

# 2025 JUBILEE PILGRIMAGE

WASHINGTON D.C. | ROME | ASSISI

NOVEMBER 30 – DECEMBER 11, 2025



**FR. JOHN PUODZIUNAS, O.F.M.**

PRESIDENT, FRANCISCAN FOUNDATION FOR THE HOLY LAND  
*SPIRITUAL LEADER FOR THE PILGRIMAGE*



FRANCISCAN PILGRIMAGE PROGRAMS, INC.  
FRANKLIN, WISCONSIN

# A WELCOME AND AN INVITATION

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Dear Pilgrims,

*Pace e bene* ... peace and all good!

I am happy to present you this opportunity of a lifetime, an invitation to participate as a pilgrim on a special journey in this 2025 Jubilee Year, *a jubilee of hope*.

The Franciscan Foundation for the Holy Land usually provides pilgrimages to the Holy Land, to the places where Jesus lived, walked, preached, healed, suffered, died and rose from the dead. The conflict in the Holy Land has forced us to suspend these journeys. For this jubilee year we have prepared a unique opportunity to make a pilgrimage to Rome, to the place that is the cradle of our faith, and to Assisi, the home of the popular 12th – 13th century Saint Francis of Assisi. We will begin our journey in Washington DC, at the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land, where we will find replicas of the holy places of the Holy Land, there setting the stage for our journey to Italy.

A pilgrimage is not the typical tourist trip; it is an opportunity to embark on a spiritual voyage, a voyage on which the journey is more important than the destination; a voyage which not only takes us to sacred places, but also a voyage to our own hearts.

Through our travels to sacred sites such as Assisi and Rome, we will delve into the profound legacy of Saints Francis and Clare and experience firsthand the beauty of their devotion to God, nature and humanity.

Our itineraries are carefully crafted to offer moments of reflection, prayer and community. More than a tourist excursion, these pilgrimages are an opportunity for personal growth, spiritual renewal and deepening of faith. They are a chance to connect with the essence of Franciscan spirituality and carry its timeless message of peace, compassion and simplicity into our lives.

I invite you to join us on an unforgettable journey of faith and discovery. Whether you are seeking solace, seeking inspiration or simply seeking to explore the rich tapestry of Italian culture and spirituality, our pilgrimage promises to be a transformative experience.

Please consider joining us for this opportunity of a lifetime.



Fr. John Puodziunas, O.F.M.

*President, Franciscan Foundation for the Holy Land*



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# THE JUBILEE YEAR

## WHAT IS A JUBILEE YEAR?

A Holy Year of the forgiveness of sin, conversion and joyful celebration.

The word “jubilee” comes from the Hebrew word *yobel*, which refers to the ram’s horn used to announce a jubilee in the Old Testament.

## OLD TESTAMENT ORIGINS

God told Moses that every fiftieth year was to be set aside for the return of absent members to their households, the restoration of land to its owners, the release of Hebrew slaves and the forgiveness of debts (see Leviticus 25:10). Like the Sabbath, which took place on the seventh day of each week, the Jubilee was a time for the Israelites to re-establish a proper relationship with God and with one another.

## TRADITION CONTINUES IN CHRISTIANITY

Pope Boniface VIII proclaimed the first Christian jubilee in A.D. 1300, granting the full remission of sin for those who confessed their sins and made a pilgrimage to St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome.

The Church first celebrated jubilee years every 100 years. This was eventually shortened to every 50 years and then every 25 years.

## RECENT JUBILEE YEARS

**1950:** During this Holy Year of 1950, Pope Pius XII proclaimed the dogma of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into Heaven.

**1975:** This Holy Year of reconciliation was proclaimed by Pope Paul VI.

**1983:** Pope John Paul II proclaimed a special jubilee year in 1983 to celebrate the 1,950th anniversary of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

**2000:** Pope John Paul II proclaimed the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000.

**2025:** Pope Francis declared an extraordinary jubilee for the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second Vatican Council. The jubilee was dedicated to mercy.

