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## 世界主教代表會議隆重開幕典禮彌撒 教宗方濟各的講道

聖伯多祿廣場

護守天使紀念日，2024年10月2日，星期三

今天我們慶祝禮儀年曆裡的護守天使紀念日，並再次召開世界主教代表會議全體大會。在聆聽天主聖言之後，讓我們以三個意象作為思考的起點：聲音、庇護和小孩子。

首先是聲音。在前往應許之地的路上，天主勸告以色列人，要聽從祂所派遣的「使者的話」（參閱：出廿三20~22）。這個意象與我們息息相關。當我們踏上這次世界主教代表會議的旅途時，上主便把一個偉大民族的歷史、夢想和希望交在我們的手中。他們是我們散居世界各地的弟兄姊妹，被相同的信仰所感召；被相同的成聖渴望所推動。讓我們與他們一起並為了他們，努力去理解我們當行的道路，以抵達上主為我們預備的地方。但我們該如何聆聽「使者的話」呢？

其中一個方法，就是在祈禱和聖言的光照下，以尊重和關注的態度來採納這三年來蒐集到的所有貢獻。這些貢獻是經過多年的工作、分享與討論，且不斷努力淨化我們的心思意念而獲得的。在聖神的幫助下，我們必須聆聽並理解這些聲音——即各種想法、期望、建議——以便共同分辨天主對教會所說的話（參

閱：雷納托·科蒂，《哪位神父？》，未發表的筆記）。正如我們一再強調的，世界主教代表會議不是國會開議，而是在共融中彼此聆聽的場域，正如教宗大聖國瑞所說，有人自身所擁有的部分恩賜卻被他人完全擁有；儘管有些人擁有特殊的恩賜，但在「聖神的仁愛」中，一切都屬於每一個人。（參閱：教宗大聖國瑞，《福音講道》，34）

要實現這一點，需具備一個條件：為使「聖神的仁愛」在差異中創造和諧，我們必須在自己內心以及我們彼此之間，擺脫所有阻礙的因素。那些自以為只有他們才有權利聆聽上主的人，反而無法聽到祂的聲音（參閱：谷九38~39）。我們應以感恩、單純的心來領受上主所說的每一句話，讓每一句話成為天主恩待我們弟兄姊妹的回音（參閱：瑪十7~8）。我們應小心謹慎，別高估了自己的貢獻，視之為不計代價要捍衛的觀點或強加的議程。我希望我們每個人都能把自己的貢獻當作一份禮物，與他人分享，甚至願意放棄自己的觀點，全然順服於天主的計畫，給新事物煥發生命活力的機會。否則，我們終將把自己封閉在有如聾子一般的對話中，一味強推自己的主張或議題，而不聽他人的意見，尤其是不聽從上主的聲音。

我們沒有面對挑戰的解決方法，但上主有（參閱：若十四6）。我們要切記，在荒漠裡，如果你自以為是，不專心留意嚮導，你很可能會餓死或渴死，而且還拖累其他人。因此，如果想要超越我們的限度和困境，一路平安，就讓我們聆聽上主和祂使者的聲音。（參閱：詠廿三4）

這帶領我們來到下一個意象：庇護。「雙翼」是保護我們的最佳象徵：「祂以自己的羽毛掩護你，又叫你往祂的翼下逃避」（詠九一4）。雙翼健壯有力，雙翼一鼓動，就能翱翔天際。雖然雙翼力道強勁，一旦放低聚攏，就成了呵護幼雛的盾牌和溫暖的巢窩。

這象徵天主為我們所行的一切，也是我們應當效法的榜樣，尤其是在我們相聚的這些日子。親愛的弟兄姊妹，我們當中有許多精明幹練、蓄勢待發的人，他們能以深入的反思和睿智的洞見，飛升高天，這對我們來說是一個絕大的優勢，能激發我們、挑戰我們，有時甚至驅迫我們更開放地思考、更果斷地行事。即使面對挑戰和困難，也幫助我們常保信德堅定。我們必須敞開心扉，樂於對話。一顆剛愎自用、固執己見的心，不合於天主聖神，必不屬於上主。能開放自己是一項恩寵，必要時，這恩寵必須與放鬆肌肉的能力相結合——彎下腰來給彼此一個溫暖的擁抱和安全的庇護。如此一來正如聖保祿六世所言，我們將成為「弟兄姐妹的家，一個充滿活力的工作坊、一個熱誠靈修的晚餐廳。」（向義大利主教團主席委員會的致詞，1974年5月9日）

我們越能意識到圍繞身邊的都是愛我們、尊重我們、欣賞我們、願意聆聽我們心聲的朋友，我們就越能自由、自然、自在地表達自己。

這方法不僅是一種「協調」對話和團體溝通動力的技巧，世界主教代表會議設有「協調人」，幫助我們順利前行。事實上，擁抱、保護和關懷是教會本質的一部分。擁抱、保護與關懷！教會就其天賦使

命而言，是一個接納眾人的聚會場所，在這裡「全體的愛德要求完美的和諧，這和諧能引領道德力量、靈性之美和理想的表達」（同上）。和諧：這是一個非常重要的詞彙，無關乎多數和少數；卻可能是第一步。要緊的、基本的乃是和諧，和諧只能靠聖神玉成。聖神是和諧的大師，能夠在異議蜂起之際創造出一種聲音。試想聖神如何在五旬節早晨眾說紛紜之際創造和諧。教會首先要在我們心中創造「和平且開放的場所」，讓每個人都感到被接納，就像乳嬰在母親的懷裡（參閱：依四九15；六六13），也像被高舉的嬰兒，靠在父親的面頰上。（參閱：歐一一4；詠一〇三13）

這帶我們看到第三個意象：一個小孩。在福音中，耶穌「叫一個孩子來，使他站在他們中間」，展示給門徒，邀請他們轉變，變成如同小孩一樣。他們問祂天國裡誰是最大的，祂鼓勵他們要自謙自卑如同小孩一樣。不僅如此，耶穌還繼續說道，誰因祂的名字收留一個這樣的小孩，就是收留祂。（參閱：瑪十八1~5）

對我們而言，這表面上矛盾的說法是必要的。鑑於世界主教代表會議的重要性，在某種意義上，我們必須在精神、心靈、視野上努力成為「偉大」的，因為我們要處理的是「浩大」而棘手的問題，而且情況是廣泛而普遍的。但正因如此，我們絕不能忽視小孩子，因為耶穌一直把小孩置於會議和工作桌的中心，祂這樣做是為了提醒我們，唯有放下身段，屈尊就卑，謙遜地接納彼此，才能完成託付給我們的使命。教會中地位最高的人就是那最謙卑自牧的人。

正是藉著使自己變得微不足道，天主「向我們展示了什麼是真正的偉大，甚至，成為天主的意義是什麼」（教宗本篤十六世，主受洗節講道，2009年1月11日）。耶穌說小孩子的天使在天上「常見我在天之父的面」（瑪十八10），並非偶然。換句話說，他們就像天父之愛的「望遠鏡」一樣。

弟兄姊妹們，讓我們將眼光轉向世界，重新踏上共識性的歷程，因為基督信仰團體始終以為人類服務來宣揚福音的喜樂。在人類歷史上，此刻正值戰火連天、戾氣蔓延，持續摧毀著所有的民族和國家，在這問題一發不可收拾的關鍵時刻，我們有必要傳達此訊息。

為了呼求聖母瑪利亞替我們轉求，使我們獲得和平的恩賜，本主日我將前往聖母大殿誦唸玫瑰經，懇切地向童貞聖母祈求。如果可能的話，我邀請世界主教代表會議全體與會者一同前往。

翌日，即10月7日，我請大家在這一天祈禱及守齋，為世界和平祈禱。

讓我們同道偕行。讓我們聆聽上主的聲音，並讓祂以聖神的「氣息」引導我們。

（天主教會臺灣地區主教團 恭譯）

## 世界主教代表會議第十六屆常務大會第二會期

### 大公合一祈禱守夜禮

#### 教宗方濟各講道

羅馬初期殉道者廣場

2024年10月11日，星期五

「我將祢賜給我的光榮賜給了他們」（若十七22），耶穌受難前的禱詞特別適用於為基督作證的光榮殉道者。我們在這裡紀念羅馬教會的第一批殉道者，這座大殿座落於他們流血致命的地方；這個教會也是建立在他們的鮮血之上。願這些殉道者使我們更加確信，當我們更親近基督，彼此之間也會更加親密，在各個教會所有聖人的祈禱扶持下，因著共享的逾越奧蹟而完美地結合為一。就如我們正慶祝六十週年紀念的《大公主義》法令所言，凡與基督越親密的基督徒，他們彼此之間的關係也越親密。（參閱：7）

今天，我們紀念梵蒂岡第二屆大公會議開幕，這是個標識天主教會正式展開大公運動的日子，感謝諸位兄弟代表、其他各教會的弟兄姊妹與我們聚集在一起。我借用教宗聖若望二十三世在會議開幕時對所有觀察員所說的話：「非常感謝你們的參與，作為一名司鐸、一名天主教會的主教，我的心中充滿感動〔……〕，這感動催迫著我向各位吐露我內心的渴望，基督在最後晚餐的祈禱



終將為眾人實現，為了那一天的到來，我的內心燃燒著工作與受苦的渴望」(1962年10月13日)。伴隨著眾位殉道者的祈禱，讓我們進入與耶穌相同的祈禱中，並在聖神的光照下，使其成為我們自己的祈禱。

基督徒的合一和同道偕行是密切相關的。事實上，「『同道偕行』正是天主期望教會在第三個千年該走的途徑」(世界主教代表會議成立五十週年致詞，2015年10月17日)，這也是所有基督徒必須走的道路。「同道偕行的旅程……是大公合一的，而且必須是大公合一的，正如大公合一的旅程是共議性的一樣」(向東方亞述教會阿瓦三世宗主教的講話，2022年11月19日)。在這兩個進程中，與其說是要創造什麼，不如說是要正視已領受的恩賜並使之結出果實。而合一的恩賜是什麼樣子呢？世界主教代表會議的經驗正在幫助我們去探索這恩賜的某些面向。

合一是一種恩寵，一份意想不到的禮物；我們並非推動合一的力量，真正的推動者是引導我們走向更圓滿共融的聖神。正如我們無法預知世界主教代表會議會結出怎樣的果實，也不確知我們所蒙召去推動的合一會成為什麼樣子。福音告訴我們，耶穌在祂偉大的祈禱中「舉目向天」：合一，主要不來自於地，而是來自於天上。我們無法預見這恩寵惠賜的時機和方式。正如大公會議的法令所闡明的，我們在領受時，必須「不要阻礙天主上智的途徑，亦不要有妨害聖神的未來推動」(《大公主義》法令，24)。正如保祿·庫蒂里耶(Paul Couturier)神父過去一再強調的，我們必須「按基督的意願」，並「以祂所願意的方式」，懇求天主惠賜基督徒合一的恩寵。

