



JUBILEE 2025 FORGIVENESS



"Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you..." (Mt. 5:44)

Jubilees are always about mercy and forgiveness, so 2025 is a sacred time which can give us space for healing and a time to extend compassion to ourselves and others. If we can forgive, we may be able to break free from past hurts and difficulties, and help build a culture of understanding and reconciliation.

Acts of mercy, personal or community initiatives, remind us of our shared humanity and the power of grace. So let's use this Jubilee to cultivate a spirit of forgiveness and mercy, paving the way for deeper connections and a more harmonious world.

There was a mother who approached Napoleon Bonaparte, pleading for the life of her son who had been sentenced to death. Napoleon said to her, "**Justice** says your son should **die**." She responded, "I didn't come to ask for justice, I came to beg for **mercy**." Napoleon looked at the woman and said, "But he doesn't **deserve** mercy." She said, "Sir, if he **deserved** mercy, it wouldn't **be** mercy." Napoleon replied, "Well then, I will show mercy."

*'Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful. Judge not, and **you** will not be judged; condemn not, and **you** will not be condemned; forgive, and **you** will be forgiven.'*
Luke 6 : 36-38

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

'Deus Caritas Est' (God is Love) emphasises the importance of love of neighbour. In God and with God, we are invited to love even the people we do not like or know and those who may have offended us. Pope Benedict XVI invites us to do good to all, in the same way that Jesus identifies himself with those in need - including those in prison. There is an unbreakable bond between love of God and love of neighbour. One is so closely connected to the other that to say we love God becomes a lie if we are closed to our neighbour or hate him altogether.

In his encyclical *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis invites us to recognise ourselves as sinners – individually and collectively. We have all sinned against creation and against others. *Laudato Si'* awakens in us the need to take responsibility for our personal sin which has contributed to the degradation of the environment. It calls us to repentance and, in turn, invites us to live God's forgiveness willingly. It is living this forgiveness that brings freedom: 'We are able to take an honest look at ourselves, to acknowledge our deep dissatisfaction, and embark on new paths to authentic freedom'.

HOW CAN WE RESPOND?

- Organise a Reconciliation service.
- Organise Liturgies of Mercy using the suggested resources.
- Pray for forgiveness from a family member, friend, colleague or a member of your parish family.
- Think of someone who has hurt you and ask God for the strength to forgive that person
- Hold a discussion in your parish – perhaps during Lent – to pray and reflect on forgiveness. Caritas Plymouth has created a short resource for use by groups or individuals.



Invite Caritas to your parish to facilitate half or full days of reflection to explore themes around Catholic Social Teaching.

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“Let us pray that this upcoming Jubilee may strengthen us in our faith, helping us to recognise the Risen Christ in the midst of our lives, transforming us into pilgrims of Christian hope.” Pope Francis

Reconciliation

The Jubilee year is an opportunity to make peace with ourselves and with others. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a way to help us find that forgiveness and peace. For more information about the Sacrament of Reconciliation:



[The Basics – Catholic Bishops' Conference \(cbcew.org.uk\)](https://www.cbcew.org.uk).
[Confession – Catholic Bishops' Conference \(cbcew.org.uk\)](https://www.cbcew.org.uk).

Suggested Scripture Readings

“Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place.”

Daniel 9:24

“Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.”

Luke 6:37-38

Pope Francis talked about forgiveness in his Angelus address in September 2023. He said Jesus' message is clear: God forgives incalculably, exceeding all measure. This is how he is; He acts out of love, and gratuitously. God is not bought, God is free, he is all gratuitousness. We cannot repay him, but when we forgive a brother or a sister, we imitate him. Forgiving is not, therefore, a good deed that we can [choose to] do or not do; forgiving is a fundamental condition for those who are Christians. Every one of us, in fact, is “forgiven”: let us not forget this, we are forgiven, God gave his life for us, and in no way can we recompense him for his mercy, which he never withdraws from his heart.

<https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/angelus/2023/documents/20230917-angelus.html>

Prayer for Forgiveness

‘Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury... pardon,
for it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and in dying that we are born to eternal life.’

Prayer attributed to St Francis of Assisi.