## JUBILEE 2025 – PILGRIMS OF HOPE

Jubilee 2025 was proclaimed by Pope Francis in the Papal Bull *Spes Non Confundit* (“Hope does not disappoint”).

“The coming Jubilee will thus be a Holy Year marked by the hope that does not fade, our hope in God. May it help us to recover the confident trust that we require, in the Church and in society, in our interpersonal relationships, in international relations, and in our task of promoting the dignity of all persons and respect for God’s gift of creation.” (Pope Francis, *Spes Non Confundit* 25)

The jubilee will begin in Rome on the vigil of the Lord's Nativity on December 24, 2024, with the opening of the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica and in local dioceses on Holy Family Sunday on December 29. It will conclude in local dioceses the following Holy Family Sunday on December 28, 2025 and in Rome on the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord, January 6, 2026, with the closing of the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica.

## HALLMARKS OF THE JUBILEE

**Jubilee Indulgence:** Special graces for the forgiveness of the temporal punishment due for sins are made available during the Jubilee Year. The faithful may obtain a plenary indulgence – remission of all temporal punishment (time in Purgatory) for sin– by meeting the normal conditions (confession, Holy Communion, prayer for the pope's intentions and no attachment to sin) and by participating in one of the following activities:

**Pilgrimages:** The four major basilicas in Rome are the main pilgrimage destinations, but pilgrims may also go to the Holy Land, their diocesan cathedral or other officially designated locations.

**Pious Visits to Sacred Places:** At these locations, the faithful are to engage in Eucharistic adoration and meditation, among other spiritual practices.

**Works of Mercy and Penance:** The faithful are to perform the spiritual or corporal works of mercy or carry out works of penance, such as abstaining from meat on Fridays.

**Holy Doors:** The pope opens the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica at the beginning of each jubilee year. Passing through the holy doors symbolizes the pilgrim's journey of conversion.

**Papal Basilicas:** The pope will open the Holy Doors of the four main churches (called "major basilicas") in Rome: St. Peter's Basilica, St. John Lateran, St. Mary Major, and St. Paul Outside the Walls.

## HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN JUBILEE 2025

**Make a pilgrimage to Rome.** Some dioceses, parishes and other organizations will be coordinating pilgrimages, but you may also go on your own.

**Participate in a local celebration of the jubilee.** Some dioceses, parishes and other organizations will coordinate local celebrations for those unable to travel to Rome.

**Obtain the Jubilee Indulgence** through one of the other means (works of mercy and penance, making a pilgrimage to your cathedral, etc.).

**Pray** for the pope, the Church and all who take part in the Jubilee.

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# ITINERARY

## DAY 1 – JOURNEY BEGINS

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30

Pilgrims arrive in Washington D.C., by 5:00 PM at the Morrow Hotel to begin our journey. After orientation, we share supper and meet the pilgrims who will journey with us. (D)



## DAY 2 – WASHINGTON, D.C.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 1

We create a lens through which to view our pilgrimage, the Holy Land, the place where Jesus walked. Because of the conflict in the Holy Land, our lens will be created by visiting the Franciscan Monastery, visiting replicas of the Holy Land sanctuaries and sites, Bethlehem, Gethsemane, Calvary and celebrating mass in the Monastery Church, taking in the beauty of the monastery grounds. (B/L/D)

## DAY 3 – WASHINGTON, D.C.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2

The story of the Holy Land is the story of the Bible. We will visit the Museum of the Bible, opened in 2017, where exhibits and technology will immerse us into the story of the Bible. After an open lunch in the museum cafes, we will make our way to Washington's Dulles Airport for our overnight flight to Rome, Italy. (B)



