelling us forward.” (*Address to Artists*, June 23, 2023)

Human beings are created with the unique capacity to create and to enjoy works of art. We delight in the order, harmony, and radiant beauty of the natural world, in masterpieces of artistic creativity, or the beauty of each human person, made in God’s image and likeness. We alone are created for beauty that stills the soul and enlightens hope in each human heart.

Artists imitate the creator God, the divine artist, in creating artistic works that give hope by lifting the spirit to transcendent realities. “The creativity of the artist” says Pope Francis, “can thus be said to share in God’s own passion for creation. You are sharers in God’s dream!” While God creates out of nothing, *ex nihilo*, the artist is privileged to imitate God, the creator of all that exists. By taking up words, sounds, paint, stone, marble, and glass the artist and the craftsman creates works of beauty capable of lifting





the soul to God. Folk artists take up local materials and inherited artistic traditions to enculturate their faith. In giving aesthetic forms to ideas conceived in the mind and feelings evoked in the depths of the heart, artists and craftsmen engage in a “spirituality of artistic service which contributes in its way to the life and renewal of a people.” (LA, no. 4).

In his *Address to Artists* (2023) Pope Francis noted that, “As artists, you can help us to make room for the Spirit. When we see the work of the Spirit, which creates harmony from differences without destroying or standardizing them but bringing them into harmony, we come to understand what beauty really is. Beauty is that work of the Spirit which creates harmony.”

Pope Francis also reminded artists that “Neither art nor faith can leave things simply as they are: they change, transform, move and convert them.” And he encouraged them by saying, “I consider you allies in so many things that are dear to me, like the defense of human life, social justice, concern for the poor, care for our common home, universal human fraternity.”

The Jubilee for Artists is a special opportunity for artists from diverse communities and cultures to discover or re-discover a common “spirituality of artistic service” that you offer to your community, society, and the Church. As St. John Paul II prayed, “may your art help to affirm that true beauty, which as a glimmer of the Spirit of God, will transfigure matter, and open the human soul to the sense of the eternal.” (LA, no. 16)

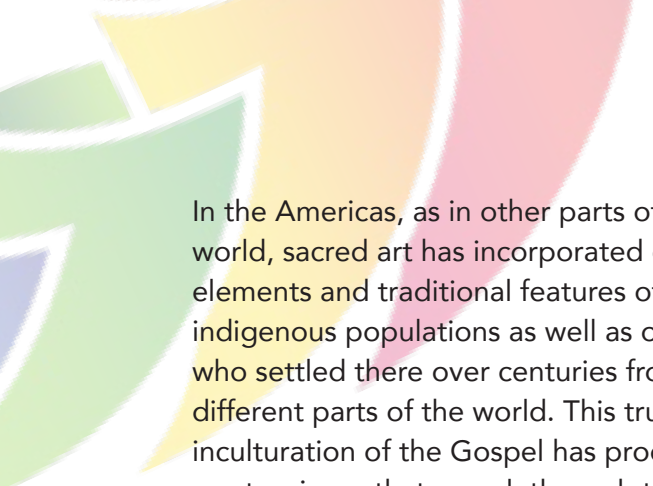
Over two thousand years, the Christian faith has found artistic expression in a vast treasury of artistic masterpieces. For centuries, the Catholic Church was the principal patron of the arts, a cultural role that is greatly diminished today. We know

from history that many of the world’s most admired and treasured artistic masterpieces, including enculturated forms of folk art, are Christian in theme, origin, provenance, and location. Recall, for instance, the biblical frescoes of the ancient Roman catacombs or Giotto’s *Madonna and Child*, Fra Angelico’s *Annunciation* or Michelangelo’s *Piéta*, Leonardo da Vinci’s *Last Supper* or Caravaggio’s *Incredulity of St. Thomas*, Juan de Juanes’ *Last Supper* or Henry Ossawa Tanner’s *Annunciation*, to name only a few celebrated masterpieces.

