



Ideas and Resources for Celebrating the Jubilee Year

Everyone knows what it is to hope. In the heart of each person, hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come, despite our not knowing what the future may bring... For all of us, may the Jubilee be an opportunity to be renewed in hope. God's word helps us find reasons for that hope.

Pope Francis, Spes non confundit #1

In the Catholic Church, a Jubilee or Holy Year is a special year of forgiveness and reconciliation, in which people are invited to come back into right relationship with God, with one another, and with all of creation.

Because Jubilee Years only occur every 25 years, this will be the only opportunity for the students in your school to experience a Jubilee Year within a school setting, so it is important that we have age-appropriate dialogue and learning around what a Jubilee Year is as well as experiences that help reinforce the significance of the event.

To celebrate the Jubilee Year 2025 in school, you can focus on the theme "Pilgrims of Hope" by incorporating activities like prayer services, discussions about social justice issues, acts of charity, art projects reflecting hope, student-led initiatives to help the community, educational sessions about the history of Jubilee years, and pilgrimages, all while emphasizing the importance of personal reflection and spiritual renewal as a community.

The following are some ideas and resources that may be useful to help your school plan for celebrating the Jubilee. Please do not think you have to do every single one! This is also not an exhaustive list! As events are planned at the archdiocesan level by the Office for Evangelization, we will share them via the Friday Update and at meetings. The official Jubilee website can be found at <https://www.iubilaeum2025.va/en.html> The jubilee website from the USCCB can be found at <https://www.usccb.org/committees/jubilee-2025>

- **Theme-based activities:**
 - **"Pilgrims of Hope" art projects:** Students can create artwork depicting hope, peace, and unity through paintings, drawings, or sculptures.
 - **"Hopeful" writing prompts:** Encourage students to write poems, stories, or reflections on themes of hope and overcoming challenges.
 - **"Pilgrim" themed plays or skits:** Students can act out scenarios representing the journey of hope and faith.
- **Spiritual practices:**
 - **Special prayer services:** Organize regular prayer assemblies focusing on the Jubilee theme, including prayers for peace, justice, and healing. The "Teach Us to Pray" resource can be helpful- <https://www.iubilaeum2025.va/en/giubileo-2025/verso-il-giubileo/2024-anno-della-preghiera/insegnaci-a-pregare.html>
 - **24 hours for the Lord:** March 28, 2025, will be celebrated as 24 hours for the Lord in the Vatican. Could schoolwide adoration services be set up for that day?

- **School penance services:** In the Old Testament, jubilee years were marked by the freeing of slaves. In the modern jubilee years we look to freeing ourselves from the slavery of sin. Regular penance services emphasizing this theme would be appropriate.
- **Reflection sessions:** Facilitate discussions on the meaning of hope, forgiveness, and renewal in the context of the Jubilee year.
- **"Daily Examen" practice:** Encourage students to reflect on their day and identify moments of hope and gratitude.
- **Community outreach:**
 - **Charity drives:** Organize collections for local charities or causes aligned with the Jubilee theme, like food drives, clothing donations, or fundraising for vulnerable populations.
 - **Volunteer initiatives:** Encourage students to volunteer their time at local shelters, soup kitchens, or community centers. Partnering with Martha's Table to make sandwiches or snack packs is a way to actively serve when you can't bring students out of the school- <https://marthastable.org/food-donations/>
 - **Letter-writing campaigns:** Write letters of encouragement to those in need, like elderly people or hospitalized individuals.
- **Educational components:**
 - **History of Jubilee Years:** Teach students about the historical significance of Jubilee years in the Catholic Church and their purpose.
 - **Pope Francis' message:** Discuss Pope Francis' vision for the Jubilee year and the "Pilgrims of Hope" theme. <https://www.iubilaeum2025.va/en/giubileo-2025/lettera-di-papa-francesco.html>
 - **Catholic Social Teaching:** Integrate lessons about Catholic social teaching related to justice, peace, and care for the marginalized.
- **School-wide events:**
 - **Jubilee Mass:** Organize a special school mass to celebrate the Jubilee year with a focus on hope and renewal.
 - **"Pilgrimage" day:** Simulate a pilgrimage experience within the school grounds, incorporating elements of reflection and prayer.
 - **Actual pilgrimages:** While the above would be appropriate for younger grades, is there a neighboring parish students could walk to where the Eucharist could be exposed and confessions could be heard so as to make a pilgrimage? Could you make a pilgrimage as a school to the Basilica Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, St. Matthew Cathedral, the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land, the Seton Shrine or other destinations?
 - **Jubilee banner competition:** Have students design banners representing the Jubilee theme and display them around the school. Or, take the competition element out of it and have each class design a banner to hang outside their classroom for the year. Then they could carry their banner on their pilgrimage...

