



Pope Francis closes the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica before a Mass to conclude the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy at the Vatican in this Nov. 20, 2016, file photo. The pope wrote a letter explaining his hopes for the Holy Year in 2025. (CNS/Maria Grazia Picciarella, pool)

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The annual celebration of the World Day of Peace during the Holy Year 2025 will be inspired by "the concepts of hope and forgiveness" — including the forgiveness of foreign debt — "which are at the heart of the Jubilee," the Vatican said.

Pope Francis has chosen "Forgive us our trespasses: grant us your peace" as the theme for the celebration Jan. 1, 2025, said an announcement Aug. 8 from the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.

The Holy Year, which the pope will open Dec. 24, is "a time for conversion that calls us not to condemn, but instead to bring about reconciliation and peace," the dicastery said.

"When considering the reality of conflicts and social sins afflicting humanity today in light of the hope inherent in the Jubilee tradition of the forgiveness of sins and the cancellation of debts, together with the reflections of the Fathers of the Church in this regard, concrete principles emerge that can lead to a much needed spiritual, social, economic, ecological and cultural change," it continued.

"Only from a genuine conversion on all levels — personal, local and international — will true peace be able to flourish," the announcement said. Conversion is needed "not only in the cessation of conflicts but also in a new reality in which wounds are healed and each person's dignity is recognized."

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The pope's message for the World Day of Peace usually is released in early December and shared with heads of state around the world by Vatican ambassadors.

In "Spes non Confundit" ("Hope Does Not Disappoint"), his bull proclaiming the Holy Year 2025, Francis appealed to the world's wealthiest nations to "acknowledge the gravity of so many of their past decisions and determine to forgive the debts of

countries that will never be able to repay them."

"If we really wish to prepare a path to peace in our world, let us commit ourselves to remedying the remote causes of injustice, settling unjust and unpayable debts, and feeding the hungry," the pope wrote.

In the Hebrew Scriptures, God commanded his people to observe a jubilee as a time to restore their relationships with God, with other people and with the land, including by forgiving the debts of the poor.