

How to Help Oneself and a Deceased Loved One on Our Journey to Heaven

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During this Jubilee Year of Hope, Dec. 29, 2024-Dec. 28, 2025, the Lord has given us a most wonderful blessing through the Church -- the opportunity to obtain a special Plenary Indulgence for ourselves and for our deceased loved ones.

This is a special grace offered by the Church that removes all temporal punishment for sins that have already been forgiven through confession. It provides a complete purification, sparing the soul from further spiritual reparation for past wrongs.

Steps for obtaining a Plenary Indulgence:

During this 2025 Jubilee Year of Hope, the Church grants Plenary Indulgences to pilgrims who fulfill these conditions while passing through the Holy Doors in the city of Rome. (If unable to travel to Rome, see “**Where to gain the indulgence locally**” below.)

1. Pass through the Holy Doors with a spirit of faith and conversion. It represents the pilgrim’s desire to leave behind sin and embrace God’s mercy. Passing through the Holy Doors is not just a symbolic act. Spend time in prayer and reflection before and after your visit to deepen the spiritual meaning of the indulgence.
2. Sacramental confession: Pilgrims must receive the sacrament of confession, either shortly before or after passing through the Holy Doors. The Church recommends that confession take place within 20 days of the act of passing through the doors.
3. Receive the Eucharist. The pilgrim must receive Holy Communion ideally on the same day that they pass through the Holy Doors. Receiving the Eucharist symbolizes the unity of the believer with Christ, and it is an essential part of the indulgence process.
4. Pray for the intentions of the Pope. These prayers typically include an Our Father, a Hail Mary, a Glory Be, and the Creed though any prayer offered with the intention of supporting the Pope and the Church is acceptable such as the Pilgrims of Hope 2025 Jubilee Year Prayer. This condition reflects the pilgrim’s unity with the Church and the wider Catholic community.
5. Be free from all attachment to sin, even venial sin. This is one of the most challenging conditions for receiving a Plenary Indulgence. The pilgrim must genuinely renounce sin and express a desire to live a virtuous life, even if human weakness makes total detachment difficult to achieve. The indulgence is granted when this condition is met with sincerity and effort.

A Plenary Indulgence for a deceased loved one: How many of you are praying for a deceased loved one in Purgatory? If that soul receives a Plenary Indulgence, he/she is released from Purgatory to enjoy the eternal, everlasting bliss of Heaven — who can ask for anything more? Indulgences can be applied either to oneself or to a deceased soul, but they cannot be applied to other persons living on earth.

How many Plenary Indulgences can be received per day? A Plenary Indulgence can be gained only once a day for oneself. For the deceased, two Plenary Indulgences are allowed each day - one for each of two deceased souls - requiring two Eucharistic celebrations on that day. This comes from the sixteenth paragraph of the “*Decree on the Granting of Indulgence during the Ordinary Jubilee Year 2025 called by His Holiness Pope Francis*” (dated May 13, 2024.2024).

Where to gain the indulgence locally: For those unable to travel to Rome, the Church often designates local Holy Doors at cathedrals or special churches worldwide during a Jubilee year. Locally, the designated Catholic pilgrimage site for the Holy Door is St. Joseph Cathedral located at 1535 Third Ave, San Diego, CA 92101.

Vatican Decree: <https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2024/05/13/240513f.html>

Reference: <https://www.romevaticancard.com/how-to-gain-indulgence-by-passing-through-holy-doors/?srsltid=AfmBOopxlZGoqp3tyGu1MZPE6lZyAVVPRuRbogmhKgc4r6ROCI-guk9Y>