

Jubilee Pilgrimage 2025
Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston
Office of Young Adult & Campus Ministry

What is the Jubilee?

“Jubilee” is the name given to a particular year where the faithful are called to reconnect with God in a new way. We can find an early indication of it in the Bible: a Jubilee year was to be marked every 50 years (cf. Leviticus 25:8-13). It was intended to be marked as a time to re-establish a proper relationship with God, with one another, and with all of creation, and involved the forgiveness of debts, the return of misappropriated land, and a fallow period for the fields.

Quoting the prophet Isaiah, the Gospel of Luke describes Jesus’ mission in this way: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord,” (Luke 4:18-19; cf. Isaiah 61:1-2). Jesus lives out these words in his daily life, in his encounters with others and in his relationships, all of which bring about liberation and conversion.

In 1300, Pope Boniface VIII called the first Jubilee, also known as a “Holy Year,” since it is a time in which God’s holiness transforms us. The frequency of Holy Years has changed over time: at first, they were celebrated every 100 years; later, in 1343 Pope Clement VI reduced the gap between Jubilees to every 50 years, and in 1470 Pope Paul II made it every 25 years. There have also been “extraordinary” Holy Years: for example, in 1933 Pope Pius XI chose to commemorate the 1900th anniversary of the Redemption, and in 2015 Pope Francis proclaimed the Year of Mercy as an extraordinary jubilee. The way in which Jubilee Years are marked has also changed through the centuries: originally the Holy Year consisted of a pilgrimage to the Roman Basilicas of St. Peter and St. Paul, later other signs were added, such as the Holy Door. By participating in the Holy Year, one is granted a plenary indulgence.

More information available here: [What is the Jubilee? \(iubilaeum2025.va\)](http://iubilaeum2025.va)

What is the Jubilee of Youth and Young Adults?

The full calendar of Jubilee events can be found [here](#). For the 2025 Jubilee, there is one week dedicated to youth, which includes teenagers and young adults, on July 28-August 3. The Vatican is expecting many pilgrims to come to Rome during this week and is planning on offering special events and opportunities for these pilgrims (catechesis sessions, musical concerts, prayer opportunities, etc.) during the week (similar to World Youth Day).

What happens during the Jubilee of Youth and Young Adults?

During the Jubilee of Youth and Young Adults, there will be several key moments of encounter for the pilgrims including:

- **Opening Mass:** On Tuesday, July 29, there will be an opening Mass for all pilgrims during the Jubilee of Youth.

- **Entrance to one Jubilee Holy Door:** Pope Francis will open the Holy Doors in Rome at the start of the Jubilee year of 2025. These doors will be open throughout the year for pilgrims to enter. In crossing the threshold of the Holy Door, the pilgrim is reminded of the passage from John:10: "I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved." Passing through the Holy Door expresses the decision to follow and be guided by Jesus, who is the Good Shepherd. All pilgrims will be given a timed entrance to ONE of the holy doors at one of the 4 major basilicas in Rome.
- **Walking Pilgrimage:** On Saturday, August 2, participants embark on a true pilgrimage by walking anywhere from 7-15 miles to arrive at the site for the Overnight Vigil. The hike is a moment of physical exertion that unites the modern-day pilgrims with pilgrims of Jesus day who would walk to Jerusalem for various feasts, especially the Passover.
- **Overnight Vigil:** With all pilgrims in one place, the overnight vigil is a true experience. Pilgrims from all over the world first meet for a moment of prayer with Eucharistic adoration, led by Pope Francis, followed by a night under the stars. This vigil will be held in the same spot of the vigil during WYD 2000 with Pope John Paul II.
- **Closing Mass with Pope Francis:** On Sunday, August 3, join Pope Francis and your fellow pilgrims for the closing Mass of the Jubilee of Youth. This is celebrated on the same field from the overnight vigil.

When is the Houston trip to the Jubilee of Youth and Young Adults?

July 27-August 6, 2025

The Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston will be offering a pilgrimage for young adults (ages 18-39) to participate in the Jubilee of Youth and Young Adults in Rome. We will also spend 2 days in Assisi after the Jubilee events end.

What is the Jubilee Theme?

Pilgrims of Hope

Who should come with the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston?

The Archdiocesan trip is open to all young adults (ages 18-39). This will be a bilingual trip with English/Spanish being spoken throughout.

The trip will be led by Archdiocesan Staff:

- Angie Pometto, Director, Office of Young Adult & Campus Ministry

We will also be joined by a priest (TBD). The priest will lead us in daily Mass, offer confession throughout the retreat, and walk with us on this pilgrimage.

We are working with Verso Pilgrimage company to make plans for this trip. All payments will be made directly to Verso. Verso staff is on hand to answer more specific questions about the trip. Information about Verso can be found: versoministries.com/archgh-jubilee

Registering for Jubilee

To register, please click the link available on our website and sign up through Verso Ministry. A deposit of \$500 is required at registration.