## DAY 4 – ROME

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3

Upon arrival at Rome's Fiumicino Airport, we will make our way to the Hotel *il Cantico*, a former orphanage that is now a guesthouse serving up Franciscan hospitality. We will make our way to the International Headquarters of the Franciscan Friars for lunch, *pranzo*, celebrate mass in the friars' chapel, and take in views from terraces overlooking St. Peter's Dome. Take a little *riposo*, time for rest before *cena*, dinner together in a typical Roman *osteria*. (L/D)



## DAY 5 – ROME

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4

After breakfast, we will make our way in vans through the city of Rome to the Basilica of *San Giovanni Laterano*, the home church and *cathedra* of the Holy Father. Here, in 1209, St. Francis came to Pope Innocent III to get approval for his *regula bullata*, rule of life. Here, we will pass through the Holy Door, a Jubilee Year ritual, and we will celebrate mass.





Before moving on we will visit the *Sancta Scala*, the holy steps brought from Jerusalem by St. Helena, the mother of Emperor Constantine, the steps that Jesus climbed to meet Pontius Pilate.

After lunch on your own in the neighborhood, we will make our way to the basilica of *Santa Croce de Gerusalemme*, home to relics of the crucifixion – the cross, parts of the nails, thorns from the crown. *Cena*, dinner together at one of the local eateries, then back to the hotel for a restful night, *buona note*. (B/D)



## DAY 6 – ROME

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5

After an early breakfast, we begin with early mass at one of the chapels in the Basilica *San Pietro*, the second of four major basilicas in Rome; then a visit of the basilica and tombs of the popes, followed by *pranzo*, lunch on your own. After lunch we meet up to make our way to the third of four major basilicas in Rome, St. Paul Outside the Wall, thought to be the resting place of St. Paul, the apostle who traveled extensively through the Holy Land.

For *cena*, supper, we will venture outside of the city, to a winery in the Frascati region for a relaxing evening. (B/D)

## DAY 7 – ASSISI

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6

It's *arrivederci* Roma as we make our way by motor coach to Assisi, the land of Saints Francis and Clare where we will find ourselves at the Hotel Dei Priori in the town square. Once settled in, we will have our *pranzo*, lunch, together, and our adventure will begin. Beginning at the rebuilt medieval fortress of *Rocca Maggiore*, we will take in a view of Assisi, then journey into the heart of the town to revisit the early life of St. Francis, to *Chiesa Nuova*, *San Francesco Piccolino*, and the Cathedral of *San Rufino* where we will stand at the baptistery where both Saints Francis and Clare were baptized in the late 12th century. *Cena*, supper, will be back at our hotel. (B/L/D)



## DAY 8 – ASSISI

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7

After breakfast we will find our way outside of the city walls to the Sanctuary of *San Damiano* where St. Francis first heard his call, where St. Clare founded her Order of nuns today called the Poor Clares. Here we will celebrate mass and commemorate the healing ministry of St. Clare.

We then return to the city for *pranzo*, lunch on your own. After lunch we will meet up in the town square as the residents of Assisi would do and find our way to the Church of *Santa Maria Maggiore*, the bishops' residence, to revisit a renunciation ritual of St. Francis, to visit the tomb of Blessed Carlo Acutis, the teen saint and a museum dedicated to the World War II heroes of Assisi.

Our afternoon ends at the Basilica of *Santa Chiara* where we will pray in front of the original cross that inspired St. Francis and view the relics of St. Clare. For *cena*, supper, we will savor some local cuisine together. (B/D)

### DAY 9 – ASSISI

MONDAY, DECEMBER 8

Our last day in this medieval town, after breakfast, we will journey by vans to the valley, to the Basilica of *Santa Maria D'Angeles*, to visit the treasure of the Franciscan Order, the little portion, *Porziuncola*, there to celebrate mass in one of the chapels.



