



CONDITIONS FOR A PLENARY INDULGENCE JUBILEE YEAR OF SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI

We mark the eighth centenary of the happy passing of Saint Francis of Assisi from earthly life to his heavenly homeland (3 October 1226).

The year 2026 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*.

His Holiness Pope Leo XIV, Minister of our faith and our joy, establishes that, from 10 January 2026 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.

This indulgence is applicable to all the faithful, who fulfill these conditions:

1. Have a heart detached from sin
2. Visit, in the form of a pilgrimage, any place of worship anywhere in the world dedicated to Saint Francis or connected to him for any reason
3. Spend at least a reasonable period of time in pious meditation and raise prayers to God, asking that feelings of Christian charity towards their neighbors and authentic vows of harmony and peace among peoples may spring forth in their hearts, following the example of St. Francis of Assisi
4. Offer a prayer to Saint Francis of Assisi, Saint Clare, and the saints of the Franciscan Family
5. Offer the *Our Father*, a *Hail Mary*, and the *Creed* for Pope Leo XIV
6. Receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion on the day of the visit
7. Receive the Sacrament of Confession (3 weeks before or after the visit)

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

WHO WAS ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI?

The patron saint of Italy, Saint Francis lived in the town of Assisi in the 1200s and was a poor man who astounded and inspired the Church by taking the gospel literally — not in a narrow fundamentalist sense, but by actually following all that Jesus said and did, joyfully, without limit, and without a sense of self-importance.

Serious illness brought the young Saint Francis to see the emptiness of his frolicking life as leader of Assisi's youth. Prayer — lengthy and difficult — led him to a self-emptying like that of Christ, climaxed by embracing a leper he met on the road. It symbolized his complete obedience to what he had heard in prayer: "Francis! Everything you have loved and desired in the flesh it is your duty to despise and hate, if you wish to know my will. And when you have begun this, all that now seems sweet and lovely to you will become intolerable and bitter, but all that you used to avoid will turn itself to great sweetness and exceeding joy."

From the cross in the neglected chapel of San Damiano, Christ told him, "Francis, go out and build up my house, for it is nearly falling down." Francis became the totally poor and humble workman. He would have been content to be for the rest of his life the poor "nothing" man actually putting brick on brick in abandoned chapels. He gave up all his possessions, piling even his clothes before his earthly father—who was demanding restitution for Francis' "gifts" to the poor.

Saint Francis was, for a time, considered to be a religious fanatic, begging from door to door when he could not get money for his work, evoking sadness or disgust to the hearts of his former friends, ridicule from the unthinking. But a few people began to realize that this man was actually trying to be Christian.

Saint Francis of Assisi's first rule for his followers was a collection of texts from the Gospels. He had no intention of founding an order, but once it began he protected it and accepted all the legal structures needed to support it. His devotion and loyalty to the Catholic Church and to the pope were absolute and highly exemplary at a time when various movements of reform tended to break the Church's unity.

Saint Francis of Assisi was torn between a life devoted entirely to prayer and a life of active preaching of the Good News. He decided in favor of the latter, but always returned to solitude when he could. He was ordained a Catholic deacon so he could assist at Mass and preach. He had a great devotion to the poor Christ child and organized a live-nativity with animals during Christmas Mass in the town of Greccio. He also had a great love for Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. And he recognized the beauty of God revealed in the beauty of nature.

Many men from Assisi and surrounding towns joined him and imitated his life of prayer, poverty, and cheerfulness. St. Clare was a young woman from Assisi who began a women's branch of Franciscans.

During the last years of his relatively short life, he died at 44, Francis was half blind and seriously ill. Two years before his death he received the stigmata, the real and painful wounds of Christ in his hands, feet, and side. On his deathbed, Saint Francis repeatedly said the prayer from his Canticle of the Sun. When Francis died, there were 5000 Franciscans living serving throughout Europe. Today, 800 years after his death, there are an estimated 650,000 Franciscan priest, brothers, and sisters.