

**DECREE OF THE APOSTOLIC PENITENTIARY ANNOUNCING
SPECIAL JUBILEE YEAR
SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI**



While the fruits of grace of the Ordinary Jubilee of the Year 2025, which has just ended, in which we have all been urged to become pilgrims of that hope that does not disappoint (cf. Rm 5:5), are still present and effective, a new occasion for jubilation and sanctification is added to it as an ideal continuation: the eighth centenary of the happy passing of Saint Francis of Assisi from earthly life to his heavenly homeland (3 October 1226).

In recent years, other important Jubilees have concerned the person and the words of the Saint of Assisi: the eighth centenary of the creation of the first Nativity Scene in Greccio, the composition of the Canticum of the Creatures, hymn to the holy beauty of creation, and the impression of the Holy Stigmata, which took place on Mount Verna, almost a new Calvary, two years before his death. The year 2026 will mark the culmination and fulfilment of all the preceding celebrations: indeed, it will be the Year of Saint Francis and we are all called to become saints in the contemporary world, following the example of the *Seraphic Patriarch*.

If it is admirably true that “there is no other name under heaven given among men” (cf. Acts 4:12) except Jesus Christ, Redeemer of humanity, it is equally extraordinarily true that between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, in an era of so-called holy wars, relaxed morals and misguided religious fervour, “a sun was born into the world”[2]: Francis, who, as the son of a wealthy merchant, became poor and humble, a true *alter Christus* on earth, providing the world with tangible examples of evangelical life and a real image of Christian perfection. Our times are not very different from those in which Francis lived, and precisely in light of this, his teachings are perhaps even more valid and understandable today. When Christian charity languishes, ignorance spreads like bad habits, and those who extol harmony among peoples do so more out of selfishness than out of a sincere Christian spirit; when the virtual takes precedence over the real, social discord and violence are part of everyday life, and peace becomes more uncertain and distant every day; may this Year of Saint Francis urge us all, each according to our own possibilities, to imitate the *Poverello* of Assisi, to mould ourselves as much as possible on the model of Christ, to not let the intentions of the Holy Year just passed be in vain: may the hope that saw us as pilgrims now be transformed into zeal and fervour of active charity.

“And in this I want to know if you love the Lord and love me, his and your servant, if you will do this, namely: that there may never be any friar in the world, who has sinned as much as he could sin, who, after seeing your eyes, may go away without your merciful forgiveness, if he asks for it”[3].

With these extraordinary words, given in the *Epistola ad quendam ministrum*, Saint Francis at the same time not only dispenses consolation and advices to an anonymous confrère, but above all outlines and emphasizes the fundamental concept of mercy, which is inextricably linked to that of forgiveness and indulgence. And it is precisely forgiveness, the well-known “Pardon of Assisi” or “Indulgence of the Portiuncola”, that Pope Honorius

III granted directly to Francis as an exceptional privilege for those who, having confessed and received communion, visited an ancient church near Assisi on 2 August, built 800 years earlier on a “small portion of land” (hence the name “Portiuncola”).

With the same generous enthusiasm and joy that the Saint radiated to the crowd present at the consecration of the Portiuncola when he announced the grace granted, upon seeing his prayer answered by the Vicar of Christ, His Holiness Pope Leo XIV, Minister of our faith and our joy, establishes that, from 10 January 2026, coinciding with the closing of the Ordinary Jubilee, until 10 January 2027, a special Year of Saint Francis shall be proclaimed, in which every faithful Christian, following the example of the Saint of Assisi, shall become a model of holiness of life and a constant witness of peace.

For a more perfect achievement of the intended aims, the Apostolic Penitentiary, through this Decree issued in accordance with the will of the Supreme Pontiff, on the occasion of the Year of Saint Francis, grants a plenary indulgence under the usual conditions (sacramental confession, Eucharistic communion and prayer according to the intentions of the Holy Father), also applicable in the form of suffrage for the souls in Purgatory:

1) to members:

- of the Franciscan Families of the First, Second and Third Orders Regular and Secular;
- of Institutes of Consecrated Life, Societies of Apostolic Life and public or private associations of the faithful, male and female, who observe the Rule of Saint Francis or are inspired by his spirituality or perpetuate his charism in any form;

2) to all the faithful without distinction

who, with a heart detached from sin, participate in the Year of Saint Francis by visiting, in the form of a pilgrimage, any Franciscan conventual church or place of worship anywhere in the world dedicated to Saint Francis or connected to him for any reason, and there devoutly follow the Jubilee rites or spend at least a reasonable period of time in pious meditation and raise prayers to God so that, following the example of Saint Francis, feelings of Christian charity towards their neighbours and authentic vows of harmony and peace among peoples may spring forth in their hearts, concluding with the Our Father, the Creed and invocations to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Saint Francis of Assisi, Saint Clare and all the Saints of the Franciscan Family.

The elderly, the sick and those who take care of them, and all those who are unable to leave their homes for serious reasons may also obtain a Plenary Indulgence, provided they detach themselves from any sin and intend to fulfil the three usual conditions as soon as possible, if they unite themselves spiritually to the jubilee celebrations of the Year of Saint Francis, offering to the Merciful God their prayers, the pains or sufferings of their lives.

In order that this opportunity to obtain divine grace through the Power of the Keys of the Church may be more easily realised, this Penitentiary firmly requests all priests, regular and secular, who have the appropriate faculties, to make themselves available, with a ready, generous and merciful spirit, for the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

This decree is valid for the Year of Saint Francis, notwithstanding any provision to the contrary.

Given in Rome, from the seat of the Apostolic Penitentiary, on 10 January 2026, the eve of the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

Angelo Card. De Donatis
Major Penitentiary

His Reverend Excellency Msgr. Krzysztof Józef Nykiel
Titular Bishop of Velia, Regent