After *pranzo*, lunch, on your own, we make our way to the grand basilica of *San Francesco*, to take in some beautiful artwork and to pray at the tomb of St. Francis – a fitting closure for our time in Assisi. We return to the *casa* for our *arrivederci* Assisi meal. (B/D)

### DAY 10 – GRECCIO

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9

We depart Assisi in the morning for Rome, making a stop in Greccio to celebrate an early Christmas. Here, in 1223, in a mountain-top cave, St. Francis celebrated Christmas Eve mass with the townspeople; a child appeared in the prepared manger by the altar. From here we get the tradition of preparing Christmas cribs and mangers, *precipe*, in our own homes. After “Christmas” mass and a visit of the sanctuary, we will make our way to a local eatery for our early-Christmas *pranzo*.

Then it's onto Rome, back to the Hotel *il Cantico*, for *cena*, supper, together at a local eatery and our final days. (B/D)

### DAY 11 – THE VATICAN

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10

This day will begin with an early breakfast, *collazione*, so that we can make our way to St. Peter's for the Papal Audience – time to greet our American-born, Pope Leo XIV.



After *pranzo*, lunch, on your own, we gather again to make our way to the fourth of the four major basilicas in Rome, the Basilica of *Santa Maria Maggiore*. Here we will pray at the simple tomb of the former Pope Francis, his chosen resting place, and celebrate mass, closing our jubilee pilgrimage. The evening meal, *cena*, we will celebrate at an eatery in Rome, and settle in for a well-deserved rest. (B/D)

### DAY 12 – FAREWELL

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11

And sadly, we say our farewells. For those returning to the U.S., we will arrange transportation to the airport. For those staying, we will help you find your way.

#### TRAVEL FOR A CAUSE

Traveling with the Franciscan Foundation for the Holy Land (FFHL) offers a unique opportunity to do so for a mission-based cause – to safeguard Christian presence in the Holy Land.

*FFHL is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.*

# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

## **COST FOR EXPERIENCE**

**\$4,250 PER PERSON**

LAND ONLY PRICING

Priced for Double-Occupancy  
Hotel Accommodations

*Single-Occupancy Hotel Accommodations  
are an Extra \$400*

### **PRICE INCLUDES:**

- Accommodations for 10 Nights
- All Hotel Taxes
- Meals as Indicated on Itinerary  
(B – Breakfast; L – Lunch; D – Dinner)
- Land Transportation by Deluxe Motorcoach  
or Van
- Baggage Handling at Hotels
- Sightseeing (Itinerary), Including All Entrance  
Fees
- Daily Mass
- Gratuities to Guide, Drivers, Hotel Staff and  
Waiters for Included Meals

### **AIR TRANSPORTATION**

**Airfare is NOT included in the published price.**

Once we meet the required minimum in registrations, we will reach out to you to assist in booking flights. Airfares will be added according to individual needs. We will travel as a group from Washington D.C. to Rome.

## **RESERVATIONS**

To register and reserve a place on the 2025 Jubilee Pilgrimage, please call 855.500.3345 or email [Info@FFHL.org](mailto:Info@FFHL.org). *Late registrations are accepted as space allows.*

## **DEPOSITS/PAYMENTS**

We require a \$300 non-refundable deposit per person. Final payment is due 65 days prior to departure.

## **TRAVEL**

Prices listed are for land only. You are responsible for booking and paying for your own flights. Once you register, we will give you the contact for **REX Travel**.

Pilgrims should plan to arrive in Washington D.C. by 5:00 PM on Sunday, November 30, 2025. We will travel as a group from Washington D.C. to Rome on Tuesday, December 2. We conclude our pilgrimage in Rome with a festive supper on Wednesday, December 10, going our separate ways on Thursday, December 11, either returning to the United States or remaining on your own in Italy. REX Travel will coordinate individual travel arrangements.

## **CANCELLATIONS**

All cancellations must be in writing. We honor cancellations for any reason and will provide a full refund less the \$300 deposit.

## **NON-INCLUSIONS**

Price does not include: (a) passport and visa fees; (b) travel, visits, gratuities, or excursions not scheduled as part of the official program; (c) travel, life, accident or health insurance; (d) airport or border taxes for extracurricular travel before or after a program.