It is a historical fact that there has never been a time when sacred art has not flourished in the Catholic tradition. From the ancient art of the Christian catacombs to majestic Byzantine basilicas, from the surging Gothic cathedrals of the Middle Ages to the creative flood of the Renaissance, and from the mysticism of the Baroque down to the present day, the truth and goodness of Christian faith has taken the form of the beautiful in an immense treasury of masterpieces of art. This vast treasury of art opens to transcendence and becomes a permanent witness to faith within the evangelizing mission of the Church. As the *Directory for Catechesis* notes, “the way of evangelization is the way of beauty, and therefore every form of beauty is a source of catechesis.” (DC, no. 109)

Pilgrims to Europe and the eternal city of Rome encounter many of these artistic masterpieces in churches and chapels that are privileged storehouses of the beauty of Christian faith. As millions of visitors marvel at masterpieces of sacred art in these pilgrim places their encounters with beauty can serve as a “pre-sacrament” that prepares the soil of the heart and mind for God. For as Pope Francis notes, “every expression of true beauty can thus be acknowledged as a path leading to an encounter with the Lord Jesus.” (Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 167).





In the Americas, as in other parts of the world, sacred art has incorporated cultural elements and traditional features of local indigenous populations as well as of those who settled there over centuries from different parts of the world. This true inculturation of the Gospel has produced masterpieces that reveal, through the genius of local artists, the intimate relationship between art and beauty, faith and culture. Moving musical compositions, tapestries, stained glass, wood carving, church construction and design, sacred images for veneration, and many other forms of artistic expressions, reveal the genius of the Creator through the creativity and skilled craftsmanship of local artists and artisans.

Quoting from the Second Vatican Council's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the Catholic Bishops of the United States stated in *Keeping Christ's Sacred Promise* (USCCB, 2024) that, "the Church has not adopted any particular style of art as her very own; she has admitted styles from every period according to the natural talents and circumstances of peoples, and the needs of the various rites. Thus, in the course of the centuries, she has brought into being a treasury of art which must be very carefully preserved." And also, "The art of our own days, coming from every race and region, shall also be given free scope in the Church, provided that it adorns the sacred buildings and holy rites with due reverence and honor; thereby it is enabled to contribute its own voice to that wonderful chorus of praise in honor of the Catholic faith sung by great men in times gone by." (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 123)

Down the centuries, the Church's heritage of sacred music has evoked the transcendent and evangelizing power of art. Renowned

classical composers, such as Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, and Vivaldi, among many others, dedicated their creative talents to composing sacred music for the liturgy in sung Masses, oratorios, and hymns. The beauty of this accumulated heritage of sacred music lifts the soul in praise and worship of God through the transforming power of sound. As the Second Vatican Council noted, "The musical tradition of the universal Church is a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of any other art. The main reason for this pre-eminence is that, as sacred song is united to words, it forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy." (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 112)

The Jubilee for Artists is a graced opportunity when individual artists and communities of artists can travel the Church's historic and treasured path of beauty that leads to a renewed encounter with the Lord Jesus. Coming together as pilgrims in prayer and reflection on one's vocation to beauty, artists can deepen awareness of the gift of artistic talent and the responsibility to place one's artistic talent at the service of the human community that longs for peace and hope. For as Pope Benedict XVI noted:

Artists are the custodians of beauty: thanks to your talent, you have the opportunity to speak to the heart of humanity, to touch individual and collective sensibilities, to call forth dreams and hopes, to broaden the horizons of knowledge and of human engagement. Be grateful, then, for the gifts you have received and be fully conscious of your great responsibility to communicate beauty, to communicate in and through beauty! Through your art, you yourselves are to be heralds and witnesses of hope for humanity! (Address to Artists, 2009).