我們從共議性的歷程中學到了另一門功課，即：合一是一趟路程：隨著進程而逐漸成長。透過彼此的服務、生命的對話、以及所有基督徒的合作，「也更明顯地揭露出基督為僕人的面目」(《大公主義》法令，12)，不同宗派的基督徒之間因此更為合一。但就我們而言，我們必須隨從聖神的引導(參閱：迦五16~25)；或者，如聖依勒內所說的，有如「一個兄弟同行的隊伍」(tôn adelphôn synodía)。藉著「以天主的步調」共赴朝聖之旅，基督徒的合一得以成長茁壯並逐漸成熟，就像前往厄瑪烏的門徒與復活的主耶穌並肩同行一樣。

我們所學到的第三門功課是：合一就是和諧。世界主教代表會議幫助我們重新發現多元化的面貌正是教會之美。因此，基督徒的合一既不是整齊劃一，也不是妥協或相互抗衡的結果，而是聖神為了所有基督徒而喚醒不同神恩之間的和諧(參閱：《大公主義》法令，4)。和諧是聖神的道路，因為正如聖巴西略所說，聖神就是和諧本身(參閱：詠廿九1)。我們需要追求合一之路，因為我們愛基督，也愛我們蒙召所服務的所有人。在這旅程中，困難和險阻都無法使我們停下腳步！讓我們信賴聖神——祂在多元化的七彩繽紛的和諧中吸引我們邁向合一。

最後，正如同道偕行一樣，基督徒的合一對他們的見證而言不可或缺：合一就是為了傳教使命。「願眾人都合而為一〔……〕為叫世界相信」(若十七21)。這是出席大公會議的教長們的信念，他們認為：意見分歧的基督徒團體「令世人困惑，使向萬民宣傳福音的神聖事業遭受損害」(《大公主義》法令，1)。大公運動源於共

同見證的渴望：我們要並肩作見證，而不是彼此分離，更不是彼此對立。在這個地方，羅馬的首批殉道者提醒我們，今天在全世界許多地方，仍有不同傳統的基督徒為基督信仰一同捨命，具體展現出「傾流熱血的大公合一」。他們的見證比任何言語更有力量，因為合一源於主的十字架。

在這次會議開始之前，我們舉行了懺悔禮儀。今天我們也對基督徒分裂的醜聞與未能一起為主耶穌作見證，感到羞愧。這次世界主教代表會議是一個改進的機會，讓我們克服彼此之間仍然存在的高牆。讓我們聚焦於我們共同的洗禮，這洗禮敦促我們肩負共同的傳教使命，成為基督福傳的門徒。這個世界需要我們的共同見證；需要我們忠實地履行我們的共同的傳教使命。

親愛的弟兄姊妹們，正是在被釘的基督像前，亞西西的聖方濟蒙召重建教會。願基督的十字架也引導我們日復一日地邁向圓滿的合一，讓人與人、人與受造物之間和諧共處：「因為天主樂意叫整個的圓滿居住在祂內，並藉著祂使萬有，無論是地上的，是天上的，都與自己重歸於好，因著祂十字架的血立定了和平。」（哥一19~20）

（天主教會臺灣地區主教團 恭譯）

## 世界主教代表會議第十六屆常務大會第二會期

（2024年10月2日至27日）

第17場次全體大會

### 教宗方濟各的最後致詞

保祿六世大廳

2024年10月26日，星期六

親愛的弟兄姊妹們：

在這份《最終文件》中，我們彙集了至少三年的成果，在這段時間裡，我們聆聽了天主子民的聲音，好能深刻理解如何在這個時代成為一個「共議性的教會」——一個聆聽聖神的教會。每章開頭的聖經引文以復活的主的行動和言語來提示該章的內容，因為祂召叫我們，首先以我們的生活，其次以言語，為祂的福音作證。

我們表決通過的《文件》是一份三重的禮物：

1. 首先是給我——羅馬主教的禮物。在以羅馬主教的身分召集天主的教會舉行世界主教代表會議時，我深知我需要你們：各位主教，各位共議性的旅程的見證者。謝謝你們每一位！

我常提醒自己，也提醒各位，羅馬主教也需要操練聆聽，應說：他渴望操練聆聽，好能回應每天向他說話的天主聖言：「你要使你的弟兄姊妹堅定不移」以及「餵養我的羊群。」

正如你們所知，我的任務是守護並促進聖巴西略所教導的和諧，就是聖神在天主的教會內、以及在教會之間，持續散播的和諧。儘管在邁向天主國的旅程中，歷經千辛萬苦、緊張和分歧，但正如依撒意亞先知邀請我們想像的，在天主的國完全彰顯那一日，天主為萬民擺設了肥甘的盛宴。眾人都希望不會有人被遺漏：所有的國家民族，沒有任何人缺席！關鍵字是「和諧」，這正是聖神的奇妙作為。聖神第一次大顯大能是在五旬節的早晨，祂調和了所有不同的語言……。和諧，這是梵蒂岡第二屆大公會議所教導的，教會「有如一件聖事」，成為我們所盼望的天主的標記和工具；天主早已備妥筵席，正等待著我們。透過聖神，祂的恩寵在每個人心中輕聲細語。我們的責任是將聖神俯首帖耳所說的話語大聲說出來，而不是妨礙祂；我們應該敞開大門，而不是築起高牆。當教會中的男女信友一旦開始築牆，就會造成何等的傷害！每個人、每個人、每個人都受邀進入天主的國！我們不應該成為「恩寵的分施者」，自以為擁有寶藏，卻束縛我們慈悲天主的雙手。各位要記住，我們是以請求寬恕、經驗到羞愧，並承認我們都需要天主的慈悲，來開始本屆的世界主教代表會議。

瑪德琳·德布雷爾(Madeleine Delbrêl)寫了一首詩。這位邊緣地區的神祕主義者在詩中勸勉說：「最重要的是，不要僵化」——僵化是一種罪，不時地會滲透到聖職人員或度奉獻生活者的生活中。我想誦讀幾行她所寫的詩句，作為祈禱，她寫道：

「因為我想，你們可能已經受夠了那些總是  
以司領的氣勢口口聲聲說要服務你們的人，

以老師的氣勢來與你們相識的人，  
以運動規則來接觸你們的人，  
以老夫老妻的愛來愛你們的人。

.....

請讓我們過我們的生活，  
別像一盤棋局，事事都需要計算，  
別像一場比賽，事事都難以為繼，  
別像一個定理，要我們絞盡腦汁，  
而是像一個不散的筵席——彼此的相遇不斷更新，  
像一場舞會，  
像一支舞蹈，  
在你們殷勤的懷抱中、  
在充滿宇宙愛的樂聲中。」

這些詩句可以成為迎接《最終文件》的背景音樂。基於共識性的旅程的成果，目前已經有了一些決定，未來還將陸續作出決定。

在這個戰爭時期，我們必須成為和平的見證者，同時也要學習以具體的形式在差異中表達和諧共處。

為此，我無意再發表「宗座勸諭」，因為我們所批准的文件已經足夠了。《最終文件》已有十分具體的指引，足以成為各地方教會在不同大洲、不同背景中的傳教使命指南。這正是我決定立即向大家公布《文件》的原因，也是我認為應當公布，以便所有人都能及時閱讀。藉此，我希望肯定這段共識性的旅程所成就

的價值，並透過這份《文件》將此價值傳遞給所有聖潔而忠信的天主子民。

關於《文件》中所指出的教會生活的某些面向，以及委託十個「研究小組」自由討論並向我提出建議的議題，還需要更多的時間，以便做出攸關整個教會的決定。我將繼續聆聽主教們以及託付給他們的各個教會。

這並不是將決定無限期地延後，而是以符合共議性的風格來行使伯多祿的牧職：經由聆聽、召集、辨明、決定和評估來完成。在這趟旅程中，我們需要時不時停下來、靜默和祈禱，並且仍然要在一起一點一滴地學習。聖神召叫我們並支持我們繼續這學習的進程，並視之為一個持續轉變的進程。

世界主教代表會議總祕書處和教廷的所有部會協助我完成這項任務。

2. 這份以多樣表達方式的《文件》，是給全體忠信的天主子民的一份禮物。但顯然，並非每個人都會去閱讀。所以主要還是需要仰賴你們，以及其他眾人，使各地方教會能接受文件的內容。如果沒有親身經驗的見證，這文件內容的價值將失色不少。

3. 親愛的弟兄姊妹們，我們所經驗的是一份不能私藏的禮物。《最終文件》反映出我們的經驗——此經驗帶給予我們一股動力及勇氣去作此見證：在差異中不彼此譴責、攜手同行是可能的。

我們來自世界各個不同的角落，有些地區飽受暴力、貧窮與冷漠的摧殘。我們抱著那不令人蒙羞的希望，在傾注於我們心內的天主的愛中合而為一，我們不應僅止於夢想和平，更要致力於付諸實行；也許毋須多談共議精神，因為透過不斷地聆聽、交談與和好，和平自便會實現。為了完成傳教使命，共議性的教會需將言詞化為行動。這是我們當行的道路。

這一切都是聖神的恩賜：是祂成就了和諧，祂本身就是和諧。聖巴西略對此有很美的神學闡述，若有機會，你們可以閱讀他的《聖神論》。聖神就是和諧。弟兄姊妹們，願我們離開此大廳時，和諧仍能延續，並願復活主的氣息幫助我們分享所領受的恩賜。

請各位記住——瑪德琳·德布雷爾所說的話——「有些地方有聖神的氣息，但只有一位聖神在所有地方嘯氣。」

我要感謝在場的每一位，也讓我們彼此道謝。感謝格雷奇 (Mario Grech) 樞機和霍勒利希 (Jean-Claude Hollerich) 樞機所承擔的工作，感謝兩位祕書，娜塔莉 (Nathalie Becquart) 修女和聖馬蒂 (San Martin) 主教——你們做得真好！——還有巴托基奧 (Riccardo Battocchio) 神父和科斯大 (Giacomo Costa) 神父，對我們協助良多！感謝所有的幕後工作人員，沒有他們，這一切不可能實現。非常感謝你們！願主降福你們。讓我們彼此代禱。謝謝！

(天主教會臺灣地區主教團 恭譯)



