



PAENITENTIARIA APOSTOLICA

DECREE

ON THE EIGHTH CENTENARY OF THE DEATH OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI, A SPECIAL JUBILEE YEAR IS BEING ANNOUNCED WITH ATTACHED PLENARY INDULGENCES.

“Keep the memory of our father and brother Francis, to the praise and glory of Him who made him great amongst men and glorified him amongst angels. Pray for him, as he himself asked us before he died, and pray to him, so that God may also share with him in his holy grace”.¹

Whilst the fruits of grace of the Ordinary Jubilee of the year 2025 that has just ended, in which we have all been spurred to become pilgrims of this hope that does not disappoint, are still timely and effective (cf. Rom 5:5), here is added to it as an ideal continuation a new occasion for jubilation and sanctification: the Eighth Centenary of the happy passage of St. Francis of Assisi from earthly life to his heavenly homeland (3 October 1226).

In recent years, other important jubilees have concerned the figure and works of the Saint of Assisi: the eighth centenary of the creation of the first Nativity scene in Greccio, of the composition of the Canticle of the Creatures, a hymn to the holy beauty of creation, and that of the impression of the Sacred Stigmata, which took place on Monte della Verna, almost a new Calvary, two years before his death. 2026 will mark the culmination and fulfillment of all previous celebrations: it will in fact be the Year of St. Francis and we will all be 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 to men” (cf. At 4:12) apart from Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of humanity, it is equally

¹ Lettera enciclica di Frate Elia, a tutte le Province dell’Ordine, sulla morte di San Francesco, 7 (FF 311).



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extraordinarily true that between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, in the age of so-called holy wars, laxity of morals, misunderstood religious fervour, “a sun was born into the world”²: Francis, who, from the son of a rich merchant, became poor and humble, true *alter Christus* on earth, providing the world with tangible examples of evangelical life and a real image of Christian perfection. Our time is not very different from that in which Francis lived, and precisely in the light of this his teaching is perhaps even more valid and understandable today. When Christian charity languishes, ignorance spreads like immorality, and those who exalt concord among peoples do so more out of selfishness than out of a sincere Christian spirit; when the virtual takes over the real, disagreements and social violence are part of everyday life and peace becomes more insecure and distant every day, this Year of St. Francis spurs all of us, each according to our possibilities, to imitate the *poor man of Assisi*, to form ourselves as far as possible on the model of Christ, not to frustrate the purposes of the Holy Year that has just ended: may the hope that has seen 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 as his servant and yours, if you will do this, namely, that there may never be a brother in the world who has sinned as much as he could sin, who, after seeing your eyes, goes away without your merciful forgiveness, if he asks for it”*³.

With these extraordinary words, reported in the well-known *Epistola ad quendam ministrum*, St. Francis at the same time not only dispenses consolation and advice to an anonymous confrere, but above all outlines and emphasizes the fundamental concept of mercy, to which that of forgiveness and indulgence is inextricably linked. And it is precisely a pardon, the well-known “Pardon of Assisi” or “Indulgence of the Portiuncula,” that Pope Honorius III granted by exceptional privilege directly to Francis for those who, having confessed and received communion, visited on the 2nd August an ancient church near Assisi, erected 800 years earlier on a “small portion of land” (hence the name Porziuncola).

² Dante Alighieri, *Divina Commedia*, *Paradiso*, XI, 50.

³ Francesco d’Assisi, *Lettera a un ministro*, 7-8 (FF 235)



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

For a more perfect attainment of its intended purposes, the Apostolic Penitentiary, through the present Decree issued in conformity with the will of the Supreme Pontiff, on the occasion of the Year of St. Francis, grants the *Plenary Indulgence* under the usual conditions (sacramental confession, Eucharistic communion and prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father), which can also be applied in the form of suffrage for the souls in Purgatory:

1) Members:

- of the Franciscan Families of the First, Second and Third Regular and Secular Orders;
- Institutes of Consecrated Life, Societies of Apostolic Life and Public or Private Associations of the Faithful, male and female, which observe the Rule of St. Francis or are inspired by his spirituality or in any form they perpetuate his charism;

2) to all the faithful without distinction

who, with a spirit detached from sin, will participate in the Year of St. Francis by visiting in the form of a pilgrimage any Franciscan conventual church, or place of worship in any part of the world named after St. Francis or connected to him for any reason, and there they will devoutly follow the Jubilee rites or spend at least a suitable period of time in pious meditation and will raise prayers to God so that, following the example of Saint Francis, may sentiments of Christian charity towards one's neighbour and authentic wishes for harmony and peace among peoples spring up in hearts, concluding with the Our Father, the Creed and invocations to the



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Blessed Virgin Mary, St Francis of Assisi, St Clare and all the saints of the Franciscan Family.

The elderly, the sick and those who take care of them and all those who for serious reasons are unable to leave their homes, will also be able to obtain the Plenary Indulgence, provided that they are detached from any sin and intend to fulfill the three usual conditions as soon as possible, if they join spiritually in the Jubilee celebrations of the Year of St. Francis, offering their prayers to the Merciful God, the pains or sufferings of one's life.

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

This decree is valid for the Year of St. Francis. Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary.

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

Angelo Card. De Donatis

Major Penitentiary

+ Krzysztof Jozef Nykiel

Regent

L. + S.

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