

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT 2024

# PILGRIMS OF HOPE

*Towards Jubilee 2025*

WHAT MUST WE DO



# The Gospel

When all the people asked John, 'What must we do?' he answered, 'If anyone has two tunics he must share with the man who has none, and the one with something to eat must do the same.' There were tax collectors too, who came for baptism, and these said to him, 'Master, what must we do?' He said to them, 'Exact no more than your rate.' Some soldiers asked him in their turn, 'What about us? What must we do?' He said to them, 'No intimidation! No extortion! Be content with your pay!'

A feeling of expectancy had grown among the people who were beginning to think that John might be the Christ, so John declared before them all, 'I baptise you with water, but someone is coming, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fan is in his hand to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his barn; but the chaff he will burn in a fire that will never go out.' As well as this, there were many other things he said to exhort the people and to announce the Good News to them (Luke 3:10-18).

**The message is urgent.** 'What must we do?' The answer relates to practical actions, real situations and relationships. There is no need to leave jobs or homes to follow John into the desert. Share with those in need; be honest and just; avoid violence, false accusations and exploitation. Reach out in practical love and compassion to your brothers and sisters. Simplify your life. These are outward signs of a change of heart from sin and selfishness. We are challenged to think of our own situations!

## FOR 'EVERYDAY PILGRIMS'

*From Pope Francis' announcement of the Jubilee Year 2025 and meditations offered by Timothy Radcliffe OP to delegates at each of the sessions of the recent Synod Assembly in Rome.*

... **We are also called to discover hope in the signs of the times** that the Lord gives us. As the Second Vatican Council observed: "In every age, the Church has the responsibility of reading the signs of the times

and interpreting them in the light of the Gospel. In this way, in language adapted to every generation, she can respond to people's persistent questions about the meaning of this present life and of the life to come, and how one is related to the other" (Pope Francis, *Spes Non Confundit*, #10).

**We are called to be tangible signs of hope** for those of our brothers and sisters who experience hardships of any kind (Pope Francis, *Spes Non Confundit*, #10.)

**Signs of hope should also be shown to the sick**, at home or in hospital. Their sufferings can be allayed by the closeness and affection of those who visit them. Works of mercy are also works of hope (Pope Francis, *Spes Non Confundit*, #11).

**Inclusive attention should also be given to all those in particularly difficult situations**, who experience their own weaknesses and limitations, especially those affected by illnesses or disabilities that severely restrict their personal independence and freedom. Care given to them is a hymn to human dignity, a song of hope (Pope Francis, *Spes Non Confundit*, # 11).

## FROM PILGRIMS OF THE PAST

- **Hope has two beautiful daughters:** their names are Anger and Courage. Anger at the way things are, and Courage to see that they do not remain as they are. *Unknown. Often attributed to St Augustine*
- **Give something, however small, to the one in need.** For it is not small to one who has nothing. Neither is it small to God, if we have given what we could. *St Gregory Nazianzen*
- **We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.** *Martin Luther King, Jr*

### FOR THINKING AND PRAYING

- **What words stand out for you?**
- **What insights might you take with you on your own life 'pilgrimage'?**



# A PRAYER

**We bless you, Father,**  
for the thirst  
you put in us,  
for the boldness  
you inspire,  
for the fire  
alight in us,  
that is you in us,  
you the just.

**Never mind**  
that our thirst  
is mostly unquenched  
(pity the satisfied).  
Never mind  
our bold plots  
are mostly unclined,  
wanted not realised.

**Who better than you**  
knows that success  
comes not from us?  
You ask us to do  
our utmost only,  
but willingly.

*Dom Helder Camara, Essential Writings, 93*

PILGRIMS OF HOPE PILGRIMS OF HOPE PILGRIMS OF HOPE PILGRIMS OF HOPE PILGRIMS OF HOPE PILGRIMS OF HOPE PILGRIMS OF HOPE



**Prepared for Advent Year C 2024:** The Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst: PO Box 201 Bendigo, Vic, 3552  
Email: [adultfaith@sandhurst.catholic.org.au](mailto:adultfaith@sandhurst.catholic.org.au) Web: [www.sandhurst.catholic.org.au](http://www.sandhurst.catholic.org.au)  
**Acknowledgements:** *Pope Francis, Spes Non Confundit, Bull of Indiction of the Ordinary Jubilee of the Year 2025*, [https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/bulls/documents/20240509\\_spes-non-confundit\\_bolla-giubileo2025.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/bulls/documents/20240509_spes-non-confundit_bolla-giubileo2025.html); *Timothy Radcliffe OP*, Synod Retreat Mediation, 'Hoping Against Hope', October 1 2023.  
<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/church/news/2023-10/retreat-day-1-radcliffe-first-meditation.html>;  
*St Gregory Nazianzen quoted in:* <https://www.catholicdigest.com/from-the-magazine/quiet-moment/st-gregory-nazianzen-give-something-however-small>; *Martin Luther King Jr quoted at:* [https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/martin\\_luther\\_king\\_jr\\_297522](https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/martin_luther_king_jr_297522); Dom Helder Camara, *Essential Writings, Selected and Introduced by Francis McDonagh, Modern Spiritual Masters Series:* Orbis Books: Maryknoll, New York, 2009