The Jubilee for Artists also offers an opportunity to draw close to the Blessed Virgin Mary who is praised in an ancient hymn as *tota pulchra es Maria*, “you are the most beautiful, Mary.” The Mother of God, Mary, is the most beautiful of all creatures since God preserved her from the stain of Original Sin. Mary’s beauty radiated from her faith in God’s word, her “yes” to God’s plan revealed by the Archangel Gabriel at the Annunciation, and her witness to discipleship that hears and lives God’s word.

Finally, while not all are called and gifted with artistic talents, Scripture reminds us that “all men and women are entrusted with the task of crafting their own life: in a certain sense, they are to make of it a work of art, a masterpiece.” (St. John Paul II, *Letter to Artists*, no. 2). The Jubilee for Artists is an opportunity for all the faithful to join with artists for a renewed encounter with Jesus Christ as pilgrims on the “way of beauty.”

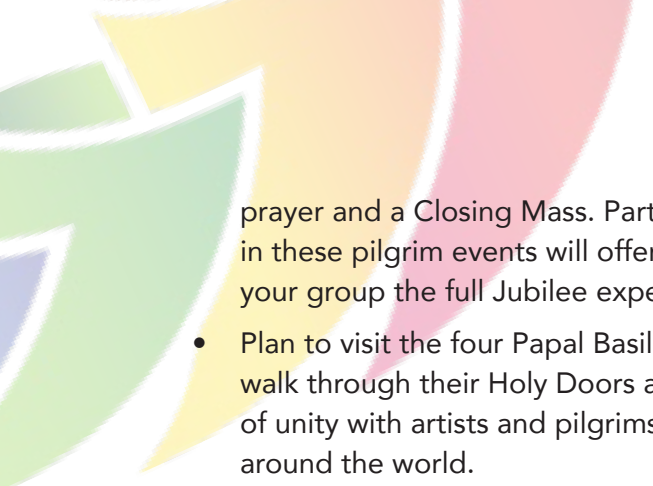
SUGGESTIONS FOR PILGRIM PREPARATION - ROME

One major element of the Jubilee celebrations for Catholics is making pilgrimage. For some, that may involve traveling to Rome, where pilgrims from around the world traditionally visit the Holy Doors of the four Papal Basilicas (St. Peter, St. John Lateran, St. Mary Major, and St. Paul Outside the Walls). At the beginning of the Jubilee 2025, the pope will enter these papal churches through their Holy Doors which will remain open throughout the Jubilee year. For others, local Jubilee pilgrimages can be made to diocesan or eparchial cathedrals, churches, and/or shrines and religious sites.

If you, your parish or ministry group, or artist’s organization or community are planning a pilgrimage to Rome for the Jubilee for Artists (February 16-18, 2025), the following suggestions may help your planning:

- In the weeks and months before the pilgrimage take the time, individually or as a group, to prayerfully read and discuss one or more of the Church’s reflections on the vocation of artists and the place of beauty in the spiritual life and in the evangelizing mission of the Church. Recommended reading would include St. John Paul II’s *Letter to Artists*.
- In the weeks and months before the pilgrimage prepare yourself spiritually as individuals or as a group through liturgies, retreats, devotions, catechesis, and fundraising activities, as is possible. Dedicate times of Eucharistic Adoration for the intention of your pilgrimage. Learn the Jubilee Hymn as a group ([Hymn for the 2025 Jubilee \(iubilaeum2025.va\)](https://iubilaeum2025.va)).
- Download the official app of the Jubilee 2025 - **iubilaeum25**
- Get a free Pilgrim’s Card (see [Pilgrim’s Card \(iubilaeum2025.va\)](https://iubilaeum2025.va)). In addition, you may wish to purchase a Pilgrim’s Services Card that provides discounts on transport, accommodation, and catering. This card will also offer reduced ticket prices for museums, cultural events, and city transport in Rome.
- Official Jubilee events for the Jubilee for Artists include an Opening Mass, Jubilee rites in walking through Holy Doors, and moments of recollection,





prayer and a Closing Mass. Participating in these pilgrim events will offer you and your group the full Jubilee experience.

