

Prayer Focus

Many people make New Year resolutions. You could hold a prayer service in the new year that focuses on becoming a better follower of Christ. Children could write down their promises which could be displayed in the prayer area. Figures of the Holy Family can remain until February 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord, also known as Candlemas (please see information below). It is traditional for homes to be blessed on the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord. Mission Together have produced a Classroom Blessing linked to the Epiphany. This can be found here: <https://missiontogether.org.uk/calendar/epiphany/>

**Ordinary Time 1 (From Mon 13<sup>th</sup> January):** During this period of Ordinary Time, prayer cloths will be changed to a **green** cloth. Symbols of Baptism may also be included from the Feast of Our Lord such as a cross, white garment, oil, water, and candles. You could also include traditional and contemporary images of Jesus' Baptism. On the World Day of the Sick and the Memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes (11 February), images of St. Bernadette Soubirous and Our Lady of Lourdes could be displayed.

Christian Unity Week January 18 - 25

This year the chosen theme is based on the text from the Gospel of John: "Do you believe this?" (John 11:26) and is based on the dialogue between Jesus and Martha where Jesus visited the home of Martha and Mary in Bethany following the death of their brother Lazarus. The resources for 2025 were prepared for use by the monastic community of Bose in northern Italy. They include a pamphlet which also has daily reflections and prayers. For more information: <https://ctbi.org.uk/resources-for-week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2025/>

February 2 The Presentation of the Lord (Candlemas)

February 2 is The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord or more popularly known as Candlemas ('Candle Mass'). On this day candles which will be used in the forthcoming year in church are blessed. The same could be done for candles used in school. The candles are a symbol of Christ whose birth illuminated the world out of darkness, Jesus is the light for all nations. This Nunc Dimittis prayer or canticle below (a song or chant containing words from Scripture) is also known as the song of Simeon. Simeon who worked in the temple, had been promised by God that he would see the Messiah before his death. When Mary and Joseph came to the temple to make an offering following Jesus' birth, Simeon recognised and acknowledged Jesus as the 'Light of the World'. The canticle of Simeon is part of the Liturgy of the Hours:  
Now, Lord, you have kept your word:  
let your servant go in peace.  
With my own eyes I have seen the salvation  
which you have prepared in the sight of every people:  
a light to reveal you to the nations  
and the glory of your people Israel.  
Glory be to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit,  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.  
**Amen.**

For further information on the traditions of Candlemas:  
<https://www.whychristmas.com/customs/when-christmas-is-celebrated>

Pilgrims of Hope

What is a Jubilee Year?

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

How often is a Jubilee Year?

A Jubilee Year is celebrated by the Church every 25 years. This has been the case since 1470 when Pope Paul II changed it from every 50 years.

What is the theme of the Jubilee Year in 2025?

The theme is Pilgrims of Hope. Pope Francis has invited Catholics to renew our hope and discover a vision that can 'restore access to the fruits of the earth to everyone'. We are also invited to rediscover a spirituality of God's creation in which we understand ourselves as 'pilgrims on the earth' rather than masters of the world.

When does the Jubilee Year start and finish?

The 2025 Jubilee Year begins on Christmas Eve 2024 and concludes on 6 January 2026. The DES and Fr. Hudson's will be holding a special launch assembly on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> January.

What is a Holy Door?

A Holy Door is one of the usually sealed entrances that lead into the major basilicas of Rome. The beginning of the Jubilee Year is marked by the opening of the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican. It is only during a Jubilee Year that these doors are opened.



Pope's Prayer Intentions

January: For the right to an education

Let us pray for migrants, refugees and those affected by war, that their right to an education, which is necessary to build a better world, might always be respected.

February: For vocations to the priesthood and religious life

Let us pray that the ecclesial community might welcome the desires and doubts of those young people who feel a call to serve Christ's mission in the priesthood and religious life.

Dates for the Diary

Christmas Season

January

Sun 5 Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord

Ordinary Time

Sun 12 The Baptism of the Lord  
Sat 18 Octave of Christian Unity Peace Day (Octave ends Monday 25)  
Sun 19 Peace Day  
Mon 20 Optional memorial of St. Sebastian, Martyr  
Thur 23 Memorial in Worcestershire of St. Nicholas Owen.  
Fri 24 Memorial of St. Francis de Sales, Bishop, Doctor of the Church  
Sat 25 Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul  
Sun 26 Sunday of the Word of God  
Mon 27 Memorial in Worcestershire of Blessed Edward Oldcorne  
Tue 28 Memorial of St. Thomas Aquinas, Priest, Doctor of the Church  
Fri 31 Memorial of St. John Bosco, Priest

February

Sun 2 Feast of the Presentation of the Lord  
World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life  
Mon 3 Memorial in Staffordshire of St Werburg  
Memorial of St. Blaise  
Wed 5 Memorial of St. Agatha  
Thur 6 Memorial of St. Paul Miki and Companions  
Sun 8 Memorial of St. Josephine Bakhita  
Mon 10 Memorial of St. Scholastica  
Tues 11 Memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes  
World Day of Prayer for the Sick  
Fri 14 Day of Prayer for Europe  
Feast of St. Cyril, Monk, & St. Methodius, Bishop  
Sun 16 Racial Justice Day

For a complete list of dates, readings and colours please refer to the Archdiocese of Birmingham Ordo 2025

OneLife Music

**Songs of Hope:** OneLife music have kindly written and recorded two FREE songs for schools to use during the Jubilee Year. The Vocal, backing tracks, guitar chords and associated resources can be accessed here:  
<https://onelifemusic.thinkific.com/pages/jubilee-year-with-onelife-music>

CAFOD

**Pilgrims of Hope:** A wealth of resources to download and order from the CAFOD shop including posters, banners, prayer booklets and more.  
<https://cafod.org.uk/jubilee-schools>

New Resources:

**Primary:** <https://cafod.org.uk/education/primary-teaching-resources>

**Secondary:** <https://cafod.org.uk/education/secondary-and-youth-resources>

Mission Together

**Pilgrims of Hope:** Resources including prayers, assemblies and songs available: <https://missiontogether.org.uk/jubilee-2025-pilgrims-of-hope/>  
**Resources:** Missio now arrange their resources by month which will support you for planning throughout the liturgical year:  
<https://missiontogether.org.uk/resources-by-month/>