## 教宗方濟各 第8屆世界窮人日文告

常年期第33主日

2024年11月17日

窮人的祈禱直達天主（參閱：德廿一6）

親愛的弟兄姊妹們：

1. 窮人的祈禱直達天主（參閱：德廿一6）。今年是為迎接2025禧年的祈禱年，在此為將於11月17日舉行的第8屆世界窮人日的準備時刻，聖經這句智慧箴言表達得再貼切不過了。基督徒所懷抱的希望也包含這樣的確信：我們的祈禱能夠直達天主；但不是任何的祈禱，而是窮人的祈禱！讓我們反思這句話，並從每日相遇的窮人的臉龐上、故事中，「讀到」這句話，使祈禱能夠成為與他們共融的途徑，並分擔他們的痛苦。

2. 我們所提的《德訓篇》，並不廣為人知，然而它的主題豐富，特別是有關人與天主和人與世界的關係，值得我們去探索、挖掘。該書的作者：班·息辣（Ben Sira／息辣的兒子），是一位導師，耶路撒冷的一個經師，大約於主曆前二世紀寫作。他是一位智者，其著作深植於以色列的傳統，講授關於人類生活的各個面向：工作、家庭、社會生活和年輕人的教育。

他特別著重與信仰天主和遵守法律有關的主題，回應了自由、邪惡和天主正義等難題，這些問題至今仍與我們息息相關。在聖神的啟發之下，班·息辣試圖向眾人指出應當遵循的道路，為能在天主和我們的弟兄姊妹面前過著明智且有尊嚴的生活。

3. 這位聖經作者所關心和深入探討的主題之一，就是祈禱。他懷著極大的熱情來表達自己的親身經歷。的確，若非每天立於天主面前、聆聽祂的話語，否則任何關於祈禱的著作都會枯燥無味、乏善可陳。班·息辣宣稱自己自幼便已尋求智慧：「當我年輕時，在出外旅行以前，我公開以祈禱來尋求智慧。」（德五十一18）

4. 在他的人生旅程中，他發現了天主啟示的一個基本真理，即窮人在天主心中占有特殊的地位，甚至面對他們的苦難，天主「迫不及待」地給予他們應得的幫助。「謙卑人的祈禱，穿雲而上，不達到目的，決不甘休；不等至高者見了，為義人申冤，執行正義，決不離開」（德卅五21）。天主是一位用心關懷子女的父親，了解孩子所受的痛苦；身為父親，肯定要照顧那些最需要幫助的人：窮人、邊緣人、受苦的人和被遺忘的人。在天主心中，沒有人被排除在外，在祂眼中，我們都是匱乏且亟需幫助的人。離開了天主，我們一無所是，只得乞討度日。如果沒有天主的賜予，我們甚至沒有生命。然而，我們常常自以為是生命的主人，又或好像是必須戰勝生命！世俗的眼光要我們追求功名利祿，不擇手段地為成就自己，打破社會規範來累積財富。這是多麼可悲

的痴心妄想啊！幸福，是絕對不能靠踐踏他人的權利和尊嚴來爭取的。

戰爭所引發的暴力，戳破了某些人的傲慢——他們自以為在人前是強者，但在天主眼中卻是極為匱乏。多少人因為錯誤的軍事政策而陷入貧困！多少無辜的受害者啊！對此現實，我們絕不能轉面不顧。主的門徒們知道，每一個這樣的「最小兄弟」的面容都是天主子的肖像，勢必得到我們基督徒的支持與愛德表現。「每個基督徒和每個信仰團體都蒙召成為天主的工具，為窮人的脫貧和進步效力，讓他們能完全融入社會。這要求我們對窮人的呼喊要珍而重之、細心留意，並幫助他們。」（《福音的喜樂》宗座勸諭，187）

5. 在這全心全意祈禱的一年裡，我們要把窮人的祈禱轉化為我們自己的祈禱，並與他們一起祈禱。這是我們必須接受的挑戰，也是需要培育的牧靈行動。實際上，「窮人經歷到最嚴重的歧視是缺乏靈性上的關懷。絕大多數窮人都對信仰特別開放；他們需要天主，我們不得不給他們提供天主的友情、祝福、祂的話語、聖事慶典、成長之旅，以及信德上的成熟。偏愛窮人是我們的基本抉擇，整體上必須將之轉變為宗教的關懷，務使窮人享有優惠和偏愛。」（《福音的喜樂》宗座勸諭，200）

這一切都需要一顆謙卑的心、一顆有勇氣成為乞丐的心——自認貧困和需要求助於人的心。事實上，貧窮、謙卑和信任彼此之間，息息相關。真正的窮人是謙卑的人，正如聖奧斯定主教

所說：「窮人沒有什麼可驕傲的，富人則必須戰勝他們的驕傲。因此，請聽我說：你要清貧，要有德性，要謙虛」（《講道集》，14，4）。謙卑的人無可炫耀，也無可要求；他們知道不能依靠自己，但堅信可以全然投靠天主的慈悲與憐憫，就像悔改的浪子一樣，回家站在父親面前，接受他的擁抱（參閱：路十五11~24）。無依無靠的窮人從上主那裡汲取力量，並完全信賴祂。事實上，謙卑使人相信天主永遠不會對我們棄之不顧，也不會對我們置之不理。

6. 我要對住在我們城市和我們團體中的窮人說：不要失去這份確信！天主關心你們每一個人，並親近你們。祂沒有忘記你們，也不可能忘記你們。我們都有過祈禱卻似乎沒有得到回應的經驗。有時，我們祈求擺脫使我們痛苦、羞辱的煎熬，但天主似乎沒有聽到我們的哀禱。然而，天主的沉默並不表示祂對我們的苦楚漠不關心；相反地，這其中蘊含了一個訊息，我們必須懷著信賴的心去接受，讓自己完全降服於祂和祂的意志。

《德訓篇》再次證明了這一點：上主必迅速為窮人申冤（參閱：德廿一6）。因此，從貧乏中能流露最誠摯的希望之歌。讓我們記住「內心若被個人私益和顧慮所禁錮時，就再沒有空間去顧及他人或容納窮人，就聽不到天主的聲音，感覺不到祂愛的飴樂，行善的渴望也消退了。」（《福音的喜樂》宗座勸諭，2）

7. 世界窮人日現已成為每個教會團體的固定日子，這是一個不容小覷的牧靈機會，因為它挑戰每位信友去聆聽窮人的祈禱，並意識到他們的存在和需要。這是執行各項措施，具體幫助窮

人的好時機，也是認識並支持那些熱情投身於服務最困苦者的志工們的好機會。我們衷心感謝上主，感謝那些願意聆聽並支持我們當中最貧困者的人。他們是司鐸、度奉獻生活者、平信徒，透過他們的見證替天主回應投奔於祂的人的祈禱——每當有需要的人被接納和擁抱時，天主就打破沉默。窮人仍然有許多東西教導我們，因為在現今高舉財富、並經常在物質財貨的祭壇上犧牲人性尊嚴的文化裡，他們逆水行舟，凸顯出生命中不可或缺的，完全是另外一回事。

因此，祈禱得藉由真正的愛德來證實，而愛德表現在人與人的相遇和親近。如果祈禱沒有轉化為具體的行動，便是徒勞無功；事實上，「信德也是這樣：若沒有行為，自身便是死的」（雅二17）。然而，沒有祈禱的愛德行動，恐怕很快就會淪為耗盡自身的慈善事業。「若是沒有每天忠實地祈禱，我們的行動便是空泛的，失去了深刻的靈魂，變成僅僅是行動主義」（教宗本篤十六世，教理講授，2012年4月25日）。我們必須謹慎，避免陷入這種誘惑，並且藉由賦予生命的聖神所賜予的力量與堅毅，使我們始終保持警醒。

8. 在這脈絡中，我們不妨回顧加爾各答的聖德蘭姆姆，一位為貧困者窮盡一生的女性，為我們留下的美好見證。聖德蘭姆姆反覆說道，她從祈禱中汲取力量和信德，來實踐為我們當中最弱小者服務的使命。1985年10月26日她在聯合國大會演講時，拿出手中隨身攜帶的玫瑰念珠給大家看，說：「我不過是一個不

斷祈禱的貧窮修女。在我向耶穌祈禱時，祂把祂的愛傾注在我心中，我就把這份愛分送給沿路遇到的所有窮人。你們也要祈禱！你們祈禱，就會察覺到身邊的窮人，也許就在所住公寓大樓的同一樓層，甚至也許就在家裡，有人正等著你們的愛。祈禱，幫助你睜開雙眼，使你們的心中洋溢著愛。」

在羅馬，我們怎能不想起聖本篤·若瑟·拉布雷（St. Benedict Joseph Labre, 1748~1783），他的遺體安葬於蒙蒂聖母堂供人敬禮。這位從法國到羅馬朝聖的聖人，曾被許多修院拒絕，在生命最後的歲月，與窮人為伍，成為窮人中的窮人，每天在聖體前祈禱數小時，誦念玫瑰經和日課，閱讀《新約》和《師主篇》。因無處容身，他只得像「天主的流浪者」一樣，常窩在羅馬競技場廢墟的一角，使他的生活成為不間斷的祈禱，直達天主。

9. 在我們邁向聖年之際，我敦促每一個人都成為懷著希望的朝聖者，為更美好的未來設定具體的目標，別忘了去體現「愛的瑣事」（《你們要歡喜踴躍》宗座勸諭，145）：停下來，靠近些，給近人一絲關懷，一抹微笑，一個擁抱，一句安慰。這些舉動並非不假思索、自然而然，而是需要日復一日地作出承諾，它們通常隱而不顯，悄無聲息，但可由祈禱獲得力量。在此刻，武器的喧囂聲、許多無辜傷者的哭泣聲，以及無數戰爭受害者的沉默，淹沒了希望之歌，讓我們轉向天主，懇求祂賜下和平。我們伸出雙手接受和平這份珍貴的禮物，因為我們「缺乏」和平，同時承諾將和平重新融入我們的日常生活。

10. 我們蒙召在任何情況下都成為窮人的朋友，追隨耶穌的腳步——祂總是與我們中間最弱小者精誠團結地在一起。曾在比利時巴訥（Banneux）顯現的天主之母至聖童貞瑪利亞，給我們留下了不可或忘的訊息：「我是窮人之母」，願她在我們塵世的旅程中支持我們。聖母瑪利亞因她的卑微受到天主的垂顧，以她的服從完成了大事；我們將我們的祈禱託付給她，相信我們的祈禱將直達天主，必蒙垂聽。

