INDULGENTIAE PLENARIAE

# Plenary Indulgences

An indulgence is the remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven. The Church, as minister of Redemption, grants it from the treasury of the infinite merits of Christ and the merits of the saints. A **plenary** indulgence removes all of this punishment; a **partial** one removes part of it.

*"Whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven." — Matthew 16:19*

### GUILT AND PUNISHMENT

Every sin brings both guilt and punishment. Confession takes away the guilt and the eternal punishment of mortal sin, but a debt of temporal punishment usually remains, to be paid by penance in this life or in Purgatory.

### THE TREASURY OF THE CHURCH

The satisfaction offered by Christ is infinite, and the Blessed Virgin and the saints added theirs. The Church, by the power of the keys, opens this treasury to the faithful under fixed conditions.

### FOR WHOM?

An indulgence can be gained for oneself or applied to the souls in Purgatory by way of suffrage. It can never be applied to other living persons.

## The Usual Conditions

*To gain a plenary indulgence one must be baptised, in the state of grace at least when the work is completed, and intend to gain it*

I

### Sacramental Confession

A good confession, made within about 20 days before or after the work. One confession suffices for several plenary indulgences.

II

### Holy Communion

Received worthily, ideally on the same day. Each plenary indulgence requires its own Communion.

III

### Prayer for the Pope's intentions

For the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff (not his personal ones): one Our Father and one Hail Mary suffice, or any other prayer.

IV

### Detachment from all sin

Complete detachment from all attachment to sin, even venial. Without it, the indulgence is only partial.

## Some Plenary Indulgences

*From the Church's Enchiridion of Indulgences, with the usual conditions*

ANY DAY

### Adoration

Adoring the Blessed Sacrament for at least half an hour, exposed or in the tabernacle.

ANY DAY

### Holy Scripture

Reading Sacred Scripture with the veneration due to the Word of God for at least half an hour.

ANY DAY

### The Way of the Cross

Making the Stations before lawfully erected stations, moving from one to the next and meditating on the Passion.

ANY DAY

### The Holy Rosary

Five decades prayed in a church or oratory, in the family, a religious community or a pious association, with meditation on the mysteries.

FRIDAYS OF LENT

### Prayer before a Crucifix

Devoutly praying "Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus" (*En ego, o bone et dulcissime Iesu*) before an image of Christ crucified, after Communion.

1–8 NOVEMBER

### Visiting a Cemetery

Visiting a cemetery and praying, even mentally, for the departed. Applicable only to the souls in Purgatory, once each day.

2 NOVEMBER

### All Souls' Day

Visiting a church or oratory and praying an Our Father and the Creed for the faithful departed.

31 DEC · 1 JAN · PENTECOST

### Te Deum & Veni Creator

Publicly reciting the *Te Deum* in thanksgiving on the last day of the year; the *Veni Creator* on New Year's Day and at Pentecost.

GOOD FRIDAY

### Adoration of the Cross

Devoutly taking part in the adoration of the Cross in the solemn liturgy of Good Friday.

EASTER VIGIL · BAPTISM ANNIVERSARY

### Renewal of Baptismal Vows

Renewing the promises of Baptism in the Easter Vigil, or on the anniversary of one's own baptism.

URBI ET ORBI

### Papal Blessing

Devoutly receiving the blessing the Pope gives to the city and the world, even by radio or television.

IN ARTICULO MORTIS

### At the Hour of Death

The Church grants a plenary indulgence to the dying who were in the habit of praying during life, even when no priest is present. A blessed crucifix is recommended.

GOOD TO KNOW

### Rules

- Only **one** plenary indulgence can be gained per day (one more at the point of death).
- Partial indulgences can be gained many times a day.
- If the conditions or full detachment are lacking, the indulgence is partial.
- The work must be done in the time and manner prescribed.

PARTIAL INDULGENCES

### Everyday examples

The Sign of the Cross; using holy water; the Angelus and the Regina Caeli; Acts of Faith, Hope, Charity and Contrition; the *Anima Christi*; visiting the Blessed Sacrament; spiritual communion; devoutly using a blessed rosary, medal or scapular; short invocations raised to God amid daily work.

TRADITION

### Days and years

Before 1967 partial indulgences were counted in days, quarantines (forty days) and years, after the ancient canonical penances, as in the *Raccolta* of 1950. Paul VI simplified this, but the doctrine is unchanged: the Council of Trent anathematised anyone who calls indulgences useless.