- Plan to visit the four Papal Basilicas to walk through their Holy Doors as a sign of unity with artists and pilgrims from around the world.
- In addition, plan to make the traditional pilgrimage of “Seven Churches,” originally created by St. Philip Neri in the 16th century. This is one of the oldest Roman pilgrim traditions and involves visiting seven churches that span the entire city as well as the Roman countryside, the Roman Catacombs, and some magnificent awe inspiring Roman basilicas. (for the list of churches see [The Seven Churches Pilgrimage \(iubilaeum2025.va\)](http://TheSevenChurchesPilgrimage(iubilaeum2025.va)).)
- Individual artists and groups of artists may also wish to experience the artistic treasures of Rome and other Italian cities. A tour of the Vatican Museums and other special artistic treasures of Rome, such as the Scavi Tour, may be of interest to your pilgrim group. Such activities may be planned and hosted by organizations, apostolates, episcopal conferences or lay movements.
- You may create your own pilgrimage itinerary or go through a licensed tour operator that specializes or has experience in pilgrimage travel. The latter option may cost extra, but it can save time. In addition, pilgrimage operators typically have existing connections with local vendors and may have recommendations on travel concerns. PLEASE NOTE: The USCCB does not endorse nor identify any licensed tour operator as the official U.S. tour operator.

- Pilgrims are encouraged to bring sturdy backpacks, comfortable shoes, appropriate clothing for February, necessary medications and supplies, and resources that aid in pilgrim prayer. Packing light is essential.
- After returning home, take time for prayer and theological reflection, individually and as a group, to recognize and to thank God for the graces of God received during the pilgrimage to Rome. If you were part of a group pilgrimage, continue to gather in the weeks and months following the trip to support one another and coordinate missionary actions and initiatives inspired by your pilgrimage experience.

SUGGESTIONS FOR LOCAL CELEBRATIONS OF JUBILEE FOR ARTISTS

It is highly recommended to make pilgrimage to one’s own diocesan or eparchial cathedral or other church(es), shrine(s), or religious site(s) designated by the bishop or eparch.

- A local pilgrimage can be planned to take place at any time of year, or to coincide with the Jubilee for Artists in Rome (February 16–18, 2025). The timing of the local celebration, as well as the local destination(s), is at the discretion of the diocese or local organizer(s).
- Communicate with the location in advance, especially if you are organizing a group pilgrimage. This will ensure that your pilgrimage does not overlap with liturgical or local community events and takes place within the hours of operation for the site. Create a smaller group of volunteers to organize various details in the planning of a group pilgrimage.



- In the weeks and months before the pilgrimage take time, individually or as a group, to prayerfully read and discuss one or more of the Church's reflections on the vocation of artists and the place of beauty in the spiritual life and in the evangelizing mission of the Church. Recommended reading would include St. John Paul II's *Letter to Artists*.
- In the weeks and months before the pilgrimage prepare yourself spiritually as individuals or as a group through liturgies, retreats, devotions, catechesis, and fundraising activities, as is possible. Dedicate times of Eucharistic Adoration for the intention of your pilgrimage. Learn the Jubilee Hymn as a group ([Hymn for the 2025 Jubilee \(iubilaeum2025.va\)](https://www.iubilaeum2025.va)).
- Download the official app of the Jubilee 2025—**iubilaeum25**—so your group can stay up to date and remain connected to the celebrations in Rome.
- The pilgrim journey to the cathedral or other major site typically includes some walking. Consider adding a walking component, if one is not part of the pilgrimage activities. The spirituality of a physical journey from one place to another is meant to evoke the spiritual pilgrimage of interior conversion from one spiritual place to another. Prepare by inviting the faithful to complete a walking pilgrimage on a smaller scale, perhaps within or around the parish, campus, or local community.
- After returning home (even if the trip was local), take time for prayer and theological reflection on the graces of God received during the pilgrimage experience. If you went as a group, continue to gather in the weeks and months following the trip to support

one another and coordinate missionary actions and initiatives inspired by your pilgrimage experience.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CELEBRATING ARTISTS LOCALLY (SUGGESTIONS FOR PARISHES)

