



The Holy See

OPENING OF THE HOLY DOOR IN THE PRISON OF REBIBBIA

HOMILY OF THE HOLY FATHER

*Prison of Rebibbia, Roma
Thursday, 26 December 2024*

[[Multimedia](#)]

*Dear Sisters and dear Brothers,
Good morning and Happy Christmas!*

I wanted to open the Door here today. The first Door I opened was at Saint Peter's, the second one is yours. It is a beautiful gesture to open wide, to open doors. But what this means is even more important: it means to open our hearts. Open hearts. And this is what fraternity does. Closed hearts, hardened hearts, do not help us live. This is why the grace of a Jubilee is to open wide, to open, and above all, to open our hearts to hope. Hope does not disappoint (cf. *Rom 5:5*), ever! Think about this carefully. I think about it too, because in bad times, one thinks that everything is over, that nothing can be resolved. But hope never disappoints.

I like to think of hope as an anchor on the shore. With the rope, we are safe there because our hope is like an anchor on solid ground (cf. *Heb 6:17-20*). Do not lose hope. This is the message I want to give you; to everyone, to all of us. Myself first. All of us. Do not lose hope. Hope never disappoints. Never. Sometimes the rope is tough and hurts our hands... but with the rope, always with the rope in hand, looking towards the shore, the anchor pulls us forward. There is always something good, always something that helps us move forward.

The rope in one's hand and, secondly, open windows, open doors. Especially the doors of our hearts. When one's heart is closed, it becomes as hard as stone; it forgets tenderness. Yet even in the most difficult times — each of us has our own, easier or harder, and I am thinking of you —

always keep your hearts open. The heart is precisely what makes us brothers and sisters. Open wide the doors of your heart. Each one knows how to do it. Each one knows where the door is closed or half-closed. Each person knows.

I say two things to you. First: *the rope in hand*, with the anchor of hope. Second: *open wide the doors of the heart*. We have opened this Door, but this is a symbol of the doors of our hearts.

I wish you a great Jubilee. I wish you much peace, much peace. I pray for you every day. Truly. It is not just a figure of speech. I think of you and I pray for you. And you, pray for me. Thank you.

After the final blessing, the Holy Father added a few words extemporaneously.

Now let us not forget two things we must do with our hands. First: *Hold on tightly to the rope of hope*, hold on to the anchor, to the rope. Never let go. Second: *Open wide your hearts*. Open hearts. May the Lord help us in all of this. Thank you.

Spontaneous words spoken at the conclusion of Holy Mass.

Before we finish, I wish you all a happy New Year. May the coming year be better than this one. Every year must be better. And from here, I want to greet the prisoners who are still in their cells, who could not come. A greeting to all and to each one of you.

And do not forget: Hold on to the anchor. Hands firmly gripping it. Do not forget. Happy New Year to all of you. Thank you.

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