



# DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

*Office of the Bishop*

December 14/15, 2024

Dear Friends in Christ,

On Christmas Eve, Pope Francis will open the Holy Door at the Basilica of Saint Peter in Vatican City to commence Jubilee 2025: *Pilgrims of Hope*. He has asked bishops to open the Jubilee Year in their local dioceses on the following weekend, December 29, the Feast of the Holy Family.

It is fitting that the opening of the Jubilee Year follows the holy season of Advent, a time when we reflect deeply on our reason for Christian hope. If the Eternal Word had not “become flesh and made his dwelling among us,” (Jn 1:14) we would be hopeless, but “Christ chose to be born and grow up in the bosom of the holy family of Joseph and Mary” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1655).

We too are pilgrims like those involved in the Nativity story: Joseph and Mary, the shepherds, and the magi. May this Jubilee be an “intense experience of the love of God that awakens in hearts the sure hope of salvation in Christ,” (*Spes non Confundit*, 6) just as all of them experienced on that night 2,000 years ago.

I invite all of you to the opening Mass for the Holy Year. **The liturgy will begin at 3 p.m. in the Catholic Central High School gym where we can gather and process together as pilgrims into the Cathedral of Saint Andrew.**

I look forward to walking with you as *Pilgrims of Hope* during this upcoming Holy Year.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend David J. Walkowiak  
Bishop of Grand Rapids