

TURN DEBT INTO Hope

Jubilee 2025 Debt Relief Campaign

Jubilee is a Tradition

Jubilee is a Biblical tradition of restoration and release, calling for freeing those oppressed by unjust and unsustainable debts.

Jubilee is God's call to us, over and over again, to create structures of justice that will allow people to start anew.

The Jubilee tradition has roots in both Jewish and Christian faiths. The Jewish origins can be found in the Old Testament (Leviticus 25), where the Jubilee was named as a year of rest for the land and a time for social and economic righting of relationships.

Every 50 years, debts were to be forgiven, land returned to its original owners, and slaves set free. In the Christian tradition, the Catholic Church adopted the concept of a Jubilee year, celebrated every 25 years. It's a period of special grace and forgiveness, often marked by pilgrimages, acts of charity and justice, and a renewed focus on faith.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF JUBILEE 2025:

Pope Francis urges nations to...

- **Abolish the death penalty**
- **Forgive developing nations' debts**
- **Reallocate arms spending to fight hunger and climate change.**

These steps, he said, aim to foster hope and address systemic injustice.

The Jubilee theme offers a path toward hope for those burdened by crippling debt in the Global South.

Jubilee Offers Renewed Hope

SILENT DEBT CRISIS

The Jubilee campaign is a way of raising awareness about the silent debt crisis engulfing the Global South and what needs to change. Too many developing countries remain stuck in a debt trap with no hope of escape anytime soon. Rising public debt is forcing many lower-income countries to spend more on debt repayments than on climate, health, and education priorities. In 130 of 152 countries in the Global South, 55% are critically or very critically indebted, in contrast to only 37% before the covid-19 pandemic. More than 3.3 billion people — almost half of the world's population

— live in countries that spend more on debt service than on education or healthcare.

In heavily indebted countries like Sri Lanka, Malawi, Zambia, and Ghana, governments make deep cuts to basic social services, limiting access to education and healthcare, and allow for a steep rise in food and energy prices. As a result, malnutrition, school dropouts, and youth unemployment are all increasing. These countries need debt relief if they are to pursue development and transform into sustainable societies. This includes addressing the climate crisis—something only debt relief can allow.

CAMPAIGN GOALS

1. Stop the debt crisis now by canceling and remedying unjust and unsustainable debts, without economic policy conditions.
2. Prevent debt crises from happening again by addressing their root causes, reforming the global financial system to prioritize people and the planet.
3. Establish a permanent, transparent, binding, and comprehensive debt framework within the United Nations.

KEY ACTIVITIES

- Global Petition – open for signatures throughout 2025
- Prayer and Education events – during Lent (March and April)
- Relay of Light events for 10th anniversary of Laudato Si' (May)
- G7 Leaders' Summit in Alberta, Canada (June 15-17)
- UN Financing for Development Conference in Spain (June 30-July 3)
- G20 Leaders' Summit in South Africa (November)
- UN Climate Change Conference (COP 30) in Brazil (November 10-21)

Turn Debt Into Hope Global Campaign Resources

at <https://turndebtintohope.caritas.org/>

- Global Petition
- Campaign Pack with prayer, study, and action materials in 3 languages and social media toolkit. Relay of Lights event materials available in the campaign pack.

Jubilee USA Network National Campaign Resources

at <https://www.jubileeusa.org/>

- U.S. Policy Action Alerts
- U.S. Catholic Bishops and Interreligious Statements