教宗方濟各

羅馬，拉特朗聖若望大殿

2024年6月13日，帕多瓦的聖安多尼——窮人主保紀念日

（天主教會臺灣地區主教團 恭譯）

## 教宗方濟各 頒布2025年常規禧年 頒賜大赦的規則

「現在又到了新的禧年，聖門將再次開啟，邀請每一個人來深刻地體驗天主的愛」（《望德不叫人蒙羞》，6）。在宣布2025年常規禧年的詔書中，教宗在現今這個「人類無視過去的恐怖經驗，此時正面臨另一場磨難，許多民族正成為殘酷和暴力的犧牲品」（《望德不叫人蒙羞》，8）的歷史時刻，呼籲所有基督徒成為**希望的朝聖者**。這項美德首先是根源於天主的恩寵和祂圓滿的慈悲，而且要在時代的徵兆中重新發掘出來。這些徵兆既包括「在人心中的渴望，需要天主救恩的臨在，應該轉變為希望的標記。」（《望德不叫人蒙羞》，7）

教宗方濟各曾於2015年宣布慈悲特殊禧年的詔書中強調，大赦在禧年中「意義更為重大」（《慈悲面容》，22），因為「天主的慈悲比這一切都更強。這就是大赦，即是父透過基督的新娘——祂的教會，關顧已蒙寬恕的罪人，使他脫離罪惡遺留給他的一切後果」（同上）。「古語有云，『憐憫』和『寬免』這兩個詞是相通的，這並非偶然。事實上，『大赦』是發現天主無限慈悲的一種方式，它表達了上主無限的寬恕」（《望德不叫人蒙羞》，23）。因此，大赦是禧年的一份恩典。



有鑑於此，負責處理所有與頒賜和運用大赦相關事項的本「慈悲法庭」，按教宗的意願，為2025年常規禧年釐定下列指引，以鼓勵信友的靈性生活和培育他們去獲得大赦——聖年獨特的恩典，他們「獲得禧年大赦……，並使其實踐在靈修上富有成效。」（《望德不叫人蒙羞》，23）

在2025年常規禧年期間，其他已頒賜的大赦仍然有效。所有信友，如真誠悔改和棄絕對罪過的任何留戀（參閱：《大赦手冊》，第IV版，20§1）、透過懺悔聖事而淨化、因聖體聖事而振作，並按教宗的意向祈禱，均可本著愛德精神，循以下方式，從教會的寶庫中獲得全大赦和罪過的赦免，而該全大赦亦可轉讓給煉獄中的靈魂：

### 一、朝聖活動

信友——希望的朝聖者，如虔誠地到以下地點朝聖，均可獲得教宗頒賜的禧年大赦：

**任何禧年聖地：**虔誠地參與彌撒聖祭（可遵照禮規，參與禧年彌撒，或為和好、罪過的赦免、促進愛德或促進和諧共處等目的而舉行的求恩彌撒）；為施行基督徒入門聖事或病人傅油聖事而舉行的典禮彌撒，或任何以下善工；聖道禮儀；時辰頌禱禮（誦讀、晨禱、晚禱）；苦路善工；玫瑰經；聖母頌（Akathistos）；以及按懺悔禮（第二式）規定、以懺悔者個別告明而結束的公共懺悔禮；

**羅馬：**至少前往四大宗座聖殿其中一處，即：梵蒂岡聖伯多祿大殿、拉特朗至聖救主大殿（即拉特朗聖若望大殿）、聖母大殿和城外聖保祿大殿；

**聖地：**至少前往三大聖殿其中一處，即：耶路撒冷聖墓大殿、白冷救主誕生大殿和納匝肋預報救主誕生大殿；

**其他教會區域：**前往主教座堂或教區教長所指定的其他教堂或聖地。主教們應考慮信友的需求，並把握時機，加強他們對朝聖活動的理解，包括這些活動的象徵意義，以彰顯出人類是如何需要與天主和與他人和好。

### 二、虔誠地前往朝聖地點

同樣，信友們無論是以個別或集體形式，虔誠地前往任何禧年聖地點，並完成以下善工者，均可獲得禧年大赦，即：以適當的時間，朝拜聖體和默想，並以天主經和任何認可的信經作結束，同時呼求天主之母瑪利亞，使每個信徒都能在這聖年「都會感受到瑪利亞的親近，她是最慈愛的母親，從不離棄自己的孩子。」（《望德不叫人蒙羞》，24）

在禧年期間，除了上述朝聖地點以外，信友亦可在同等條件下，前往其他朝聖地：

**羅馬：**耶路撒冷十字架大殿、聖老楞佐大殿、聖巴斯弟盎大殿（極力推薦信友虔誠地前往聖斐理伯·內利所熱愛的所謂的「七教堂」）、聖愛朝聖地（Sanctuary of Divine Love）、薩西亞的聖神堂（Church of the Holy Spirit in Sassia）、三泉聖保祿堂（Church of St. Paul at the Tre Fontane）、即聖保祿宗徒致命地（site of the Martyrdom of the Apostle），以及基督徒墓窟；與「歐洲之旅」（Iter Europaeum）相關的禧年之路所指定的教堂和分別奉獻給歐洲主保聖女和教會聖師的教堂（彌涅耳瓦聖母大殿〔Basilica of St. Mary sopra Minerva〕、花市聖碧瑾堂〔St. Brigid at Campo de' Fiori〕、聖母勝利之后堂〔St. Mary of the Victory〕、聖三堂〔Church of Trinità dei Monti〕、聖女則濟利亞大殿〔Basilica of St. Cecilia in Trastevere〕和聖奧斯定大殿〔Basilica of St. Augustine in Campo Marzio〕）；

**世界其他聖地：**亞西西的兩座宗座乙級大殿，即聖方濟各大殿和天使聖瑪利亞大殿；洛雷托聖母宗座大殿、龐貝聖母宗座大殿、帕多瓦的聖安多尼宗座大殿；任何乙級大殿、主教座堂及副座堂、聖母朝聖地，以及為了信友們的益處，任何著名的非主教座堂或由任何教區主教或教牧〔東方教會〕所指定的朝聖地、全國性或國際朝聖地，以及由主教團所指定的「款待朝聖者的朝聖地和尤其能重振希望的地點。」（《望德不叫人蒙羞》，24）

真誠悔改的信友，因特殊緣故（尤其是所有男女隱修士，年長者、病患者、在囚人士，以及身在醫院或其他醫護場所而要為病人提供

不間斷服務的人員）而不能參與隆重慶典、朝聖活動和熱心地前往教堂等活動者，在滿全相同條件下，如在精神上與在場的信友保持合一——特別是當媒體直播教宗或教區主教的講話時，並在家中或受阻之處（諸如隱修院的小聖堂、醫院、療養院、監獄……）誦念天主經、任何認可的信經和符合聖年宗旨的其他經文，同時向天主奉獻個人的痛苦或生活上的辛勞者，亦可獲得禧年大赦。

### 三、哀矜和補贖善工

再者，信友凡是以虔敬的精神，參與當地教會團體舉行的福傳活動（popular missions）、退省或遵照教宗的意向，參加在教堂內或其他適當場所舉行的梵二大公會議文獻和《天主教教理》的培育活動，亦可獲得禧年大赦。

儘管規定每天只可獲得一項全大赦（參閱：《大赦手冊》，IV ed.，18 §1），然而，凡是為煉獄靈魂履行愛德的信友，如在同一日第二次依法領受聖體聖事（這是指在一台感恩祭當中領聖體；參閱：《天主教法典》917條和宗座法律委員會1984年7月11日的疑問答覆），亦可在當日獲得另一項全大赦，但該全大赦僅適用於亡者。透過這種雙重善行，一項值得稱讚的超性愛德善工得以實現，而藉著這種愛德聯繫，仍在塵世中的信友與那些已結束了塵世旅程的信友，在基督奧體中連結相通，因為「禧年大赦是特別為那些先我們而去的信友而設的，為使他們能體驗圓滿的憐憫。」（《望德不叫人蒙羞》，22）

「在禧年，我們被召喚為那些經歷各種困難的弟兄姊妹帶來希望的具體標記」(《望德不叫人蒙羞》，10)：因此，大赦與一些見證罪人真誠悔改的哀矜和補贖善工有關連。應鼓勵信友遵從基督的榜樣和命令，多做一點慈善事工或哀矜善工，主要是為那些有各種需要的弟兄服務。信友尤其要重新醒覺到他們要踐行「形哀矜：饑者食之、渴者飲之、裸者衣之、收留旅人、照顧病人、探望囚者、埋葬死者」(《慈悲面容》，15)，信友也要重新醒覺到要踐行「神哀矜：解人疑惑、教導愚蒙、勸人悔改、安慰憂苦、赦人侮辱、忍耐磨難、為生者死者祈求。」(同上)

信友如用適當的時間去探訪那些有需要或身處困境中的弟兄姊妹(病人、囚犯、孤寡老人、傷殘人士……)，如朝聖者一樣前去朝拜臨現在他們身上的基督(參閱：瑪廿五34~36)，同時滿全慣常的靈性、聖事性和祈禱的條件，亦可獲得禧年大赦。信友們可以在聖年期間重複這類探訪，每次探訪——甚至每天探訪一次——均可獲得全大赦。

信友亦可透過具體和慷慨的方式來踐行懺悔精神——這恰是禧年的真諦——來獲得禧年大赦，同時，他們也可採用以下方式，重新發掘星期五的懺悔性質：以懺悔的精神來節制自己，一週內至少找一天避免無謂的繁雜事務(實體的或虛擬的，例如，不使用媒體及／或社交網絡)、節省不必要的消費(例如，按照教會的一般規定和主教的特別規定，踐行齋戒、以一定數額的金錢來濟貧、支援宗教性或社會性的事工，特別是支援那些捍衛和維護

各個階段的生命和生活品質的事工、援助被遺棄的兒童、困境中的年輕人、需要照顧或獨居的老人，「為了自己和家人離鄉背井去追求更好生活的各國移民」(《望德不叫人蒙羞》，13)；用適當的餘暇參與促進公益的義工活動或其他由個人承擔的類似事工。

每位教區主教及東方教會教牧，以及依法被賦予等同權力者，均可在禧年期間最適合的一天，為所有滿全慣常條件的信友，授予宗座祝福(Papal Blessing)及附帶的全大赦。

為了在牧靈上促進信友們領受懺悔聖事和藉著天鑰聖權獲得天主的寬恕，誠邀教區教長將下列僅限於內庭行使的權力，授予詠禱司鐸及在主教座堂和在聖年指定的教堂聆聽信友告解的司鐸：

相對東方教會信友：《東方教會法典》728條2項授予的權力；如涉及保留事項，則授予727條指定的權力，惟不適用於728條1項所指定的事項。

相對拉丁教會信友：《天主教法典》508條1項所規定的權力。

在這方面，本聖赦院敦促所有司鐸以慷慨和獻身服務的精神，盡量為信友提供善用救恩措施的機會，並為此與堂區主任或鄰近的教堂主任達成一致，採用公布告解時段的方法，親臨告解室，並定期且頻繁地為懺悔禮作出安排；同時，也要借助那些

