



United States  
Conference of  
Catholic Bishops

# Pilgrims on the way of Hope: A Resource for the Jubilee of the Sick and Health Care Workers

## Jubilee 2025: Pilgrims of Hope

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## Jubilee of the Sick and Health Care Workers: Resource Packet

April 5-6, 2025

## INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

A Jubilee Year is an important and historical event in the life of the Church designed for the faithful to experience God's loving mercy in a special way. Traditionally, a Jubilee is proclaimed every twenty-five years, and the activities include pilgrimages, processions, special celebrations of Mass, and an invitation to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. This Jubilee's theme is "Pilgrims of Hope" and it begins on Christmas Eve, 2024 in Rome and concludes the following year on the Epiphany in 2026. The Jubilee's activities are meant to encourage Catholics to both receive God's mercy and invite participation in acts of mercy in our daily lives and communities. Pope Francis specifically asks us to consider working for peace and an end to conflicts, promoting human life, showing amnesty to prisoners,

upholding the dignity of migrants, healing the sick, and accompanying the elderly.

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 Sick and Health Care Workers helps us to celebrate the important service of healthcare providers and to recognize that accompanying the sick is an important vocation. Whether due to our own health or the health of a loved one, each of us has interfaced with health care workers at some point in our lives, and experienced first-hand the value of their accompaniment. Not only this, but each of us has likely also cared for a sick loved one in some capacity, and so we know how taxing it can be. As the Catholic Health Association states, "Catholic health care, [is] a ministry of the church continuing Jesus' mission of love and healing today. [This] ministry is an enduring sign of health care rooted in our belief that every person is a treasure, every life a sacred gift, every human being a unity of body, mind, and spirit" ([Statement of Shared Identity](#)). While each of us are called to continue Jesus's mission of love and healing in our own way, we recognize that the unique vocation of health care workers during this Jubilee.



Responding to the Jubilee theme, “Pilgrims of Hope,” we are called to reflect on and discover hope in the signs of the times and in the realities of our daily lives. Pope Francis instructed, “Signs of hope should also be shown to the sick, at home or in hospital. Their sufferings can be allayed by the closeness and affection of those who visit them. Works of mercy are also works of hope that give rise to immense gratitude. Gratitude should likewise be shown to all those healthcare workers who, often in precarious conditions, carry out their mission with constant care and concern for the sick and for those who are most vulnerable. ... Care given to them is a hymn to human dignity, a song of hope that calls for the choral participation of society as a whole” ([Spes non confundit](#), n.11).

The Jubilee year is an invitation to be agents of God’s mercy in our world. For those who are sick themselves or caring for someone who is ill, the mercy of God is especially important. Feeling God’s love and closeness during an uncertain time, like an illness, can provide strength and peace when the world around us feels tumultuous. The Jubilee year can bring us closer to God and deepen our experiences of God’s love and mercy.

Additional resources for the Jubilee of the Sick and Health Care Workers and other 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**

During the Jubilee of the Sick and Health Care Workers, we can all offer special prayers for those who are in need of healing. We pray they will feel God’s love with them during their

journey through the illness. We can offer prayers to experience God’s closeness – whether through their own life of prayer or through the presence of their community.

### **In Solidarity with Those Who Suffer**

*A prayer service from [Health Progress: The Journal of the Catholic Health Association of the United States, Winter 2017 Issue](#)*

#### **OPENING PRAYER**

*LEADER: It can be overwhelming when we see the amount of suffering by people throughout the world. Let us prayerfully reflect upon those who are in pain in our communities and in our world. May we find grace and strength to walk with them in their pain and to lessen their affliction when we are able.*

*READER 1: (Matthew 9:35-36)*

*Jesus went around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness. At the sight of the crowds, his heart was moved with pity for them because they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd.*

#### **Silent Reflection**

*LEADER: Let us take a moment in silent reflection, considering the reading we have heard.*

*READER 2: (Dorothy Day)*

*Love and ever more love is the only solution to every problem that comes up. If we love each other enough, we will bear with each other's faults and burdens. If we love enough, we are going to light that fire in the hearts of others. And it is love that will burn out the sins and hatreds that sadden us. It is love that will make us want to do great things for each other. No sacrifice and no suffering will then seem too much.*

*LEADER: For all who suffer from contagious disease and terminal illness.*



ALL: (from Psalm 80): *Lord, let your face shine forth, and we shall be saved.*

LEADER: *For those whose lives are threatened by lack of clean water and sustainable crops.*

ALL: *Lord, let your face shine forth, and we shall be saved.*

LEADER: *For all who live in fear, oppression and the threat of violence.*

ALL: *Lord, let your face shine forth, and we shall be saved.*

LEADER: *For all people trapped in poverty, the unemployed and those who have lost hope.*

ALL: *Lord, let your face shine forth, and we shall be saved.*

#### CLOSING PRAYER

ALL: *Loving God, May we see the plight of all those who suffer in our midst. Give us courage and compassion to live in solidarity with the suffering. May our hearts, burning with love, bear the burdens of all in our care. And may our loving example ignite the hearts of others to accompany the vulnerable in their affliction. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.*

## PARTICIPATE IN VIRTUAL PILGRIMAGE OPTIONS

One major element of the Jubilee celebration for Catholics is to make a pilgrimage. For some, that may involve going to Rome, where international pilgrims traditionally visit the Holy Doors of the four great basilicas (Saint Peter, Saint Paul Outside the Walls, Saint Mary Major, and Saint John Lateran). For most others, though, local Jubilee pilgrimages can be made to diocesan or eparchial cathedrals, churches, and/or religious sites. A pilgrimage doesn't need to be a long journey in order to be transformational.

