



Indulgence

What is an indulgence?

An **indulgence** is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, which the faithful Christian who is duly disposed gains under certain prescribed conditions through the action of the Church which, as the minister of redemption, dispenses and applies with authority the treasury of the satisfactions of Christ and the saints” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1471).

An **indulgence** typically is associated with an action done in faith usually referred to as a work.

There are two types of indulgences: **Partial** and **Plenary**.

A **partial indulgence** is the remission of a portion of the temporal punishment due to sin, while a **plenary indulgence** is the remission of all temporal punishment due to sin.

The usual conditions for obtaining a plenary indulgence:

- Have the **intention** of gaining an indulgence.
- **Perform** the prescribed activity (work).
- **Have no attachment to sin (even venial)** one may make an act of the will to love God and despise sin.
- **Go to confession (as soon as possible)**.
- **Receive Communion** while reflecting on God’s mercy, preferably within Mass.
- **Make a profession of faith** (Nicene Creed or Apostles’ Creed).
- **Pray for the pope and for his intentions**, which may be satisfied by praying one Our Father and one Hail Mary.

It is *appropriate* that the sacramental confession especially Communion and the prayer for the pope’s intentions take place on the same day of the pilgrimage, **but it is not necessary**. The sacramental rites and prayers may be carried out up to 20 days before or after the activity/work. A plenary indulgence may be gained only once each day.

While observing the “usual conditions” listed above, the following are **common activities whereby the faithful may gain a plenary indulgence**:

1. **Adoration** of the Blessed Sacrament for at least 30 minutes. (Note: adoration includes private prayer before the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle.)
2. Personally, making a **Way of the Cross** where the fourteen stations have been legitimately erected
3. Uninterrupted recitation of at least five decades of the **Marian Rosary**, while meditating on the accompanying mysteries, with several members of the faithful gathered for some honest purpose (in public recitation the mysteries must be



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- announced) or recitation while it is being recited by the Holy Father and broadcast live on television or radio (or internet).
4. Devout **reading or listening to Sacred Scripture** for at least 30 minutes.
 5. **Renewing one's baptismal promises** at the Easter Vigil or on the anniversary of one's baptism.
 6. By **visiting sacred places** and reciting the Our Father and Creed. Sites include:
 - a. One of the four Patriarchal Basilicas in Rome;
 - b. A minor basilica (such as the Basilica of Our Lady of San Juan del Valle, in San Juan Texas)
 - i. On the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, June 29;
 - ii. On the solemnity of its Titular (title);
 - c. The Cathedral Church (such as St. Mary Cathedral, Austin)
 - i. On the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul (June 29);
 - ii. On the solemnity of its Titular (December 8);
 - d. A parish church on the solemnity of its Titular;
 - e. A church or an altar on the day of its dedication;
 - f. A church or oratory of a religious community on the liturgical memorial of their founder.