- Use the weekend liturgies on either February 15-16, 2025, or February 22-23, 2025, to recognize artists and artists groups in the community. Recognition can be included in the homily, general intercessions, with a special blessing, or by inviting artists to serve in key liturgical roles. An example of a petition for the Prayer of the Faithful might include:

For artists in this parish, in the wider community and in our families, and for artists who are distant from the faith, that they may rediscover the hope that Jesus brings, we pray to the Lord.

- Host a social or creative activity for artists after all weekend Masses on either February 15-16 or February 22-23. Create opportunities to share food and drink, to meet-and-mingle, and extend invitations to deeper faith engagement in the life of the parish.
- Host a Jubilee prayer service, held at the parish at some point between February 15–22, 2025, to recognize local artists, their gifts, and their contributions to society and to the Church.
- Use the Jubilee celebration as an opportunity to engage the wider parish community and parish leadership in the welcome, accompaniment, and evangelization of artists. Provide opportunities for artists to share their talents through art displays or an art festival for the parish.



- Invite artists in your parish to engage in “acts of hope” during the Jubilee Year, which can include visits with marginalized communities, evangelizing outreach to artists who are disaffiliated from the Church, and/or engagement with their families on issues of faith.
- Livestream or replay video of key Jubilee events (i.e., Opening Mass, Vigil, or Closing Mass) taking place in Rome at the Jubilee for Artists at any of the parish celebrations described above. Note the time difference between Rome and your local area.

SUGGESTIONS FOR DIOCESES & EPARCHIES

- Celebrate a liturgy or host a prayer service for artists at the diocesan/eparchial cathedral between February 15–23, 2025, concurrent with the Jubilee celebrations happening in Rome. Invite all parishes across the diocese to attend and engage artists in planning for the liturgy or prayer service.
- Hold a diocesan/eparchial Jubilee walking pilgrimage for artists from the cathedral (or another site of your choosing) to religious sites, churches, universities/schools, and/or a Catholic organization dedicated to the arts. Invite the bishop or eparch to join the community on this journey.
- Host a diocesan sacred art contest on a select spiritual theme and invite diverse cultural communities to participate for art submissions in various media. Select a well-known judge(s) for the sacred art contest and offer prizes for the contest winners. Display the submitted artistic works in a special exhibit that travels across the diocese in the Jubilee year. Engage artists in planning the art contest and art exhibits.
- Post testimonies and stories about local Catholic artists on the diocesan or eparchial website, social media channels, and communications (magazine, newspaper, newsletter, etc.) prior to and/or during the Jubilee for Artists from February 16-18, 2025.
- Host a diocesan/eparchial Jubilee gathering of artists with the bishop/eparch. This can be a guest presentation, dialogue/discussion, meet-and-greet social with art displays, meal, and/or a virtual event, allowing artists across the diocese/eparchy to engage with their episcopal shepherd.
- Encourage diocesan/eparchial offices and departments to feature, celebrate, or acknowledge artists during February 2025. A meeting with diocesan/eparchial staff helps with the coordination of efforts.
- Inaugurate a diocesan/eparchial initiative for artists beginning with the Jubilee celebrations. This could include an evangelization effort with an annual Mass for Artists with the bishop, an annual pilgrimage for artists, or an annual sacred art contest and exhibit.
- Organize pilgrimages - local, regional, or located in a different part of the country - to churches, shrines, chapels, and monasteries where sacred art of different times, traditions and cultural influences are displayed.
- Organize a concert or festival of sacred music with the inclusion of pieces from different composers, styles, epochs/times, and ethnic, cultural and liturgical traditions.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & DOCUMENTS