This cost includes:

- Verso Pilgrimage Director (Groups of 40+ pilgrims get dedicated director)
- Accommodations in double/triple/quad occupancy rooms (for young adults), including taxes (single rooms available on a limited basis with an extra charge).
- Meals as indicated on itinerary
- Transportation on motorcoach during select days
 - Day 9 - Transfer to Assisi, then to hotel
 - Day 10 - Assisi to Rome transfer
- Jubilee registration fees, including backpack pickup (if possible)
- Anticipated to include public transportation pass, meal vouchers, ticketed entry for 1 Holy Door, and pilgrim kit/backpack (final details still not released from Jubilee Planning Committee)
- Opportunity for daily Mass
- Gratuities for pilgrimage director, guide(s), driver(s), hotel staff, and meals
- T-shirt and other items specific to the Houston pilgrims.

This cost does NOT include:

- Flight
- Any meals not listed on the itinerary and drinks at meals
- Passport or visa fees (more info soon)
- Luggage fees
- Public transportation when we first arrive in Rome
- Travel Insurance (common among all travelers)

All pilgrims will be responsible for purchasing their own air flight transportation. All pilgrims will also be encouraged to purchase a travel protection policy (more details below).

Full itinerary details are available online at versoministries.com/archgh-jubilee

Jubilee Pilgrimage Payments

To register, you will need to submit a deposit of \$500. The remaining amount due will be collected at 5 points throughout the year. Register early to stay on schedule and keep payments smaller! All payments are due in full by March 31, 2025.

Payment	Date	Amount Due
Deposit	Upon Registration	\$500
#2	October 31, 2024	\$972
#3	December 31, 2024	\$972
#4	February 28, 2025	\$972
#5	March 31, 2025	\$465

This payment schedule is meant as a guide to help pilgrims stay on track with their payments. However, Verso is willing to work to develop an individualized payment plan with each pilgrim.

All payments are due in full by March 31, 2025.

Making Payments

Payments will be made directly to Verso Ministries and can be made via credit card through their registration site (YouLi). For more information, contact Verso directly at hello@versoministries.com.

Cancellation Policy

All cancellations must be submitted to Verso Ministries in written form and received via email or mail. Any refunds, as applicable, will be processed based on the date stamp of email or mail received. Cancellation fees will be charged per person, per booking. Cancellation fees apply to individual pilgrims who cancel their booking.

Cancellations are possible at any time, but refunds are subject to cancellation fees at the rates listed here.

After deposit*: Deposit is retained (\$500 per person)

October 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024: \$1,940.50 per person

January 1, 2025 – March 31, 2025: \$2,910.75 per person

April 1, 2025 or after: 100% of trip cost (no refund given)**

Any cancellation charges incurred from other suppliers or vendors (lodging, ground transportation, tickets, Jubilee registration, etc.) may come in addition to the administrative fees listed here. All optional excursions, trip options, pre/post extensions, private transfers, and additional hotel nights are non-refundable 180 days or less prior to departure unless otherwise noted.

*Pilgrims have 24 hours from the time of booking to cancel their pilgrimage without penalty, as long as the pilgrimage was booked on or before March 31, 2025.

**If someone needs to cancel after this date, there may be opportunities to find someone of the same gender to take their place. We're still working with Verso to finalize that.

Travel Insurance

We highly recommend that all pilgrims buy travel protection. Travel protection is not only for peace of mind, but it helps protect you and those you are traveling with from unforeseen emergencies, which always seem to happen at the worst possible time. In the event of emergencies, both before and during

your travels, as well other circumstances, like travel delay, lost baggage, missed connection(s), and much more, travel protection can help.

Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston suggests that pilgrims purchase a “Cancel for Any Reason” package of travel insurance. It is not required, but it is strongly recommended.

It is also strongly recommended that you purchase the insurance keeping in mind the cost of your flight as well (\$600-\$1,500).

More options and information about travel insurance will be provided at a later date.

Passports/Visas

Make sure to plan to bring your valid, up-to-date passport with you on the trip. Keep this with your wallet at all times.

- **Take a photo** of your passport on your smartphone so you have a backup copy in case your physical copy is lost or stolen.
- If you don't have a passport, start your application [here](#).
- If your passport is out of date (**expiration date should be AFTER February 15, 2026**), renew your application [here](#). Note that routine processing takes 6-8 weeks so get started as soon as possible (there are expedited options if you need it faster).

A visa is not required to travel to **Italy** for U.S. or Canadian citizens. Here is the list of other countries that may or may not require a passport for this event: [Italy Visa Application - Guide to Italy Schengen Visa \(visaguide.world\)](#)

Due to travel agreements between the European Union and the US, US citizens can enjoy international travel to any Schengen country **without applying for a visa**, and this includes **Italy**. As a US citizen, you can enjoy visa-free travel to Italy for up to 90 days.

If you are not a US Citizen, it is strongly recommended that you contact your embassy to inquire if a Visa will be needed for travel to Italy for the Jubilee Pilgrimage event.