已退休而無固定牧靈職務的司鐸。此外，要記得，視乎情形，根據《天主的仁慈》自動手諭的規定，善用彌撒聖祭過程中聽告解的牧靈機會。

為了利便聽告解司鐸履行職務，宗座聖赦院根據教宗的指令，特此規定：凡是在所屬教區之外，伴隨或參加禧年朝聖活動的司鐸，均可行使其在所屬教區由合法當局賦予的相同權力。本宗座聖赦院也將特殊的權力授予羅馬宗座大殿的特赦司鐸、詠禱特赦司鐸或在個別教會區域內所設立的特赦司鐸。

聽告解司鐸，在慈祥地指導告罪者之後，按照那些附帶著保留或懲戒罰的罪過的嚴重性，以牧靈愛德為告罪者指定適當的聖事性補贖，盡量引導他們穩定地悔改，並按照個別情況，促請他們對可能引致的惡表和損害作出補償。

最後，主教們既肩負着訓導、治理和聖化信友的三重職務，本聖赦院誠邀清晰地向信友解釋上述為聖化他們的措施和原則，同時要斟酌地區、文化和傳統等方面。一套適應每個民族的社會和文化特徵的教理講授，將會有成效地展示福音和整個基督信仰的訊息，並可使每個民族對這份恩賜——藉著教會而獲得的獨特恩賜——的渴望，更深入地植根於其心中。

本法令在2025年整個常規禧年期間生效，與之相反的任何規定，一概無效。

2024年5月13日，法蒂瑪聖母紀念日，發自羅馬宗座聖赦院。

聖赦院院長——安傑羅·德·多納蒂斯 樞機

(Angelo Card. De Donatis, Major Penitentiary)

副院長——克利斯多弗·克尼基爾 主教

(+ Krzysztof Nykiel, Regent)

(天主教會臺灣地區主教團 譯)





## OPENING OF THE ORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS

FEAST OF THE GUARDIAN ANGELS - HOLY MASS

PAPAL MASS

**Homily of the Holy Father Pope Francis**

*Saint Peter's Square*

*Wednesday, 2 October 2024*

Today we celebrate the liturgical Memorial of the Holy Guardian Angels, and we re-open the Plenary Session of the Synod of Bishops. After listening to the Word of God, let us take three images as starting points for our consideration: voice, refuge and a child.

First, the voice. On the way to the Promised Land, God advises the people to listen to the “voice of the angel” whom he had sent (cf. *Ex* 23:20-22). It is an image that is relevant to us. As we walk down the path of this Synod, the Lord places in our hands the history, dreams and hopes of a great people. They are our sisters and brothers scattered throughout the world, inspired by the same faith, moved by the same desire for holiness. With them and for them, let us strive to understand the path we must follow in order to reach the destination the Lord desires for us. But how can we listen to the “voice of the angel”?

One way is to receive all the contributions collected during these three years with respect and attention, in prayer and in the light of the Word of God. These have been years of work, sharing and discussion, carried out with a constant effort to purify our minds and hearts. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we must listen to and understand these

voices — that is, the ideas, the expectations, the proposals — so as to discern together the voice of God speaking to the Church (cf. Renato Corti, *Quale prete?*, Appunti inediti). As we have repeatedly stressed, ours is not a parliamentary assembly, but rather a place of listening in communion, where, as Saint Gregory the Great says, what someone has in himself or herself partially is possessed completely by another, and although some have particular gifts, everything belongs to everyone in the “charity of the Spirit” (cf. Homilies on the Gospels, XXXIV).

For this to happen, there is a condition: we must free ourselves from everything that prevents the “charity of the Spirit” from creating harmony in diversity in us and among us. Those who arrogantly claim to have the exclusive right to hear the voice of the Lord cannot hear it (cf. *Mk* 9:38-39). Every word is to be received with gratitude and simplicity and can become an echo of what God has given for the good of our brothers and sisters (cf. *Mt* 10:7-8). Let us be careful not to see our contributions as points to defend at all costs or agendas to be imposed. I hope each of us will offer our contribution as a gift to be shared, ready even to sacrifice our own point of view in order to give life to something new, all according to God’s plan. Otherwise we will end up locking ourselves into dialogues among the deaf, where participants seek to advance their own causes or agendas without listening to others and, above all, without listening to the voice of the Lord.

We do not have the solutions to the problems we face, but the Lord does (cf. *Jn* 14:6). Remember that you cannot lose focus in the desert. If you do not pay attention to the guide, if you think you are self-sufficient, you may die of hunger or thirst and take others with you. Let us therefore listen to the voice of God and of his angel so

that we may go safely on our way, rising above our limitations and difficulties (cf. *Ps* 23:4).

This brings us to the next image: refuge, which can be symbolized by wings that protect us – “under his wings you will find refuge” (*Ps* 91:4). Wings are powerful instruments, able to lift a body off the ground through vigorous movement. Although they represent great strength, wings can also be lowered in order to gather, becoming a shield and a welcoming nest for the young birds who are in need of warmth and protection.

This is a symbol of what God does for us, and it is also a model for us to follow, especially as we gather together these days. Among us, dear brothers and sisters, there are many strong, well-prepared people, capable of rising to the heights with the intense movements of reflection and with brilliant insights. All this is a great advantage to us. It stimulates, challenges and sometimes forces us to think more openly and to move forward more decisively. It also helps us to remain firm in our faith even in the face of challenges and difficulties. We must have open hearts, hearts in dialogue. A heart that is closed in personal convictions is not proper to the Spirit of the Lord. It is not of the Lord. It is a gift to open ourselves, and this gift must be combined, when necessary, with the ability to relax our muscles and bend down to offer each other a welcoming embrace and a place of refuge. That way we will be, as Saint Paul VI said, “a house [...] of brothers and sisters, a workshop of intense activity, a cenacle of ardent spirituality” (*Address to the Presidential Council of the C.E.I.*, 9 May 1974).

The more we realise that we are surrounded by friends who love, respect and appreciate us, friends who want to listen to what we have to say, the more we will feel free to express ourselves spontaneously

and openly.

This approach is not just a technique for “facilitating” dialogue and group communication dynamics. In the Synod there are “facilitators”, but they are here to help us move forward better. Embracing, protecting and caring are in fact part of the very nature of the Church. Embracing, protecting and caring. The Church, by its very vocation, is a welcoming place of gathering, where “collegial charity demands perfect harmony, which leads to moral strength, spiritual beauty and ideal expression” (*ibid.*). Harmony: it is a very important word. It is not about majorities and minorities; that could be a first step. What is important, what is fundamental, is harmony, the harmony that only the Holy Spirit can achieve. The Holy Spirit is the master of harmony and is capable of creating one voice among so many different voices. Consider how the Spirit created harmony among differences on the morning of Pentecost. The Church needs “peaceful and open places” to be created first of all in our hearts, where each person feels welcomed, like an infant in a mother’s arms (cf. *Is* 49:15; 66:13) and as a child lifted up to a father’s cheek (cf. *Hos* 11:4; *Ps* 103:13).

This brings us to the third image: a child. It is Jesus himself who, in the Gospel, “put a child in the midst of them”, showing him to the disciples, inviting them to convert and become small like him. They had asked him who was the greatest in the kingdom of heaven and he replied by encouraging them to become small like a child. But not only this, Jesus also adds that by welcoming a child in his name, we welcome him (cf. *Mt* 18:1-5).

This paradox is essential for us. Given the importance of a Synod, in a certain sense we must try to be “great” in spirit, in heart, in outlook, because the issues that we must deal with are “great” and delicate, and the situations are broad and universal. But it is precisely for this

reason that we must not lose sight of the child, whom Jesus continues to place at the centre of our meetings and work tables. He does so to remind us that the only way to be worthy of the task entrusted to us is to lower ourselves, to make ourselves small and to receive one another humbly. The greatest in the Church is the one who bends down the lowest.

Precisely by making himself small, God “shows us what true greatness, indeed, what it means to be God” (BENEDICT XVI, Homily for the Feast of the Baptism of *the Lord*, 11 January 2009). It is not by chance that Jesus says that children’s angels “always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven” (Mt 18:10). In other words, they are like a “telescope” of the Father's love.

Brothers and sisters, we begin anew our synodal path with an eye toward the world, since the Christian community is always at the service of humanity in order to announce the joy of the Gospel. In such a dramatic time in our history, when the winds of war and the flames of violence continue to devastate entire peoples and nations, there is need for this message.

In order to invoke the intercession of Mary Most Holy for the gift of peace, I will recite the holy rosary and make a heartfelt plea to the Virgin **in the Basilica of Saint Mary Major this coming Sunday**. If possible, I ask all members of the Synod to join me for this occasion.

The following day, 7 October, I ask everyone to participate in a day of prayer and fasting for peace in the world.

Let us walk together. Let us listen to the Lord and allow him to guide us by the “breath” of the Spirit.

## SECOND SESSION OF THE XVI GENERAL ORDINARY ASSEMBLY OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS

### ECUMENICAL VIGIL

#### Homily of the Holy Father Pope Francis

#### *Square of the Roman Protomartyrs*

*Friday, 11 October 2024*

“The glory that you have given me I have given them” (Jn 17:22). These words from Jesus’ prayer before his Passion can be applied above all to the martyrs, who received glory for the witness they bore to Christ. In this place, we remember the First Martyrs of the Church of Rome. This Basilica was built on the site where their blood was shed; the Church was built upon their blood. May these martyrs strengthen our certainty that, in drawing closer to Christ, we draw closer to one another, sustained by the prayers of all the saints of our Churches, now perfectly one by their sharing in the paschal mystery. As we read in the Decree on Eucmenism *Unitatis Redintegratio*, whose sixtieth anniversary we are celebrating, *the closer Christians are to Christ, the closer they are to one another* (cf. 7).

On this day, when we commemorate the opening of the **Second Vatican Council**, which marked the official entry of the Catholic Church into the ecumenical movement, we are gathered together with the fraternal delegates, our brothers and sisters of other Churches. I make my own the words that **Saint John XXIII** spoke to the Observers at the opening of the Council: “Your much- appreciated presence here and the emotion that fills my heart as a priest, as a Bishop of the Church of God... encourage me to confide to you the

longing of my heart, which burns with the desire to work and suffer for the dawn of the day when Christ's prayer at the Last Supper will be fulfilled for all" (13 October 1962). Accompanied by the prayers of the martyrs, let us enter into that same prayer of Jesus, and make it our own in the Holy Spirit.

