

Right Reverend Patrick Joseph McKinney

Bishop of Nottingham



Pastoral Letter on the Jubilee 2025

*appointed to be read at all Sunday Masses celebrated in the Diocese of Nottingham
on the Feast of the Holy Family, Saturday 28th and Sunday 29th December 2024*

**“Hope does not disappoint, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts
through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.” (St Paul, Romans 5:5)**

Hope is the central message of the Jubilee Year 2025 which today, the Feast of the Holy Family, now formally begins in our diocese and every Catholic diocese throughout the world. Our schools, presently on holiday, will have their special start to the Jubilee Year on 24th January. Pope Francis’ prayer for us all, young and not so young, is that this Jubilee Year might be a time of renewed personal encounter with Christ Jesus and an opportunity to be renewed in our Christian hope. Our Holy Father is very aware that, in these uncertain times across our world, hope feels under attack and many people feel very anxious. He encourages us to find in God’s Word reasons why our Christian hope will never deceive or disappoint us. That hope is, of course, grounded in the certainty that nothing and no-one can ever separate us from God’s love. Saint Paul can certainly testify to a life of faith that suffered many trials but in which hope endured: “We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope.” (Romans 5: 3-4)

Ordinary Jubilees now take place across the Catholic Church every twenty-five years; the previous one, in the year 2000, was to celebrate two thousand years since the birth of Jesus Christ. More recently, in 2015, Pope Francis proclaimed an extra-ordinary Jubilee of Mercy to encourage each of us to encounter the merciful face of God, and then to share that mercy with others. Throughout this Ordinary Jubilee Year 2025, Pope Francis is inviting us to open ourselves to what he calls “an intense experience of the love of God that awakens in hearts the hope of our salvation in Christ.” We are to set out on this Jubilee Year, “firm in our faith, active in charity and steadfast in hope.” He encourages us to be *Pilgrims of Hope*, putting our Christian faith into action in our relationships with those around us who are experiencing hardships: the sick, the elderly, people with disabilities, the poor, the homeless, those in prison, and migrants and refugees. He invites us to give special encouragement to the young because as he says, “they are the joy and hope of the Church and of the world.” As a practical example of hope, he asks that the more affluent countries cancel the debts of countries that will never be able to repay them.

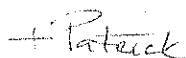
In Rome, all the Holy Doors of the Basilicas of Saint Peter, Saint John Lateran, Saint Mary Major, and Saint Paul Outside the Walls, will be opened to pilgrims as particular places of pilgrimage during the Jubilee Year; here a special indulgence may be received under the usual conditions of sacramental confession, reciting the creed and receiving Holy Communion. Many people will be unable to visit these Basilicas in Rome, so here in our diocese I have designated nine churches as Jubilee Churches, one in each deanery: the Cathedral Church of Saint Barnabas; Good Shepherd, Woodthorpe; Saint Philip Neri, Mansfield; Our Lady of Lincoln, Lincoln; Our Lady and Saint Norbert, Spalding; Saint Mary, Derby; Saint Joseph, Matlock; Holy Cross, Leicester; and Saint Mary of the Annunciation, Loughborough. The Jubilee indulgence can be received in these churches under the same conditions when people visit them on pilgrimage. My hope is that parishes across each deanery will make a special effort to journey as *Pilgrims of Hope* to the local Jubilee Church; deaneries might also like to make a collective Jubilee Pilgrimage to our diocesan Cathedral.

There is a special Jubilee Prayer which I would encourage you to pick up from church this weekend; please take two, one for yourself and one for someone you know who may not be a regular church-goer but who might appreciate receiving it. Why not agree to pray it for each other! A Jubilee hymn has been composed which, in our diocese, has been set to a well-known tune so as to encourage it to be sung throughout the year. Rather than try to do too many extra things in the course of the Jubilee Year, I suggest that what we already do be badged up as Jubilee events. For example we can speak of people 'baptised in the Jubilee Year' or 'getting married in the Jubilee Year'. Parishes might decide to have a Jubilee Summer Fete with the Jubilee logo on a special cake. Each parish, school and chaplaincy is encouraged to be as creative as it wishes in integrating the Jubilee Year into existing activities.

During Lent I will celebrate a Jubilee Deanery Station Mass in each of our Jubilee Churches. The Deans will advertise the details of these Masses where there will also be an opportunity for Confessions, Eucharistic Adoration, and to receive the Jubilee indulgence. I very much look forward to meeting many of you on these occasions. Throughout the year special days have been set aside to celebrate particular Jubilees. An impressive list of these has been put up on the diocesan website, included in the Ordo, the diocesan Liturgical Calendar, and has been distributed to parishes, schools and chaplaincies. During the Jubilee Year we will also be celebrating, on 29th September, the 175th anniversary of the creation of our diocese.

In the midst of the troubles in life that besiege us, may this Jubilee Year help us all to deepen still more our relationship with Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, whose birth we are celebrating this Christmastide. May we recognise Him more and more as our steadfast hope and firm anchor in life, and may He send us out into our wider communities to be the living signs of hope he desires us to be. So, as we set out to be *Pilgrims of Hope* this Jubilee Year, may I encourage you with these words of the Psalmist, "Hope in the Lord! Hold firm, take heart and hope in the Lord." (*Psalm 27:4*)

With prayer for the New Year, and good wishes on this special Feast of the Holy Family,



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