Franciscan Foundation for the Holy Land and Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs, Inc. are not responsible for any additional air or surface transportation costs incurred by participants who miss scheduled group travel departure times, nor is it responsible for any medical expenses incurred by any member of the group or any additional costs incurred by participants who are unable to complete the program for whatever reason. Pilgrims are responsible for any baggage fees charged by airlines.

## **PASSPORTS/VISAS**

A passport with a minimum of 6 months validity remaining is required of all U.S. citizens. Required for the office: one (1) photocopy of the first page (photograph/signature page only) of your valid passport is needed for any international destination.



If you have residency in a country other than the United States, please check with the destination country's consulate or web page to learn if you need a visa to enter Italy. If required, let us know as soon as possible, and we will send you a letter to take to the respective Consulate.

## **HOTELS**

Accommodations are based on double occupancy. A number of single rooms are available at the supplement cost and must be requested at the time of booking.

## **MEDICAL CONDITION**

Good health (and relative physical fitness) are REQUIRED to enjoy the experience. Pilgrimages can be strenuous, with considerable walking, often in hilly areas, and stair climbing each day. Most international sites are not handicapped or wheelchair accessible. Please consult with your doctor if health problems exist.

## **PARTICIPATION EXPECTATION**

Participation is required from beginning to end, no cutting short or extracurricular activity during the program. Your full commitment is needed to share, enjoy leisure time, read, and to benefit from the experience.

## **TRAVEL INSURANCE**

We strongly suggest the purchase of travel insurance. While we do not recommend any particular insurance company, we can supply brochures to you upon request. Your insurance agent may have a recommendation. It is the responsibility of the pilgrim to request and review the insurance brochure, as well as arrange their insurance.

## **RESPONSIBILITY CLAUSE**

*Franciscan Foundation for the Holy Land (FFHL) and Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs, Inc. (FPP) cannot be responsible for the suppliers providing transportation, sightseeing arrangements, and hotel accommodations.*

*They are independent contractors and are not agents or employees of FFHL or FPP. All coupons, receipts, and tickets issued are subject to the terms and conditions specified by suppliers.*

*By utilizing the service of the suppliers, you agree that FFHL and FPP will not be liable for any change in schedule, strikes, delay, acts of governments, acts of war, acts of terrorism, fires, riots, theft, pilferage, epidemics, quarantine, medical or customs regulations, accident, loss, injury, or damage to you or those traveling with you in connection with any accommodations, transportation or any other services or resulting directly or indirectly from any occurrence or conditions beyond its control, including defects in vehicles, breakdown in equipment, thefts, delay or cancellation of or changes in itinerary for any act, omission, or event during the pilgrimage. Neither FFHL, FPP, and/or agents of the airlines concerned are to be held responsible for the late arrival of passengers at airports or hotels due to inclement weather, nor are they to be held liable for payment or any refund for unused hotel accommodations or meals occasioned by such late arrivals at the hotels holding rooms as confirmed itineraries. FFHL, FPP and suppliers contracted for services reserve the right to refuse to accept or retain any person whose BEHAVIOR is deemed likely to affect the smooth operation of a tour or adversely affect the enjoyment or safety of other pilgrims. FFHL, FPP, its agents, and suppliers shall be under no liability to any such person for refund, compensation, repatriation or any other matters arising.*

# A JUBILEE PRAYER

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Father in heaven,  
may the *faith* you have given us  
in your Son, Jesus Christ, our brother,  
and the flame of *charity* enkindled  
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 tireless cultivators of the seeds  
of the Gospel.

May those seeds transform from within both  
humanity and the whole cosmos  
in the sure expectation  
of a new heaven and a new earth,  
when, with the powers of Evil vanquished,  
your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee  
reawaken in us, *Pilgrims of Hope*,  
a yearning for the treasures of heaven.

May that same grace spread  
the joy and peace of our Redeemer  
throughout the earth.

To you our God, eternally blessed,  
be glory and praise for ever.

**AMEN**

