



For in hope we were saved. Now hope that sees for itself is not hope. For who hopes for what one sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait with endurance.
(Romans 8:24-25)

August 19, 2025

Hello Everyone —

In just over four months, we will conclude the Jubilee Year 2025. Time passes so quickly. It is difficult to recall the many events, happenings, tragedies, etc. that have occurred in our world since I dedicated two posts of “The Branches” (February 11 and 18). But we certainly need the virtue of hope in our ever-challenged world now more than ever.

So, this week, I thought I would make a quick return to the call we received from the late Pope Francis when he set the course and focus for a year given over to our human need to grow hope in our Christian living.

In the Bull of Indiction, Pope Francis spoke about both the need to discover hope in the “signs of the times” in which we live – and to provide hope for those who deserve to experience hope in their lives. With the Lord’s help, we must overcome the temptation to think that we are completely overwhelmed by evil and violence — and that hope has lost its place — its purpose — its effectiveness.

The Holy Father reflected that we are not only to find hope in God’s grace, but we need to recognize the immense goodness still present in our world. These signs of the times, “which include the yearning of the human heart in need of God’s saving presence, ought to become signs of hope.” They are:

1. The desire for peace in our world which continues to be immersed in the tragedy of war
2. Having enthusiasm for life and a readiness to share it when confronted by the loss of the desire to transmit life
3. The reality of those who experience hardships of any kind (prisoners, those deprived of freedom, suffering from a lack of affection and respect)
4. The sick — at home and in hospitals — and their care; also, a well-deserved focus on healthcare workers
5. The young — those who are the very embodiment of hope; and new initiatives by the Church to reach out to the young
6. The migrants who leave their homelands in search of a better life for themselves and their families (exiles, displaced persons, refugees — to avoid war, violence, and discrimination)

7. The elderly, who frequently feel lonely and abandoned
8. The billions of the poor, who often lack the essentials of life

How are we to discover hope and to provide it for others?

We do so in becoming Pilgrims of Hope, that is, by virtue of being proclaimers of the Resurrection of Jesus, not only in words, but also in our conduct and the testimony of our lives. It is the power of the Resurrection that makes Christians capable of loving even when love seems to have lost its place. Faith in the risen Christ is not just optimism but a driving force. The enduring Christian is convinced through the power of Jesus and his Resurrection that no evil is infinite, no night is without end, no woman or man is definitively wrong, and no hatred is impervious to love.

One closing thought — as pertains to the image of the anchor in conjunction with hope. It is eloquent — because it helps us to recognize the stability and security that is ours amid the troubled waters of this life, provided we entrust ourselves to the Lord Jesus.

The storms that buffet us will never prevail, for we are firmly anchored in the hope born of grace, which enables us to live in Christ and to overcome sin, fear and death. This hope, which transcends life's fleeting pleasures and the achievement of our immediate goals, makes us rise above our trials and difficulties, and inspires us to keep pressing forward, never losing sight of the heavenly goal to which we have been called.

As I do for you, please pray for me,

Most Reverend Jeffrey S. Grob
Archbishop of Milwaukee

