

JULY 2025

# Pilgrims of Hope

## *Jubilee Newsletter*



### *A Message of Hope in Religious Freedom*

by Francine Costantini, Director of Youth Ministry

In the midst of the 2025 Jubilee Year of Hope, the Church invites us to look again at the beautiful teachings of the Second Vatican Council. One powerful message comes from *Dignitatis Humanae*, the Declaration on Religious Freedom (1965). This document brings hope because it reminds us that God gives every person the freedom to seek and worship Him — and that freedom should be protected by both the Church and society.

As Catholics, we believe that Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. *Dignitatis Humanae* says clearly that faith must be chosen freely, not forced. It states, “The human person has a right to religious freedom,” meaning that no one should be “forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs, whether privately or publicly” (DH 2). This gives us hope: we are free to follow Jesus, share His love, and trust that God can reach every heart.

This message also gives hope to parents and grandparents who worry about loved ones who have stepped away from the Church. *Dignitatis Humanae* reminds us: God never stops calling, and He always respects our freedom. “God calls men to serve Him in spirit and in truth... but they stand under no compulsion” (DH 11). Faith grows in joyful and loving invitation — not pressure.

Pope Francis begins his Jubilee letter, *Spes Non Confundit*, by quoting St. Paul: “Hope does not disappoint because the love of God has been poured into our hearts” (Rom 5:5). This love gives us hope and helps us share our faith with gentleness and confidence.

*Dignitatis Humanae* fosters peace by rooting religious freedom in universal dignity: “This right of the human person to religious freedom is to be recognized in the constitutional law whereby society is governed” (DH 2). It adds, “The truth cannot impose itself except by virtue of its own truth, as it makes its entrance into the mind at once quietly and with power” (DH 1). This vision of mutual respect reduces conflict, giving hope for a world where all can seek God.

As Catholics, we’re called to proclaim Christ boldly through loving example. In this Jubilee Year, let’s trust God’s plan, share the Gospel with joy, and defend everyone’s freedom to seek Him, building a world where faith and dignity flourish.



### Witnesses of Hope

#### *Ss. Perpetua & Felicity*

*Perpetua and Felicity lived during the persecution of the Church under the emperor Severus at the end of the second century. Perpetua was an educated noblewoman and young mother, and she followed in her mother's footsteps by becoming a catechumen, despite knowing the threat of persecution. She was soon arrested along with four other catechumens, one of whom was Felicity, a pregnant slave; they were baptized before their imprisonment. While in prison, Felicity went into labor and gave birth to a baby girl, who was eventually adopted by a Christian woman in Carthage. Two days later, the newly baptized were led into an arena and suffered taunts from the crowd and were thrown to wild animals. Felicity and Perpetua were executed by the sword in the year 203.*

*Much of what we know about Perpetua and Felicity's story comes from a diary Perpetua kept while in prison. In the face of intense suffering and rejection, we read that both women, along with their fellow Christian brothers, remained faithful to their baptismal call. Patronesses of mothers and expectant mothers, may their example remind those experiencing pain and suffering of the hope of the resurrection.*

## *Bearing Witness to our Human Dignity*

Modesty begins in the heart and respects the God-given dignity of all, including ourselves, in how we present ourselves through:

- Our words – Would God be OK with the words we use?
- Our actions – Happiness in our gifts is different than bragging about them to belittle others.
- Our treatment of others – Do we encourage others to respect themselves in their words, dress, and actions?

During this month, take time to raise up the gifts and talents that every member of the family has. How can we better share our talents with one another and with others? You may also look through clothing while at a store and vote “yes” or “no” to whether different pieces of clothes would be considered appropriate or modest. Explain your vote to one another.

Throughout the Jubilee Year, strive to become more aware of how we treat others and how we do or do not show respect for their dignity – even if they may not seem to be respecting themselves. We are all enough because we are children of God.



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IT MEANS REFUSING TO UNVEIL WHAT SHOULD REMAIN HIDDEN.”**

*Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2521*

### *How does being a Pilgrim of Hope lead to Modesty?*

We have each been called to renew our commitment to living as credible witnesses of Christ’s love in the Jubilee Year of Hope. Modesty, a fruit of the Holy Spirit, is more than just our external behavior—it is a humble orientation of our heart. Modesty reflects reverence for God, respect for others, and a desire to honor the dignity of every person. In a world driven by self-promotion and image, modesty invites us to simplicity, restraint, and authenticity. This fruit of the Holy Spirit is exemplified in how we speak, dress, interact online, and carry ourselves in daily life. Modesty creates space in our hearts and in our world for God to be glorified, rather than ourselves. During this Jubilee Year, let us cultivate modesty by focusing on inner virtue, practicing gratitude, and resisting the pressures of vanity. In doing so, we become instruments of hope and credible witnesses who are shining lights of quiet confidence, humility, and love in a world longing for peace and grace.

## *Upcoming Events*

### **YOUNG ADULT PILGRIMAGE**

**Jul 19** | *St. John Bosco and Queen of the Holy Rosary Shrine, Parma Heights*

### **INTERGENERATIONAL PILGRIMAGE**

**Jul 26** | *St. Paschal Baylon and St. Ann Shrine, Highland Heights*



Catholic Diocese  
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