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**PILGRIMS OF HOPE**  
**REFLECTION FIRST WEEK OF LENT: JUBILEE**

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**Pope Francis:** “We must fan the flame of hope that has been given to us and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart and far-sighted vision”

**Leviticus 25:6 – 7:** “The sabbath of the land shall provide food for you, for yourself and for your male and female slaves and for your hired servant and the sojourner who lives with you; for your cattle also, and for the beasts that are in your land, all its yield shall be for food.”

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

1. How can this jubilee be a time of restoration for you?
2. How can this Jubilee be a time of hope and restoration for the poor?
3. How can we share the fruits of the earth with others, especially those who experience food insecurity?

**LEARN MORE” WHAT IS JUBILEE?**

“Jubilee” is the name given to a particular year; the name comes from the instrument used to mark its launch. In this case, the instrument in question is the *yobel*, the ram’s horn, used to proclaim the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). This (Jewish) holiday occurs every year, but it takes on special significance when it marks the beginning of a Jubilee year. We can find an early indication of it in the Bible: a Jubilee year was to be marked every 50 years, since this would be an “extra” year, one which would happen every seven weeks of seven years, i.e., every 49 years (cf. Leviticus 25:8-13). Even though it wasn’t easy to organise, it was intended to be marked as a time to re-establish a proper relationship with God, with one another, and with all of creation, and involved the forgiveness of debts, the return of misappropriated land, and a fallow period for the fields.

Quoting the prophet Isaiah, the Gospel of Luke describes Jesus’ mission in this way: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord” (Luke 4:18-19; cf. Isaiah 61:1-2). Jesus lives out these words in his daily life, in his encounters with others and in his relationships, all of which bring about liberation and conversion.

In 1300, Pope Boniface VIII called the first Jubilee, also known as a “Holy Year,” since it is a time in which God’s holiness transforms us. The frequency of Holy Years has changed over time: at first, they were celebrated every 100 years; later, in 1343 Pope Clement VI reduced

the gap between Jubilees to every 50 years, and in 1470 Pope Paul II made it every 25 years. There have also been “extraordinary” Holy Years: for example, in 1933 Pope Pius XI chose to commemorate the 1900th anniversary of the Redemption, and in 2015 Pope Francis proclaimed the Year of Mercy as an extraordinary jubilee. The way in which Jubilee Years are marked has also changed through the centuries: originally the Holy Year consisted of a pilgrimage to the Roman Basilicas of St. Peter and St. Paul, later other signs were added, such as the Holy Door. By participating in the Holy Year, one is granted a plenary indulgence

### **WHAT IS JUBILEE REFLECTION QUESTION**

1. How can you be a source of liberation and freedom for those around you who are poor or are imprisoned (addictions, severe illness, mental health instability)?

### **CALL TO ACTION**

2. What are some concrete ways you can live the Jubilee year?