



# CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ROCKHAMPTON

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4 February 2025

Dear People of the Diocese of Rockhampton

On Christmas eve at St Peter's Basilica, Pope Francis opened the Holy Door at the beginning of this Jubilee year and invited all our churches to mark this year of hope.

I quote from Pope Francis:

*'the door of hope has been opened wide for the world... God speaks to us and says.' I have hope for you'*

and Pope Francis went on to say,

*'God forgives everything, God always forgives. Do not forget this, which is a way of understanding hope in the Lord.'*

The summer holidays are now complete, there is a little respite from the heat, our schools and colleges have begun the school year, our lands are being farmed and watered for abundant harvests, and we have begun 2025 with energy, now at the beginning of February.

As asked by Pope Francis for the Year of Jubilee, I invite you to make a pilgrimage to our Cathedral, St Joseph's, during 2025 and celebrate the many different Jubilees. These include:

- The Jubilees of Marriage – Sunday 16 March
- The Jubilee of the opening of our Cathedral – Wednesday 15 October
- The Jubilee of priestly and religious life – Thursday 16 October

I also encourage our individual parishes to celebrate this year through:

- the Feast Day of the Parish
- significant pastoral events
- celebration of 24 hours for the Lord – a time of reconciliation
- the Sacramental Program of our young people and inviting the parents and families to reconnect
- running programs welcoming back those who have drifted away
- frequent offering of the sacrament of Penance.

In this Jubilee year, I invite the Diocese into a time of conversion and re-centering on the person and mission of Jesus Christ and to re-engage in the hope that he has for our Church, a Church where all find a home and peace, a time of reconciliation and a time to be reconciled, moving into friendly relations and agreement.

I invite you to take up the invitation of our God, to be reconciled.

**Bishop Michael McCarthy**

Through the voice of St Paul:

*we are ambassadors for Christ; it is as though God were urging you through us, and in the name of Christ we appeal to you to be reconciled to God. (2 Cor 5:20)*

Through the apostle in the letter to the Romans:

*For I am certain of this: neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nothing already in existence and nothing still to come, nor any power, nor the heights nor the depths, nor any created thing whatever, will be able to come between us and the love of God, known to us in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rm 8:38-39)*

God reaches out to us to be reconciled and wants us to be within the love of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Pope Francis has offered a Jubilee Year Indulgence:

*The Jubilee indulgence, thanks to the power of prayer, is intended in a particular way for those have gone before us, so that they may obtain full mercy.<sup>1</sup>*

*...the indulgence is a way of discovering the unlimited nature of God's mercy ...for the ancients, the terms "mercy" and "indulgence" were inter-changeable, as expressions of the fullness of God's forgiveness, which knows no bounds.<sup>2</sup>*

The Sacrament of Penance (through the RITES of reconciliation as we confess our sins) assures us that God wipes away our sins and we become reconciled with our God, with one another, with ourselves and the whole of creation. We experience the powerful and comforting words through the Church's minister on behalf of God and the Church, 'I absolve you of your sins'.

Pope Francis calls us once again through the experience of full forgiveness "to open our hearts and minds to the need to forgive others in turn" ... "to change the future and to live different lives"<sup>3</sup> with new hope, energy and awareness, being a disciple of Jesus Christ, sharing in His mission as missionaries of His mercy to all those whose hope is sorely tested; to prisons, hospitals, places where people's dignity has been violated, and where poverty abounds. May the theological virtue of hope, which sustains us on our Christian Pilgrimage towards the eternal vision of God in heaven and is the theme of the Jubilee year of 2025, flow over us all this year.

**As part of this year of jubilee, I wish to extend a plenary indulgence to all who make a pilgrimage to our Cathedral of St Joseph during this year.**

An indulgence is the remission of the temporal punishment that accompanies our sinfulness, even after the sin itself has been forgiven. This punishment is not to be thought of as some kind of vengeance of God, but rather it is an effect that arises from the very nature of sin itself. By means of an indulgence, the Church intervenes on behalf of a Christian to dispense him or her from the temporal effects of their sin, including that time of purification after death which we call purgatory.

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<sup>1</sup> Bull of Indiction of the Ordinary Jubilee of the Year 2025, Pope Francis – Chapter 22

<sup>2</sup> Bull of Indiction of the Ordinary Jubilee of the Year 2025, Pope Francis – Chapter 23

<sup>3</sup> Bull of Indiction of the Ordinary Jubilee of the Year 2025, Pope Francis – Chapter 23

[https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/bulls/documents/20240509\\_spes-non-confundit\\_bolla-giubileo2025.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/bulls/documents/20240509_spes-non-confundit_bolla-giubileo2025.html)

In order to obtain this plenary indulgence, the following conditions must be met:

1. Make a pilgrimage to St Joseph's Cathedral during the Jubilee year; the visit to the Cathedral should include time spent there in prayer.
2. Receive the Sacrament of Penance (Confession) as close as possible to the time of the pilgrimage.
3. Receive Holy Communion as close as possible to the time of the pilgrimage.
4. Pray for the Pope's intentions; you may wish to consult the regularly updated website listing Pope Francis' prayer intentions by scanning the QR provided below.

May God's richest blessings come upon you this Jubilee Year.

Yours sincerely in Christ



Most Rev Michael McCarthy  
Bishop of Rockhampton

  
Notary

## Holy Father's Prayer Intentions 2025



### Website

<https://www.popesprayer.va/the-challenges-facing-humanity-and-assists-the-mission-of-the-church/>



### 2025 Intentions- Printable PDF

<https://www.popesprayer.va/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ENG-HOLY-FATHERS-PRAYER-INTENTIONS-2025-DEF-1.pdf>