Jubilee Pilgrimage Preparation Meetings

The Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston will host 4 preparation meetings leading up to the Jubilee Pilgrimage in July-August of 2025. Please save the date and plan to join us:

Meeting	Date	Location/Notes
#1	Thursday, October 3, 2024	Online Info Meeting, 7 pm
#2	Wednesday, November 6, 2024	Online Info Meeting #2, 7 pm
#3	Monday, February 3, 2025	In-Person at St. Dominic Chancery (Room 140), 7 pm
#4	Saturday, April 12, 2025	In-Person (Location TBD)*, 9 am-12 pm

These meetings will be used to share information and details about the trip and ensure that all pilgrims are well prepared with flights, passports and visas, packing lists, etc. These meetings will also be a chance for pilgrims to begin to meet each other and build community.

*The final meeting will be held in person on a Saturday. It will include a pilgrimage here in Houston which will include walking, community, prayer, and visiting a holy site. More details coming.

Purchasing Flights

It is a little too early to begin purchasing a flight for this trip. We will alert pilgrims when it is time to start working on your flight purchase. When that time comes, please use the below details to schedule your flight.

Designated arrival and departures times

- **Arrival information**
 - Arrive by: July 28, 2025
 - Arrival time: Arrive by 12:00 P.M.
 - Arrival airport: Leonardo da Vinci-Fiumicino International Airport (FCO)
 - Arrival transfer: Transfer to the hotel via taxi or public transit.

- **Departure information**
 - Depart on: August 6, 2025
 - Departure time: Depart any time on August 6
 - Departure airport: Leonardo da Vinci-Fiumicino International Airport (FCO)
 - Departure transfer: Transfer to the airport via taxi or public transit.

Want help arranging your flights?

- Need assistance? Contact us at hello@versoministries.com or call us at (574) 383-9396.

Room Assignments

When filling out your traveler form, every pilgrim is given an opportunity to choose a roommate for the trip. This information is given to Verso, however, the final rooming assignments will be completed by the Archdiocesan Staff. Please make sure you have the Verso travel form filled out correctly. If you have any questions or changes, please contact Angie to let her know.

Fundraising

Details about fundraising opportunities are available in the Fundraising Packet from Verso Ministries. Please read and follow the guides in that packet to pursue some fundraising options. The first option for fundraising is writing letters to friends/family and asking them to help support you on your trip. Be sure to include the spiritual reasons for why you want to go on this trip when you ask for help.

Travel Agreement

Waiver and release form given by Verso to all pilgrims. All pilgrims need to agree to abide by the group rules and follow instructions from group leaders. It is good if all pilgrims read that document fully since this is an over-simplification of what it states. Anyone in grave violation of this agreement may be asked to leave the trip/country at their own cost.

This form is also a liability release waiver. We will cover in future meetings some tips and ways to make smart decisions while traveling abroad. We want to keep everyone safe through the trip, but some of that depends on you and the choices you make.

Packing List

A detailed packing list will be made available soon.

Priests-Letter of Good Standing

All priests traveling with the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston will need a letter of good standing in order to participate in the liturgical events of the Jubilee. Please begin the process to obtain that letter and send to Angie as soon as you have it.

Cell Phones & Wifi in Europe

Almost all modern mobile devices are compatible with European cellular networks, so you should be able to use your phone in European countries without interruption. The easiest way to use your American phone in Europe is to add an international data plan to your current mobile service—every major carrier lets you do this. Simply call them up or go online, and they'll gladly upgrade your account to work with European carriers they have service agreements with.

Europe is a large continent where communications have advanced impressively. That's why as you walk around some of the European countries, you can find free WiFi quite easily. It might be challenging to use Wifi at official Jubilee sites due to the large numbers of pilgrims who will be using it.

Italian Greetings

When traveling overseas, it can be challenging to navigate through countries where we don't speak the language. In Rome, many people will speak English, but is still considered polite to know a few common phrases and greet people in their native language, when possible.

Stay tuned for a few words to begin learning for our time in Italy (coming soon).

Small Groups and Small Group Leaders

Every pilgrim will be assigned to a small group for the trip. Each small group will have one person set as the leader. Here are a few things to know about these groups:

Small Group Leaders:

- Small Groups Leaders will be checking in with pilgrims in their small groups daily.

- Small Group Leaders will be responsible for making sure pilgrims in their small groups are present on busses and at hotels throughout the trip.

Small Groups:

- Pilgrims should know who their Small Group Leader is and have his/her contact info in their phones.
- Pilgrims do not necessarily need to stay with their small group while traveling.
- Pilgrims should let their Small Group Leader know of any issues that come up while on the trip.

Next Steps

Verso will continue to send email newsletters to all pilgrims. These newsletters have suggestions for prayers, tips on visiting Italy, and other great information. Please take this time to continue to live an active prayer life so that the trip may be a true pilgrimage where we seek to encounter Christ in a new way.