Christian unity and synodality are linked. In fact, "the path of synodality is what God expects of the Church of the third millennium" (*Address for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Institution of the Synod of Bishops*, 17 October 2015), and it must be travelled by all Christians. "The journey of synodality... is and must be ecumenical, just as the ecumenical journey is synodal" (*Address to His Holiness Mar Awa III*, 19 November 2022). In both processes, it is not so much a matter of creating something as it is of welcoming and making fruitful the gift we have already received. And what does the gift of unity look like? The Synod experience is helping us to discover some aspects of this gift.

Unity is a grace, an *unexpected gift*. We are not its driving force; the true driving force is the Holy Spirit who guides us towards greater communion. Just as we do not know beforehand what the outcome of the Synod will be, neither do we know exactly what the unity to which we are called will be like. The Gospel tells us that Jesus, in that great prayer of his, "looked up to heaven": unity does not come primarily from the earth, but from heaven. It is a gift whose timing and manner we cannot foresee. We must receive it by placing "no obstacle in the ways of divine Providence and [allowing] no preconceived judgements [to] impair the future inspirations of the Holy Spirit", as the Council's Decree goes on to say (*Unitatis Redintegratio*, 24). As Father Paul Couturier used to say, Christian unity must be implored "as Christ wills" and "by the means he wills".

Another lesson that we can learn from the synodal process is that *unity is a journey*: it grows gradually as it progresses. It grows through mutual service, through the dialogue of life, through the cooperation of all Christians that "sets in clearer relief the features of Christ the Servant" (*Unitatis Redintegratio*, 12). But we, for our part, must *walk by the Spirit* (cf. *Gal* 5:16-25); or, as Saint Irenaeus says, as *tôn adelphôn synodía*, as "a caravan of brothers." Christian unity grows and matures through a common pilgrimage "at God's pace", like that of the disciples on the way to Emmaus who journeyed with the risen Jesus at their side.

A third lesson is that *unity is harmony*. The Synod is helping us to rediscover the beauty of the Church in the variety of its faces. Thus unity is not uniformity, or the result of compromise or counterbalance. Christian unity is harmony among the diversity of charisms awakened by the Spirit for the building up of all Christians (cf. *Unitatis Redintegratio*, 4). Harmony is the way of the Spirit, for he is, as Saint Basil says, harmony itself (cf. *In Ps.* 29:1). We need to pursue the path of unity by virtue of our love for Christ and for all the people we are called to serve. As we travel along this path, let us never allow difficulties to stop us! Let us trust the Holy Spirit, who draws us to unity in the harmony of a multi-faceted diversity.

Lastly, like synodality, the unity of Christians is essential to their witness: *unity is for the sake of mission*. "That they may all be one... so that the world may believe" (*Jn* 17:21). This was the conviction of the Council Fathers when they declared that our division "scandalizes the world, and damages the holy cause of preaching the Gospel to every creature" (*Unitatis Reintegratio*, 1). The ecumenical movement evolved from the desire to bear common witness: to witness alongside one another, not standing apart from or, worse yet, at odds



with one another. In this place, the Roman protomartyrs remind us that today too, in many parts of the world, Christians of different traditions are laying down their lives together for their faith in Jesus Christ, embodying an *ecumenism of blood*. Their witness speaks more powerfully than any words, because unity is born of the Cross of the Lord.

Before beginning this Assembly, we celebrated a penance service. Today, too, we express our shame at the scandal of division among Christians, the scandal of our failure to bear common witness to the Lord Jesus. This Synod is an opportunity to do better, to overcome the walls that still exist between us. Let us focus on the *common ground* of our shared Baptism, which prompts us to become missionary disciples of Christ, with a *common mission*. The world needs our *common witness*; the world needs us to be faithful to our *common mission*.

Dear brothers and sisters, it was before an image of the Crucified Christ that Saint Francis of Assisi received the call to restore the Church. May the Cross of Christ also guide us on our daily journey towards full unity, in harmony with one another and with all creation: “For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross” (Col 1:19-20).

## SECOND SESSION OF THE XVI GENERAL ORDINARY ASSEMBLY OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS (2-27 OCTOBER 2024)

17<sup>th</sup> GENERAL CONGREGATION

### FINAL GREETING OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

*Audience Hall*

*Saturday, 26 October 2024*

*Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

With the *Final Document*, we have gathered up the fruit of years – at least three – , during which we set out to listen to the People of God, in order to have a better understanding, by listening to the Holy Spirit, of how to be a “synodal Church” in these times. The biblical references at the beginning of each chapter set out the message by linking it to the actions and words of our Risen Lord, who calls us to be witnesses of his Gospel, with our lives more than with our words.

The Document on which we have voted is a gift three times over.

1. First of all, it is a gift for me, the Bishop of Rome. When I convoked the Church of God in Synod, I was aware that I needed you, the Bishops and the witnesses of the synodal path. Thank you!

I often remind myself, and to you, that the Bishop of Rome, too, needs to practise listening; in fact, he wants to do it, in order to respond to the Word, which tells him every day: “Strengthen your brothers and sisters.... Feed my lambs”.

You are well aware that my task is to protect and promote the harmony which – as Saint Basil teaches us – the Spirit continues to disseminate in God’s Church, in the relations between the Churches, despite all the efforts, tensions and divisions that mark its journey towards the full manifestation of the Kingdom of God, which the Prophet Isaiah asks us to imagine as a banquet God will prepare for all peoples. All of them and everyone, in the hope that none will be missing. Everyone, everyone, everyone! Nobody left outside: everyone. And here is the key word: harmony. The first strong manifestation of what the Spirit does, on the morning of Pentecost, is to bring harmony among all our differences and all our languages... Harmony. It is what Vatican II teaches by saying that the Church is “like a sacrament”: it is sign and instrument of God’s anticipation; He has already set the table, and He waits expectantly. Through His Spirit, His Grace whispers words of love in everyone’s heart. It is up to us to amplify the sound of this whispering, never getting in its way; to open the doors, never building walls. How much damage the women and men of the Church do when they build walls, how much damage! Everyone is welcome, everyone, everyone! We must not behave like “dispensers of Grace”, who steal the treasure and tie the hands of our merciful God. Remember that we began this synodal Assembly by asking forgiveness, feeling shame and recognising that we are all beneficiaries of mercy.

There is a poem by Madeleine Delbr  l, the mystic of the peripheries, who urged: “Above all, do not be rigid” – rigidity is a sin, a sin which sometimes gets into the hearts of the clergy and of consecrated men and women. I’ll read you some verses from Madeleine Delbr  l, which are in the form of a prayer. She says this:

***For I think that you may have had enough***

*of people who, always, speak of serving you with the look of a leader,  
of encountering you with the air of a professor,  
of approaching you with sporting regulations,  
of loving you as one loves in an aged marriage.*

...

*Let us live our life,  
not as a game of chess where everything is calculated,  
not as a game where everything is difficult,  
not as a theorem that breaks our minds,  
but like an endless party where your meeting is renewed,  
like a ball,  
like a dance,  
in the arms of your grace,  
in the universal music of love.*

These verses can become the background music with which we receive the *Final Document*. And now, in the light of what has emerged from the synodal journey, there are and there will be decisions to be made.

In this time of wars, we must be witnesses of peace, and also learn to shape in concrete ways the *conviviality of differences*.

For this reason, I do not intend to publish an “Apostolic Exhortation”: what we have approved is enough. The Document already contains very substantial indications which can guide the mission of the Churches, on different continents, and in particular contexts: hence I

am making it available to everyone straight away; hence I have asked for it to be published. In this way, I want to acknowledge the value of the synodal journey which has been made, and which, by means of this Document, I entrust to the holy faithful People of God.

Time is needed in order to arrive at decisions and choices that involve the whole Church on some aspects of the life of the Church to which the Document draws attention, and on the themes entrusted to the ten “Study Groups”, which need to work freely in order to offer me proposals. I shall, therefore, continue to listen to the Bishops and the Churches entrusted to them.

This is not the classic way of putting decisions off for ever. It is what corresponds to the synodal style with which the Petrine ministry, too, is to be exercised: listen, convene, discern, decide and evaluate. Pauses, silence and prayer are necessary at every one of these steps. It is a style we are learning together, a little at a time. The Holy Spirit calls us and supports us in this way of learning, which we need to see as a process of conversion.

The General Secretariat of the Synod and all the Dicasteries of the Roman Curia will help me in this task.

2. The Document is a gift to the whole faithful People of God, in all its various forms. It is obvious that not everyone will set about reading it: it will be you, above all, together with many other people, who will make what it contains accessible in the local Churches. Without the witness of the experience acquired, the text would lose much of its value.

3. Dear brothers and sisters, what we have lived through is a gift we cannot keep to ourselves. The energy that comes from this

experience, which is reflected in the Document, gives us the courage to bear witness that it is possible to walk together with our differences without condemning each other.

We come from all parts of the world, from places marked by violence, poverty and indifference. Together, with the hope that does not disappoint, united in the love of God which has been poured into our hearts, we can not only dream of peace, but commit ourselves with all our might so that, even if we don't say much about synodality, peace may be achieved through processes of listening, dialogue and reconciliation. The synodal Church for mission now needs the words we have shared to be backed up by deeds. And that is the path.

All of this is the Holy Spirit's gift: *it is He who creates harmony, He is harmony*. Saint Basil has a beautiful theology on this: if you can, read his treatise on the Holy Spirit. He is harmony. Brothers and sisters, may harmony continue even after we leave this Aula and may the breath of the Risen One help us to share the gifts we have received.

And remember – more words from Madeleine Delbrêl – that “there are places where the Spirit blows, but there is one Spirit who blows in every place”.

I should like to thank you all; let us thank each other, too. I thank Cardinal Grech and Cardinal Hollerich for the work they have done, the two Under-Secretaries, Sister Becquart and Bishop Marín de San Martín – you've done well! –, Father Battocchio and Father Costa, who have helped so much! I greet everyone who has worked behind the scenes; without them we would not have been able to do all this. Thank you so much! May the Lord bless you. Let us pray for each other. Thank you!

## MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS FOR THE EIGHTH WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

*Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time*

*17 November 2024*

***The prayer of the poor rises up to God (cf. Sir 21:5)***

***Dear brothers and sisters,***

1. The prayer of the poor rises up to God (cf. *Sir* 21:5). In this year dedicated to prayer in anticipation of the Ordinary Jubilee of 2025, this expression of biblical wisdom is most fitting as we prepare for the Eighth World Day of the Poor, which will be observed on 17 November. Indeed, Christian hope embraces the certainty that our prayer reaches God's presence; not just any prayer but rather the prayer of the poor! Let us reflect on this word and "read" it on the faces and in the stories of the poor whom we encounter daily, so that prayer can become a path of communion with them and a sharing in their suffering.