- Second Vatican Council, *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, nos. 112 - 130 Chapter VI on Sacred Music and Chapter VII on Sacred Art [Sacrosanctum Concilium \(vatican.va\)](http://www.vatican.va)
- *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, "Truth, Beauty and Sacred Art," nos. 2500–2502. [Catechism of the Catholic Church \(usccb.org\)](http://www.usccb.org)
- St. Paul VI, *Message to Artists*, Sistine Chapel, May 7, 1964 [Messages of the Council: To the artists \(December 8, 1965\) | St. Paul VI \(vatican.va\)](http://www.vatican.va)
- St. John Paul II, *Letter to Artists*, April 1999 [Letter to Artists, \(April 4, 1999\) | St. John Paul II \(vatican.va\)](http://www.vatican.va)
- Pope Benedict XVI, *Address to Artists*, Sistine Chapel, November 21, 2009 [Meeting with artists in the Sistine Chapel \(November 21, 2009\) | BENEDICT XVI \(vatican.va\)](http://www.vatican.va)
- Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 167. "[Evangelii Gaudium](http://www.vatican.va)": [Apostolic Exhortation on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World \(24 November 2013\) | Francis \(vatican.va\)](http://www.vatican.va)
- Pope Francis, *Address to Artists*, Sistine Chapel, June 23, 2023 [To Artists for the 50th Anniversary of the Inauguration of the Vatican Museums' Collection of Modern Art \(23 June 2023\) | Francis](http://www.vatican.va)
- Vatican Dicastery for Culture and Education, *The Via Pulchritudinis: The Way of Beauty*, 2006. [The Via Pulchritudinis, Way of Beauty \(cultura.va\)](http://www.cultura.va)
- St. John Damascus, *On the Divine Images: Three Apologies Against Those Who Attack the Divine Images*. Eighth century. [On the Divine Images: 3 Apologies Against Those Who Attack](http://www.vatican.va)

[the Divine Images \(English and Ancient Greek Edition\): John, of Damascus, Saint, Anderson, David: 9780913836620: Amazon.com: Books](http://www.vatican.va)

PARTICULAR SAINTS WHO ARE PILGRIM COMPANIONS OF ARTISTS:

- **St. Luke (feast day October 18)**, patron of artists, is believed, from legends, to have painted the first icon of the Blessed Virgin Mary. One of the four Evangelists, St. Luke paints with words his Gospel portrait of Mary's role in salvation history and God's preferential option for the poor.
- **Blessed Fra Angelico (feast day February 18)**, patron of artists, gifted Dominican friar painter known for his sublime depictions of the Trinity, Christ, biblical scenes and figures, and the lives of the saints.
- **Blessed Carlo Acutis (feast day October 12)** is known for his skill as a computer programmer and web designer, and his musical talent in playing the saxophone.
- **Venerable Zeinab Alif** (1845-1926) was kidnapped from Sudan and sold into slavery. After her ransom from slavery she became a Poor Clare nun after her ransom from slavery and was known as a gifted singer and organist.
- **St. Thomas Aquinas, (feast day January 28)**, Italian Dominican friar and Doctor of the Church. Prominent theologian and philosopher who forged a lasting synthesis between Aristotelian philosophy and biblical revelation. Among his voluminous and influential theological works is his well-known *Summa Theologica*. Also known as a composer of several beautiful hymns centered on the Eucharist.

