

The elderly, the infirm, and those who for a serious reason cannot leave their homes, will equally be able to gain the Plenary Indulgence with repentance of any sin and with the intention of fulfilling as soon as possible the three usual conditions, participating spiritually in the Jubilee celebrations, with the offering of their prayers, pains and the discomforts of their lives to our merciful God.

This Decree is valid notwithstanding anything contrary to what is written. Given in Rome, at the Palace of the Apostolic Penitentiary, on the 14th day of November in the year of our Lord MMXXIII.

Prayer before the Nativity Scene

Almighty God, in this Christmas season, we, your faithful people who have gathered in this holy place, pray that, with your blessing these images of your nativity might be for us a reminder of your presence and love in our world today.

Almighty God, give your blessing to us and our loved ones, our family, friends and all people of good will throughout the world.

Eternal God, our refuge in every danger, to whom we turn in this time of a world beset with war and violence, unrest due to illness, and fear for many people; look with compassion upon us this

Christmas season and grant healing to the sick, peace to those suffering in war and from violence; give strength to healthcare workers and First Responders, wisdom to our leaders and the courage to reach out in love.

Open our hearts, that we might know how to receive Jesus in joy, always to do what he asks of us, and see him in all those who need our love.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, who came to give peace to the world and who lives and reigns forever and ever.
Amen

-Adapted from a blessing by Pope Benedict XVI, 2008 & the Greccio account in Thomas Celano & St. Bonaventure. mjjf.2023

St. Peter's Church
Franciscan Friars
Our Lady of Guadalupe Province
110 W. Madison Street
Chicago, Illinois

Celebrating Christmas Greccio 1223 - 2023



The plenary indulgence on the occasion of the eighth centenary of "Christmas at Greccio" as experienced by Saint Francis of Assisi

Christmas 1223 at Greccio

The day of joy drew near, the time of great rejoicing came. The brothers were called from their various places. Men and women of that neighborhood prepared with glad hearts, according to their means, candles and torches to light up that night that has lighted up all the days and years with its gleaming star. At length the saint of God came, and finding all things prepared, he saw it and was glad.

The manger was prepared, the hay had been brought, the ox and ass were led in. There simplicity was honored, poverty was exalted, humility was commended, and Greccio was made, as it were, a new Bethlehem. The night was lighted up like the day, and it delighted men and beasts. The people came and were filled with new joy over the new mystery.

The woods rang with the voices of the crowd and the rocks made answer to their jubilation. The brothers sang, paying their debt of praise to the Lord,

and the whole night resounded with their rejoicing.

The saint of God stood before the manger, uttering sighs, overcome with love, and filled with a wonderful happiness. The solemnities of the Mass were celebrated over the manger and the priest experienced a new consolation.

-Thomas of Celano, 1229



The Decree

The Apostolic Penitentiary, wishing to increase the piety of the faithful and the salvation of souls, by virtue of the faculties granted to it in a most special way by His Holiness, Francis, Our Father in Christ and by Divine Providence, Pope, keeping in mind the petitions recently presented by the Rev. Ministers General from the Conference of the Franciscan Family, on the eight hundredth anniversary of the representation of the Creche that St. Francis first set up in Greccio in 1223, drawing from the heavenly treasures of the Church, graciously grants the Plenary Indulgence under the usual conditions (Sacramental Confession, Eucharistic Communion and prayer for the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff) to be enjoyed by the repentant faithful moved by Divine love, beginning with the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, December 8, 2023, until the solemn day of the Presentation of the Lord, February 2, 2024, which they may apply, by way of suffrage, also for the souls of the faithful still in Purgatory, if they will visit as pilgrims any Franciscan Church throughout the world, in groups or individually, and devoutly participate in the Jubilee rites, or at least stand before the Creche prepared therein, spending a suitable period of time in pious meditations, concluding with the Our Father, the Profession of Faith and invocations to the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, Joseph and St. Francis of Assisi.