2. The *Book of Sirach*, of which we are speaking, is not sufficiently known, yet it deserves to be discovered for the richness of its themes, especially regarding the relationship of humanity with God and with the world. Its author, Ben Sira, was a teacher, a scribe in Jerusalem, likely writing in the 2nd century B.C. He was a wise man, deeply rooted in Israel's tradition, who taught on various aspects of human life: work, family, social life and the education of the young. He paid special attention to themes related to faith in God and observance of

the Law. He tackled the difficult issues of freedom, evil and divine justice, which are still highly relevant to us today. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, Ben Sira sought to point out to everyone the path to follow in order to live a wise and dignified life in the eyes of God and our brothers and sisters.

3. One of the themes to which this sacred author devotes significant attention is prayer. He does so with great fervour because he gives voice to his personal experience. Indeed, no writing on prayer can be effective and fruitful if it does not stem from someone who stands daily in God's presence and listens to his Word. Ben Sira declares that he sought wisdom from his youth: "While I was still young, before I went on my travels, I sought wisdom openly in my prayer" (*Sir* 51:13).

4. On this journey, he discovered one of the fundamental truths of revelation, namely, that *the poor hold a privileged place in God's heart*, to the point that, in the face of their suffering, God is "impatient" until he has rendered justice to them. "The prayer of the humble pierces the clouds, and he will not be consoled until it reaches the Lord; he will not desist until the Most High visits him, and does justice for the righteous, and executes judgment. And the Lord will not delay" (*Sir* 35:17-18). God knows the sufferings of his children because he is an attentive and caring father. As a father, he takes care of those who are most in need: the poor, the marginalized, the suffering and the forgotten. No one is excluded from his heart, for in his eyes, we are all poor and needy. We are all beggars because, without God, we would be nothing. We would not even have life if God had not given it to us. Yet how often we live as if we were the masters of life or as if we had to conquer it! The mentality of the



world demands that we become somebody, that we make a name for ourselves at any cost, breaking social norms in order to accumulate wealth. How sad of an illusion this is! Happiness cannot be acquired by trampling on the rights and dignity of others.

The violence caused by wars clearly shows the arrogance of those who consider themselves to be powerful before men and women, but they are poor in the eyes of God. *How many more people are impoverished by misguided policies involving weapons!* How many innocent victims! Yet we cannot turn our backs to this reality. The disciples of the Lord know that each of these “little ones” bears the image of the Son of God and each one must receive our support and expressions of Christian charity. “Each individual Christian and every community is called to be an instrument of God for the liberation and promotion of the poor, and for enabling them to be fully a part of society. This demands that we be docile and attentive to the cry of the poor and to come to their aid” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 187).

5. In this year dedicated to prayer, we need to *make the prayer of the poor our own and pray together with them*. This is a challenge we must embrace and a pastoral activity that needs to be nurtured. Moreover, “the worst discrimination which the poor suffer is the lack of spiritual care. The great majority of the poor have a special openness to the faith; they need God and we must not fail to offer them his friendship, his blessing, his word, the celebration of the sacraments and a journey of growth and maturity in the faith. Our preferential option for the poor must mainly translate into a privileged and preferential religious care” (*ibid.*, 200).

All of this requires *a humble heart*, one that has the courage to

become a beggar. A heart that is ready to acknowledge itself as poor and needy. Indeed, there is a correlation between poverty, humility and trust. The truly poor person is the humble one, as the holy Bishop Augustine said: “The poor have nothing to be proud of, the rich must combat their pride. Therefore, listen to me: be truly poor, be virtuous, be humble” (*Sermons*, 14, 4). The humble have nothing to boast of and nothing to claim; they know they cannot rely on themselves but firmly believe they can appeal to God’s merciful love, standing before him like the prodigal son who returns home repentant to receive the father’s embrace (cf. *Lk* 15:11-24). The poor, having nothing to rely on, receive strength from God and place all their trust in him. Indeed, humility generates trust that God will never abandon us and will never leave us without a response.

6. To the poor who dwell in our cities and are part of our communities, I say: do not lose this certainty! *God is attentive to each of you and is close to you*. He does not forget you nor could he ever do so. We all have had the experience of prayers that seem to remain unanswered. Sometimes we ask to be freed from a misery that makes us suffer and humiliates us, and God seems not to hear our cry. However, God’s silence does not mean he is inattentive to our sufferings; rather, it contains a word that must be received with trust, surrendering ourselves to him and to his will. Sirach again attests to this: the Lord’s judgment will be in favour of the poor (cf. *Sir* 21:5). From poverty, therefore, the song of the most genuine hope can spring up. Let us remember that “whenever our interior life becomes caught up in its own interests and concerns, there is no longer room for others, no place for the poor. God’s voice is no longer heard, the quiet joy of his love is no longer felt, and the desire to do good fades” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 2).

7. *The World Day of the Poor* has now become a fixture for every ecclesial community. It is a pastoral opportunity not to be underestimated, for it challenges every believer to listen to the prayer of the poor, becoming aware of their presence and needs. It is an opportune occasion to implement initiatives that concretely help the poor and to recognize and support the many volunteers who dedicate themselves passionately to those most in need. We must thank the Lord for the people who make themselves available to listen to and support the poorest among us. They are priests, consecrated persons, lay men and women who, by their testimony, give voice to God's response to the prayer of those who turn to him. This silence, therefore, is broken every time a person in need is welcomed and embraced. The poor still have much to teach us because in a culture that has placed wealth at the forefront and often sacrifices the dignity of people on the altar of material goods, they swim against the tide, highlighting that what is essential for life is something else entirely.

Prayer, then, is verified by authentic charity that manifests itself as encounter and proximity. *If prayer does not translate into concrete action, it is in vain*; indeed, "faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead" (Jas 2:17). However, *charity without prayer risks becoming philanthropy that soon exhausts itself*. "Without daily prayer lived with fidelity, our acts are empty, they lose their profound soul, and are reduced to being mere activism" (BENEDICT XVI, *Catechesis*, April 25, 2012). We must avoid this temptation and always be vigilant with the strength and perseverance that comes from the Holy Spirit, who is the giver of life.

8. In this context, it is beautiful to recall the testimony left to us by *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, a woman who gave her life for the poor.

Saint Teresa continually repeated that *it was from prayer that she drew the strength and faith* for her mission of service to the least among us. When she spoke at the General Assembly of the UN on October 26, 1985, showing everyone the rosary she always held in her hand, she said: "I am only a poor sister who prays. By praying, Jesus puts his love in my heart, and I go to give it to all the poor I meet along the way. Pray too! Pray, and you will notice the poor who are beside you. Perhaps on the same floor in your apartment building. Perhaps even in your houses, someone is waiting for your love. Pray, and your eyes will open, and your heart will fill with love".

How can we not recall here in the city of Rome, Saint Benedict Joseph Labre (1748-1783), whose body rests and is venerated in the parish church of Santa Maria ai Monti. A pilgrim from France to Rome, rejected by many monasteries, he spent the last years of his life poor among the poor, spending hours in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, with the rosary, reciting the breviary, reading the New Testament and the *Imitation of Christ*. Having no place to stay, he usually slept in a corner of the ruins of the Colosseum like a "vagabond of God," making his life a ceaseless prayer that rose up to God.

9. As we journey towards the Holy Year, I urge everyone to become *pilgrims of hope*, setting tangible goals for a better future. Let us not forget to keep "the little details of love" (*Gaudete et Exsultate*, 145): stopping, drawing near, giving a little attention, a smile, a caress, a word of comfort. These gestures are not automatic; they require a daily commitment and are often hidden and silent, but strengthened by prayer. In this time, when the song of hope seems to give way to the clamour of arms, to the cry of many innocent wounded, and the

silence of the countless victims of wars, we turn to God with our plea for peace. We stretch out our hands to receive peace as a precious gift for we are “poor” in this regard, while at the same time committing ourselves to weave it back into daily life.

10. We are called in every circumstance to be *friends of the poor*, following in the footsteps of Jesus who always began by showing solidarity when dealing with the least among us. May the Mother of God, Mary Most Holy, who appeared at Banneux and left a message not to be forgotten: “I am the Virgin of the poor,” sustain us on this journey. To Mary, whom God has looked upon with favour for her humble poverty, accomplishing great things through her obedience, we entrust our prayers, convinced that they will rise to heaven and be heard.

*Rome, Saint John Lateran, 13 June 2024,*

*Memorial of Saint Anthony of Padua, Patron of the Poor*

**FRANCIS**

## **DECREE ON THE GRANTING OF THE INDULGENCE DURING THE ORDINARY JUBILEE YEAR 2025 CALLED BY HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS**

“Now the time has come for a new Jubilee, when once more the Holy Door will be flung open to invite everyone to an intense experience of the love of God” (*Spes non confundit*, 6). In the Bull announcing the Ordinary Jubilee of 2025, at a moment in history in which “heedless of the horrors of the past, humanity is confronting yet another ordeal, as many peoples are prey to brutality and violence” (*Spes non confundit*, 8), the Holy Father calls on all Christians to become pilgrims of hope. This is a virtue which must be sourced above all in the grace of God and in the fullness of His mercy. It is to be rediscovered in the signs of the times, which, encompassing “the yearning of human hearts in need of God’s saving presence, ought to become signs of hope” (*Spes non confundit*, 7).

Previously, in the Bull announcing the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy in 2015, Pope Francis underlined how the Indulgence acquired “an even more important meaning” in that context (*Misericordiae vultus*, 22), since God’s mercy becomes the “indulgence on the part of the Father who, through the Bride of Christ, his Church, reaches the pardoned sinner and frees him or her from every residue left by the consequences of sin” (*ibid.*). Similarly, now the Holy Father declares that the gift of the Indulgence “is a way of discovering the unlimited nature of God’s mercy. Not by chance, for the ancients, the terms ‘mercy’ and ‘indulgence’ were interchangeable, as expressions of the

fullness of God's forgiveness, which knows no bounds" (*Spes non confundit*, 23). The Indulgence, therefore, is a Jubilee grace.

And so, also during the Ordinary Jubilee of 2025, by will of the Supreme Pontiff, this 'Court of Mercy', which is responsible for all that concerns the granting and use of indulgences, wishing to encourage the souls of the faithful and nourish the pious desire to obtain the Indulgence seen as a gift of grace specific to each Holy Year, establishes the following indications, so that the faithful may take advantage of the "norms for obtaining and rendering spiritually fruitful the practice of the Jubilee indulgence" (*Spes non confundit*, 23).