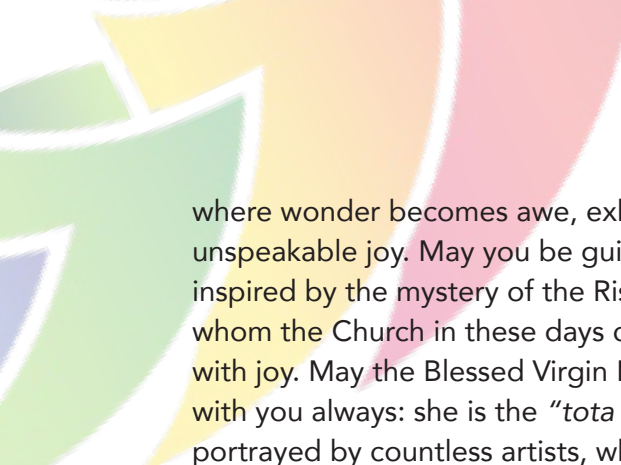


- **St. Catherine of Bologna** (feast day March 9) was an abbess of a community of Poor Clares in Italy. She was a gifted painter, poet and musician who played the viola, till the end of her life.
- **St. Cecilia (feast day November 22)**, patroness of music and musicians, and early Christian martyr known for singing to God in her heart during her arranged marriage to a pagan nobleman.
- **St. Peter Claver (feast day September 9)** was a Spanish Jesuit priest who ministered with enslaved people in Colombia. He formed a choir of Africans whose liturgical music moved the Spaniards and evangelized many people.
- **Servant of God Antonio Cuipa (d. 1704)** was an Apalachee chief who evangelized his community through music, playing the flute and the guitar along with his preaching of the Gospel.
- **St. John Damascene, (feast day December 4)**, defender of images, one of the Fathers of the Eastern Orthodox Church and a Doctor of the Church. An Arab Christian monk, composer of hymns, theologian and apologist. Best known for his treatise *On the Divine Images* whose defense against the iconoclasts of the eighth century was confirmed by the Second Council of Nicea in 787 AD.
- **St. Ephrem the Syrian (feast day June 9)** was a deacon who wrote over 400 hymns and used his hymns to evangelize and catechize the faithful.
- **St. Francis of Assisi (feast day October 4)** praised the beauty of creation in his Canticle of Creatures.
- **St. Gregory the Great (feast day September 3)**, early seventh century pope who compiled the Antiphonarium that set the stage for the development of sacred music that takes its name from him, namely Gregorian chant.
- **Blessed Ezequiel Huerta Gutiérrez** (feast day April 3) was a Mexican husband and father of 10, a gifted pianist, church organist, choir director, and classically trained tenor who was martyred in the Cristeros War.
- **St. Hildegard of Bingen (feast day September 17)**, doctor of the Church, was a German Benedictine prioress, mystic, poet, herbalist, and **celebrated composer** of hymns and antiphons for the liturgy.
- **St. Andrew Kaggwa (feast day June 3)** was martyred with St. Charles Lwanga. He was the master drummer of the king of Buganda and director of the entire royal band.
- **Blessed Volodymir Pryjma (feast day April 2)** was a Ukrainian Greek Catholic, a husband and father, and a gifted cantor and church choir director who was martyred by the Communists.
- **Servant of God Cyprien Rugamba**, husband and father of 11 children was a composer and choreographer whose artistic works highlighted Rwandan folk culture. He and his wife Daphrose were martyred in the Rwandan Genocide.
- **St. John Wang Rui (feast day July 4)** was a Chinese seminarian and martyr who is remembered for his gifted singing voice.
- **Blessed Carlos Manuel Rodriguez Santiago (feast day May 4)** was a Puerto Rican layman who was devoted to the Eucharist and played the organ at Mass.
- **King David**, composer of the psalms that constitute the Old Testament hymn book of the people of Israel. The psalms are an essential part of the public prayer of the Church in the Mass and in the Liturgy of the Hours.

CLOSING PRAYER

“Artists of the world, may your many different paths all lead to that infinite Ocean of beauty





where wonder becomes awe, exhilaration, unspeakable joy. May you be guided and inspired by the mystery of the Risen Christ, whom the Church in these days contemplates with joy. May the Blessed Virgin Mary be with you always: she is the *"tota pulchra"* portrayed by countless artists, whom Dante contemplates among the splendors of Paradise as "beauty that was joy in the eyes of all the other saints." ... May your art help to affirm that true beauty which, as a glimmer of the Spirit of God, will transfigure matter, opening the human soul to the sense of the eternal." (St. John Paul II, *Letter to Artists*, 1999)