There is even a [virtual pilgrimage](#) that was created so people from all over the world can

experience the beauty of making a pilgrimage to the sites in Rome.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR CELEBRATING THE JUBILEE LOCALLY

There are many ways to make the jubilee come alive in a local setting, and usually within existing events or structures.

#### *Suggestions for Parishes*

One easy way is to include prayers of the faithful focused on the Jubilee of the Sick and Health Care Workers on the weekend of April 5, 2025. Connect with the person who prepares the Sunday liturgies at your parish and suggest including prayers of the faithful focused on the Jubilee.

#### Sample Prayers of the Faithful:

- *For the Church, that we may continue the healing work of Jesus in our own time, and reach out with compassion to those who are sick in body, mind, or spirit:*
- *For all medical professionals, caregivers, EMTs, chaplains, and all who work in health care, that they may carry out their life-saving work with wisdom and compassion:*
- *For all who are sick, that they may have access to quality health care, regardless of their race or economic status:*
- *For those recovering from, and those struggling with addiction, that they may feel the healing presence of God.*
- *For all of us, that we may be instruments of peace, hope, and healing in our homes, our workplaces, and our communities:*



### *Suggestions for Dioceses and Eparchies*

- Contact local Catholic health care entities to offer a special Jubilee mass that honors those who are sick and health care professionals on or around the Jubilee weekend.
- An example of [Liturgy notes for hosting a Jubilee Mass for the Sick and Health Care Professionals](#) is available from the National Association of Catholic Chaplains.
- Invite the Archbishop/Bishop or presiders to offer a special blessing for all health care professionals and chaplains.

### *Suggestions for All*

- Virtually celebrate a [Jubilee Mass for the Sick and Health Care Professionals](#) with the National Association of Catholic Chaplains on Saturday, April 5, 2025.
- Virtually attend the [National Association of Catholic Chaplains' free Jubilee webinar](#) on Saturday, April 5, 2025 for an afternoon centered on pastoral care.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & DOCUMENTS**

- [The National Catholic Mental Health Campaign](#): Recognizing the toll that continued caregiving can take on the caregiver, learn more about the importance of mental health.
- [A Sign of Hope: A Pastoral Letter on Catholic Health Care](#), Joseph Cardinal Bernardin: This letter provides a theological, moral and social foundation for understanding what is distinctive about the Catholic health ministry. In it, the late Cardinal reflects on his illness and reiterates his support of the not-for-profit nature of health care delivery, asking for others to join him "in resisting efforts to make healthcare in our nation or our own ministry

merely another commodity, simply another item to be sold."

- [Resources in Recognition of Those Who Serve](#): These audio reflections offered by the Catholic Health Association provide those who serve in health care with moments of pause to contemplate their unique gifts in advancing Jesus' mission of love and healing. When used in a group, invite those in the room to extend their hands in blessing, creating a shared experience of support and affirmation. Available in English and Spanish.
- [National Nurse's Week](#): Each year from May 6-12 communities across the country recognize the invaluable work of nurses. As you work to honor health care workers in this jubilee, consider incorporating some of these in your activities. <https://www.chausa.org/nursing/national-nurses-week>
- [Inspired by the Saints](#): This collection of print and audio reflections on the lives of seven key saints for the Catholic health ministry invites users to make meaning of their work as ministry; respond to patients, co-workers and communities with greater compassion and awareness of God; and more deeply engage in [the core commitments of Catholic health care](#).

## **PRAYERS**

### Jubilee Prayer

*Father in heaven,  
may the faith you have gifted us in  
your son Jesus Christ, our brother,  
and the flame of charity  
kindled in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,  
reawaken in us, the blessed hope  
for the coming of your Kingdom.*

*May your grace transform us  
into diligent cultivators of the evangelical seeds*



*that make humanity and the cosmos rise  
unto the confident expectation  
of the new heavens and the new earth,  
when with the powers of Evil overcome,  
your glory shall be manifested eternally.*

*May the grace of the Jubilee  
reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope,  
the yearning for heavenly treasures  
and pour over all the earth  
the joy and peace of our Redeemer.  
To you God blessed in eternity,  
be praise and glory for ever and ever.*

*Amen.*

#### [A Prayer in Times of Illness](#)

*Lord Jesus, you came into the world to heal our  
infirmities and to endure our sufferings.  
You went about healing all and bringing comfort  
to those in pain and need.*

*We come before you now in this time of illness  
asking that you may be the source of our strength  
in body, courage in spirit and  
patience in pain.*

*May we join ourselves more closely to you on the  
cross and in your suffering that through them we  
may draw our patience and hope. Assist us and  
restore us to health so that united more closely to  
your family, the Church, we may give praise and  
honor to your name.*

*Amen.*

#### [A Prayer for the Sick](#)

*Dearest and gentle Jesus,  
You knew what it was to suffer, to feel pain,  
to be afraid of what may come.*

*I know that in my most difficult moments, you are  
nearer to me than my own breath, filling every  
part of me with your deep and overwhelming  
love.*

*Never allow me to forget, that your love is  
wrapped around me like a soft warm blanket,  
keeping me safe, giving me courage and comfort.*

*Lord, I ask you, watch over my loved ones and  
those who care for me.*

*Lift them up when they grow weary, or when  
patience grows thin.*

*Bless them and hold them close to your heart.  
You are with us all in this journey.*

*We are grateful.*

*Amen.*