During the Ordinary Jubilee of 2025, all others Indulgences previously granted remain in force. All the faithful, who are truly repentant and free from any affection for sin (cf. *Enchiridion Indulgentiarum*, IV ed., norm. 20, § 1), who are moved by a spirit of charity and who, during the Holy Year, purified through the sacrament of penance and refreshed by Holy Communion, pray for the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff, will be able to obtain from the treasury of the Church a plenary indulgence, with remission and forgiveness of all their sins, which can be applied in suffrage to the souls in Purgatory in the following ways:

### *I.- Pilgrimages*

The faithful, *pilgrims of hope*, will be able to obtain the Jubilee Indulgence granted by the Holy Father if they undertake a pious pilgrimage:

*to any sacred Jubilee site:* by devoutly participating in Holy Mass (where the liturgical norms allow for it, the Mass of the Jubilee might fruitfully be chosen, or one of the Votive Masses: for Reconciliation, for the Remission of Sins, for the Promotion of Charity or to Foster Harmony); a ritual Mass for the conferral of the sacraments of Christian Initiation or the Anointing of the Sick; or any of the following: a celebration of the Word of God; the Liturgy of the Hours (office of readings, lauds, vespers); the Via Crucis; the Marian Rosary; the recitation of the Akathist hymn; a penitential celebration, which ends with the individual confessions of the penitents, as established in the Rite of Penance (form II);

*in Rome:* by visiting at least one of the four Major Papal Basilicas: St. Peter's in the Vatican, the Archbasilica of the Holy Saviour (St John Lateran's), Saint Mary Major's, and St. Paul's Outside the Walls;

*in the Holy Land:* by visiting at least one of the three basilicas: the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem, or the Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth;

*in other ecclesiastical areas:* by visiting the Cathedral or other church or sacred place designated by the local Ordinary. Bishops will take into account the needs of the faithful as well as the opportunity to reinforce the concept of pilgrimage with all its symbolic significance, so as to manifest the great need for conversion and reconciliation;

### *II.- Pious visits to sacred places*

Likewise, the faithful can obtain the Jubilee Indulgence if,



individually or in a group, they devoutly visit any Jubilee site and there, for a suitable period of time, engage in Eucharistic adoration and meditation, concluding with the Our Father, the Profession of Faith in any legitimate form, and invocations to Mary, the Mother of God, so that in this Holy Year everyone "will come to know the closeness of Mary, the most affectionate of mothers, who never abandons her children" (*Spes non confundit*, 24).

During the Jubilee Year, in addition to the aforementioned places of pilgrimage, the following sacred places may also be visited under the same conditions:

*in Rome*: the Basilica of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem, the Basilica of St Lawrence at the Verano, the Basilica of St Sebastian, (the traditional visit to "the seven Churches of Rome", so close to the heart of St Philip Neri is also highly recommended), the Sanctuary of Divine Love (the 'Divino Amore'), the Church of the Holy Spirit *in Sassia*, the Church of St Paul at the *Tre Fontane*, (the site of the Martyrdom of the Apostle), the Roman Catacombs; the churches of the Jubilee Pathways dedicated respectively to the *Iter Europaeum* and to the *Female Patrons of Europe and Doctors of the Church* (the Basilica of Santa Maria sopra Minerva, and the churches of St Brigid at Campo de' Fiori, Santa Maria della Vittoria, Trinità dei Monti, the Basilica of Saint Cecilia in Trastevere, and the Basilica of Sant'Augustine in Campo Marzio);

*in other places in the world*: the two Minor Papal Basilicas in Assisi – those of St Francis and Our Lady of the Angels; the Pontifical Basilicas of Our Lady of Loreto, Our Lady of Pompeii, and St Anthony in Padua; any minor basilica, cathedral church, co-cathedral

church, Marian sanctuary, any distinguished collegiate church or sanctuary designated by the diocesan bishop or Eparchy for the benefit of the faithful, and national or international sanctuaries, "sacred places of welcome and privileged spaces for the rebirth of hope" (*Spes non confundit*, 24), as indicated by Episcopal Conferences.

The faithful who are truly repentant of sin but who cannot participate in the various solemn celebrations, pilgrimages and pious visits for serious reasons (especially cloistered nuns and monks, but also the elderly, the sick, prisoners, and those who, through their work in hospitals or other care facilities, provide continuous service to the sick), can obtain the Jubilee Indulgence, under the same conditions if, united in spirit with the faithful taking part in person, (especially when the words of the Supreme Pontiff or the diocesan Bishop are transmitted through the various means of communication), they recite the Our Father, the Profession of Faith in any approved form, and other prayers in conformity with the objectives of the Holy Year, in their homes or wherever they are confined (e.g. in the chapel of the monastery, hospital, nursing home, prison...) offering up their sufferings or the hardships of their lives;

### III.-Works of mercy and penance

In addition, the faithful will be able to obtain the Jubilee Indulgence if, with a devout spirit, they participate in popular missions, spiritual exercises, or formation activities on the documents of the Second Vatican Council and the Catechism of the Catholic Church, held in a church or other suitable place, according to the mind of the Holy Father.

Despite the rule that only one plenary indulgence can be obtained per day (cf. *Enchiridion Indulgentiarum*, IV ed., norm. 18, § 1), the faithful who have carried out an act of charity on behalf of the souls in Purgatory, if they receive Holy Communion a second time that day, can obtain the plenary indulgence twice on the same day, applicable only to the deceased (this must take place within a Eucharistic celebration; see can. 917 and the Pontifical Commission for the authentic interpretation of the CIC, *Responsa ad dubia*, 1, 11 July 1984). Through this double act, a praiseworthy exercise of supernatural charity is carried out, through that bond by which the faithful still journeying on this earth are united in the mystical Body of Christ, with those who have already completed their journey, by virtue of the fact that “the Jubilee indulgence, thanks to the power of prayer, is intended in a particular way for those who have gone before us, so that they may obtain full mercy” (*Spes non confundit*, 22).

In a special way "during the Holy Year, we are called to be tangible signs of hope for those of our brothers and sisters who experience hardships of any kind" (*Spes non confundit*, 10). Therefore, the Indulgence is also linked to certain works of mercy and penance, which bear witness to the conversion undertaken. The faithful, following the example and mandate of Christ, are encouraged to carry out works of charity or mercy more frequently, especially in the service of those brothers and sisters who are burdened by various needs. More especially, they should rediscover these “corporal works of mercy: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, heal the sick, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead ” (*Misericordiae vultus*, 15) and rediscover also "the spiritual works of mercy: to counsel the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the afflicted, forgive offences,

bear patiently those who do us ill, and pray for the living and the dead" (ibid.).

In this way, the faithful will be able to obtain the Jubilee Indulgence if they visit, for an appropriate amount of time, their brothers and sisters who are in need or in difficulty (the sick, prisoners, lonely elderly people, disabled people...), in a sense making a pilgrimage to Christ present in them (cf. Mt 25, 34-36) according to the usual spiritual, sacramental and prayer conditions. The faithful can repeat these visits throughout the Holy Year, even daily, acquiring a plenary indulgence each time.

The Jubilee Plenary Indulgence can also be obtained through initiatives that put into practice, in a concrete and generous way, the spirit of penance which is, in a sense, the soul of the Jubilee. In particular the penitential nature of Friday can be rediscovered through abstaining, in a spirit of penance, at least for one day of the week from futile distractions (real but also virtual distractions, for example, the use of the media and/or social networks), from superfluous consumption (for example by fasting or practising abstinence according to the general norms of the Church and the indications of the Bishops), as well as by donating a proportionate sum of money to the poor; by supporting works of a religious or social nature, especially in support of the defence and protection of life in all its phases, but also by supporting the quality of life of abandoned children, young people in difficulty, the needy or lonely elderly people, or migrants from various countries “who leave their homelands behind in search of a better life for themselves and for their families” (*Spes non confundit*, 13); it can also be obtained by dedicating a reasonable portion of one’s free time to voluntary

activities that are of service to the community or to other similar forms of personal commitment.

All diocesan bishops and eparchs and those who are equivalent to them in law, on the most appropriate day of this jubilee period, on the occasion of the main celebration in the cathedral and in the individual jubilee churches, may impart the *Papal Blessing* with the attached plenary indulgence, obtainable by all the faithful who receive this *Blessing* under the usual conditions.

In order to facilitate access to the sacrament of Penance and the obtaining of divine forgiveness through the ‘Power of the Keys’, local Ordinaries are invited to grant to the Canons and Priests, who in the Cathedrals and Churches specially designated for the Holy Year, hear the confessions of the faithful, the faculties limited to the internal forum for the faithful of the Eastern Churches covered by can. 728, § 2 of the CCEO, and in the case of a possible reservation, those for can. 727, excluding, clearly, those cases listed in can. 728, § 1; while for the faithful of the Latin Church, the faculties referred to in can. 508, § 1 of the CIC.

In this regard, this Penitentiary urges all priests to offer generous availability and self-dedication to allow the greatest possible opportunity for the faithful to benefit from the means of salvation, by adopting and publishing time slots for confessions, in agreement with parish priests or rectors of neighbouring churches, by making time to be available in the confessional, planning penitential celebrations on a fixed and frequent basis, and also making the widest possible use of retired priests who do not have other defined pastoral roles. Depending on the possibilities, priests should remember, in

accordance with the *Motu proprio Misericordia Dei*, the pastoral opportunity that also exists in hearing Confessions during the celebration of Holy Mass.

To facilitate the task of confessors, the Apostolic Penitentiary, by mandate of the Holy Father, grants to priests who accompany or join Jubilee pilgrimages outside their own Diocese the right to make use of the same faculties which they have been granted in their own Diocese by the legitimate authority. Special faculties will be conferred by this Apostolic Penitentiary to the penitentiaries of the Papal Basilicas in Rome, and to Canon Penitentiaries or Diocesan Penitentiaries established in individual ecclesiastical circumscriptions.

Confessors, after having lovingly instructed the faithful on the gravity of the sins to which a reservation or censure is attached, should determine, with pastoral charity, appropriate sacramental penances, so as to lead penitents, as far as possible to stable repentance and, depending on the nature of the case, invite them to repair any scandal and damages.

Finally, the Penitentiary warmly invites Bishops, as bearers of the triple *munus* of teaching, guiding, and sanctifying, to explain clearly the provisions and principles proposed here for the sanctification of the faithful, taking account of local circumstances, cultures and traditions. A catechesis appropriate to the socio-cultural characteristics of each people will propose the Gospel and the entirety of the Christian message effectively, rooting more deeply in people’s hearts the desire for this unique gift, obtained through the mediation of the Church.

This Decree is valid for the entire Ordinary Jubilee of 2025, notwithstanding any provision to the contrary.

*Given in Rome, from the Offices of the Apostolic Penitentiary, on 13 May 2024, Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Fatima.*

*Angelo Cardinal De Donatis*

*Major Penitentiary*

*+ Krzysztof Nykiel*

*Regent*



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