

JUBILEE JOURNEY

Dec. 29, 2024

Bishop Robert Brennan kicked off Jubilee 2025 by celebrating Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of St. James and the Co-Cathedral of St. Joseph in Prospect Heights. He also led the faithful in a procession between the two churches.

'Pilgrims of Hope' Theme United Diocese During Jubilee 2025

by The Tablet Staff

Speaking on the end of Jubilee 2025, Bishop Robert Brennan reflected on the many pilgrimages taken by Diocese of Brooklyn Catholics, and how "we have lived a life of faith a little bit more intensely this past year." "The close of the Jubilee Year is a time for us to reflect, to look back, and to think about some of the graces and blessings that we experienced during the Jubilee Year," Bishop Brennan said after a Jubilee Year closing Mass on Dec. 28.

As Jubilee 2025 comes to a close, The Tablet is looking back at how the Diocese of Brooklyn celebrated the Catholic Church's milestone year, which ended on Jan. 6, part of a centuries old tradition.

Bishop Brennan ushered in the Jubilee Year, which had a theme of "Pilgrims of Hope," by celebrating two Masses on Dec. 29, 2024 — first at the Cathedral Basilica of St. James and then at the Co-Cathedral of St. Joseph — and leading the faithful in a procession between the two churches.

"We are really putting our best foot forward," Bishop Brennan told the faithful that day.

In celebrating Masses at both the cathedral and the co-cathedral, Bishop Brennan following an edict from

Pope Francis designating Dec. 29 as a day on which Masses would be held in every cathedral worldwide to mark the start of the Jubilee Year.

To celebrate the milestone, Pope Francis urged Catholics to join pilgrimages to Rome and walk through the Holy Doors of designated cathedrals and basilicas to earn indulgences for sins.

And if they could not make the journey to Rome, he encouraged Catholics to participate in pilgrimages in their home dioceses.

The Holy Doors in Rome were at St. Peter's Basilica, the Cathedral of St. John Lateran, the Basilica of St. Mary Major, and the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls. Pope Francis also declared the door at Rebibbia Prison in Rome a Holy Door.

On Ash Wednesday, Bishop Brennan designated six locations as shrine churches in which pilgrims could visit to receive indulgences for sins. The churches were the Cathedral Basilica of St. James in downtown Brooklyn, the Co-Cathedral of St. Joseph in Prospect Heights, St. Jude Shrine Church in Canarsie, Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Church in Forest Hills, Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Bayside, and the Shrine Church of St. Gerard Majella in Hollis.

The Jubilee Year also saw many in the diocese packing their bags, as several pastors in the diocese led parishioners on pilgrimages to Rome.

The excitement surrounding the Jubilee Year could be felt throughout the diocese and was expressed by young and old alike throughout the year.

At the closing Mass, Bishop Brennan noted that the Jubilee Year has ushered in a new era for the Church under the leadership of Pope Leo XIV, who was elected following the death of Pope Francis in April.

"We closed one chapter and began another during this holy year," he said.

Bishop Brennan also highlighted that there were many fruits of the Jubilee Year, including how people have opened their hearts to those who are suffering and have provided them with hope, and noted that many have come to the recognition that "we really need God."

"To me, it just seems that's been something that sunk into people," he said. "There is something of an awakening where people are realizing, 'hey, we really do need God.'"

JULY 20

Ahead of the Jubilee of Youth, held July 28 to Aug. 3, Bishop Brennan celebrated a special send-off Mass for young people at the Immaculate Conception Center in Douglaston.

DEC. 28

On the feast of the Holy Family, Bishop Brennan marked the closing of Jubilee 2025 by celebrating Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of St. James. In his homily, Bishop Brennan noted that while the holy year has concluded, "the pilgrimage of life continues." "We are pilgrims of hope," he said. "We walk with God, and God walks with us."

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FEB. 26, 2025

Children in the faith formation program at St. Bernard of Clairvaux Church in Bergen Beach presented their artwork at an exhibition dedicated to Jubilee 2025.

MARCH 5

Ash Wednesday marked not only the beginning of Lent, but also the start of the diocese's Lenten Pilgrimage. The faithful enjoyed the opportunity to attend Mass each day in one of 37 churches Bishop Brennan designated as pilgrimage sites.

APRIL 18

Jubilee 2025 became part of life in the Church throughout the year. For example, the Way of the Cross, the Good Friday procession that begins at the Cathedral Basilica of St. James and ends at the World Trade Center, had hope as its theme when it took place on April 18. "This year, we're emphasizing hope because it's the Jubilee Year," explained Jonathan Fields, a member of Communion and Liberation, the Catholic lay movement that organizes the procession each year.

OCT. 12

To honor St. Carlo Acutis on his feast day, Bishop Brennan dedicated Sacred Heart of Jesus in Bayside as the official diocesan shrine to the first millennial saint. The decree formally recognized the church, describing it as a "sacred place for pilgrimages, prayer — especially for the youth — the spread of the faith, acts of charity, and evangelization."

SEPT. 6

The canonizations of Sts. Carlo Acutis and Giorgio Frassati, on Sept. 7, were cornerstones of Jubilee 2025. To celebrate, the diocese held an informal pilgrimage on Sept. 6, in which four churches — St. Patrick Church in Bay Ridge, the Shrine Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Williamsburg, St.

Pancras in Glendale, and Sacred Heart Church in Bayside — welcomed visitors throughout the day.

JULY 28-AUG. 3

Brooklyn and Queens made their presence known at the Jubilee of Youth, as 87 pilgrims from the diocese took part in the joyous gathering of an estimated 1 million pilgrims who came to hear from Pope Leo XIV. While in Rome, the diocese's pilgrims participated in a vigil featuring adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. They also traveled to Assisi to see the tomb of then-Blessed Carlo Acutis, who was canonized on Sept. 7.

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