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Bishop Siegel celebrates Solemn Opening Mass for Jubilee 2025

By MEGAN ERBACHER
The Message editor

Bishop Joseph M. Siegel celebrated the Solemn Opening Mass for the Jubilee Year 2025 on Dec. 29, 2024, the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, at St. Benedict Cathedral in Evansville.

Pope Francis inaugurated the Holy Year by opening the Holy Door of the Basilica of St. Peter in the Vatican on Dec. 24, 2024. Then, on the Dec. 29 Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Bishops in dioceses worldwide opened the Jubilee Year for their local churches. Pope Francis chose "Pilgrims of Hope" as the theme for the Holy Year 2025, which will run through Jan. 6, 2026.

All the present faithful at St. Benedict Cathedral stood and faced the rear of the cathedral as Bishop Siegel began the local celebration of Jubilee 2025. Inclement weather pre-

vented the celebration from starting outside on the plaza in front of the cathedral. Bishop Siegel began the introductory rites and invited the people to bless and praise God. He introduced the celebration of the Jubilee before reciting the following prayer:

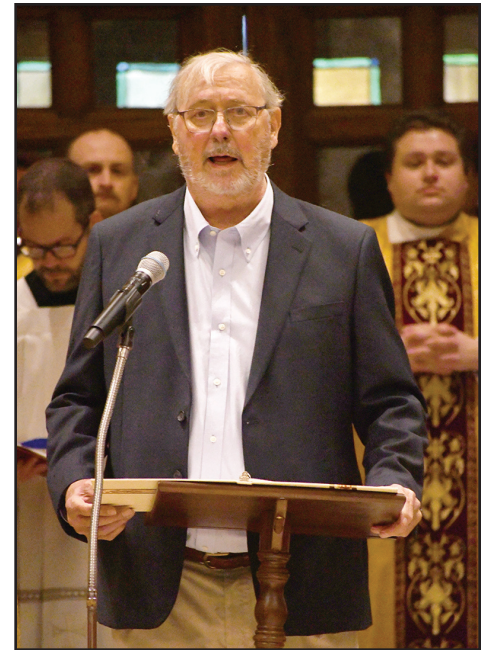
"O Father, you are the hope that does not disappoint and the beginning and end of all things; bless the start of our pilgrim journey behind the glorious Cross of your Son in this time of grace; bind up the wounds of hearts that are broken, loosen the chains that hold us slaves of sin and prisoners of hatred and grant your people the joy of the Spirit so that they may walk with renewed hope toward their longed-for destiny, Christ your Son and our Lord. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever."

Transitional Deacon Clint Johnson

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Bishop Joseph M. Siegel, second from left, prepares to place his hand on the crucifix to venerate it before it is processed to the front of St. Benedict Cathedral as part of the Solemn Opening Mass for the Jubilee Year 2025 on Dec. 29, 2024.



The Message photos by Megan Erbacher Paul Leingang, retired editor of The Message, reads an excerpt from the papal bull, "Spes non confundit," a Latin phrase that translates as "Hope does not disappoint."

Pope opens Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica launching 'Jubilee of Hope'

By CINDY WOODEN
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — In the quiet of Christmas Eve, Pope Francis opened the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica, launching what he called a "Jubilee of Hope."

As the doors opened, the bells of the basilica began to peal.

After the reading of a brief passage

from the Gospel of John in which Jesus describes himself as "the door," Pope Francis briefly left the atrium of the basilica, creating some confusion. But when the cardinals in the front row sat down, the others did likewise.

Three minutes later, the pope returned. He was pushed in his wheelchair up the ramp to the Holy Door. In silence, he raised himself from the chair to knock five times, and aides inside slowly opened the door, which had been framed in a garland of green pine branches, decorated with red roses and gold pinecones.

Opening the Holy Door of St.

Peter's Basilica has been a fixture of the Catholic Church's celebration of jubilee years since the Holy Year 1450, the Vatican said.

Pope Francis chose "Pilgrims of Hope" as the theme for the Holy Year 2025, which began Dec. 24 and will run through Jan. 6, 2026.

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CNS photo/Cristian Gennari

Pope Francis prays on the threshold of the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican after opening it Dec. 24, 2024, during the ceremony marking the beginning of the Holy Year 2025.



Habitat for Humanity dedicates recent Catholic build

Special to The Message

All her life, Andrea W. has been a renter, but it's been her goal to own a home to provide stability for her family. When a friend told her about the Habitat for Humanity homeownership program, she initially hesitated to apply, fearing her credit score wasn't high enough.

However, she applied anyway,

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Submitted photo

Andrea W., fifth from left, poses before she cuts the red ribbon on the door of her new Habitat for Humanity home during the dedication on Dec. 16, 2024. Pictured with her are her four daughters ranging in age from 12-19, and Catholics for Habitat representatives.