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MISSION MESSAGE

Jubilee 2025: Pilgrims of Hope Called to Serve

By **Shannon Kowalski**
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Pope Francis emphasizes the vital role of prayer, pilgrimage, and acts of charity in making this year a time of grace. Pilgrimages, whether physical or spiritual, represent our journey toward God, while works of mercy bring faith to life through action. Over the next 12 months, I invite you to fully embrace this Jubilee year — consider going on a pilgrimage, whether to Rome or somewhere closer like Scranton. Reflect on your prayer life and seek ways to deepen your relationship with Christ and, above all, strive to be Christ's hands and heart by serving those in need in your community.

Pope Francis calls on all believers to live out their baptismal call by becoming agents of hope and healing in a wounded world. He reminds us that true renewal doesn't happen in isolation — it flourishes through acts of selflessness and solidarity with the most vulnerable. Serving others during the Jubilee not only transforms the lives of those we help but also deepens our own faith.

Jubilee 2025 isn't just a Church event — it's a personal invitation to each of us. It's a chance to reflect, reconnect, and reignite our faith. As the Holy Doors open, let's open the doors of our hearts. Let's recommit to living our baptismal call by serving those in need and bringing light to those in darkness. By doing so, we become true "Pilgrims of Hope." Jubilee 2025 is more than a celebration — it's a mission, a journey, and an opportunity to put the Gospel into action.

By now, you have likely heard about the Jubilee Year declared by Pope Francis. This special year of prayer focused on the theme "Pilgrims of Hope" invites us to consider our spiritual journey, rekindle our relationship with God, and act upon our baptismal call to serve others — especially the poor and marginalized. It's a reminder that our mission is to bring light to a world that often feels burdened by suffering and division.

What is a Jubilee? Typically celebrated every 25 years, Jubilees are extraordinary periods of grace marked by pilgrimages, prayer, and the opportunity to receive a plenary indulgence. One of the most meaningful symbols of the Jubilee is the Holy Door, which is opened in specific churches around the world. Walking through this door isn't just a symbolic act; it's

a way to physically and spiritually embrace Christ as the door to salvation. For those who step through, it's a powerful moment of saying, "Yes, Lord, I'm ready for a new beginning in my faith."

The theme "Pilgrims of Hope" couldn't have come at a better time. The last five years have brought us many challenges — pandemics, social tensions, wars, and environmental crises. Amidst



all this, hope can feel hard to hold on to. But Pope Francis encourages us to embrace hope, not as a fleeting feeling but as a theological virtue that sustains us in the face of trials, suffering, and uncertainty. This Jubilee is an invitation to let hope shape our lives and our actions. After all, "hope does not disappoint." (Romans 5:5)

In his message for the Jubilee,

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For the Right to an Education —

Let us pray for migrants, refugees and those affected by war, that their right to an education, which is necessary to build a better world, might always be respected.