



A story of hope from Nigeria: Giving thanks to the Lord

Margaret lost both her legs and an eye in a Islamist attack during Pentecost Sunday Mass at St Francis Xavier's Church in Owo, south-west Nigeria. Despite her life-changing injuries, Margaret's faith remains as strong as ever.

The mother of four received the 2023 ACN (UK) #RedWednesday 'Courage to be Christian' award in recognition of her inspiring witness and trust in God's will in the face of extreme suffering and persecution. During her award acceptance speech, Margaret said she has forgiven the terrorists.

"I thank God I am alive. I have so many reasons to be grateful to God."



Margaret Attah, Nigeria

Prayer for the Jubilee 2025

Father in heaven,
may the *faith* you have given us
in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother,
and the flame of *charity* enkindled
in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,
reawaken in us the blessed *hope*
for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us
into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel.
May those seeds transform from within both humanity
and the whole cosmos in the sure expectation
of a new heaven and a new earth,
when, with the powers of Evil vanquished,
your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee
reawaken in us, Pilgrims of *Hope*,
a yearning for the treasures of heaven.
May that same grace spread
the joy and peace of our Redeemer throughout the earth.
To you our God, eternally blessed,
be glory and praise for ever.

Amen

Pope Francis



Antoine, Syria

A story of hope from Syria: Rescued by our Blessed Mother

Christian father-of-three Antoine was kidnapped by Daesh (ISIS) militants in Aleppo and pressured to convert to Islam. After days of torment, he was told to prepare to die as a suicide bomber.

Early one morning, while semi-conscious, Antoine felt a tap on his shoulder from the Virgin Mary, telling him to flee. Everyone was at prayer. As he tiptoed to the door, the chains and lock miraculously slipped open, and the door swung wide... He was set free and reunited with his family the same day.

"Our Lady saved my life."

Pilgrims of Hope – Reflection

“Hope is rooted deeply in faith because faith means to entrust ourselves to God. Hope is our relationship of trust in God extended into the future.” *Fr Mike Schmitz adapted from What is hope and why do you need it? 20th September 2017 – Ascension Presents*

In this Jubilee Year, I would like to encourage you to intentionally set aside time to be alone with God, to listen to him to discern his will. During your time alone with God, why not begin by reading the following:

- “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.” Proverbs 3:5-6
- “I can do all things in him who strengthens me.” Philippians 4:13

before contemplating on one, two or all the scriptures below:

Romans 15:13: “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.”

Jeremiah 29:11: “For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.”

Hebrews 11:1: “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”

During the Jubilee Year, Catholic pilgrims will flock to Rome and other pilgrimage sites around the world to enter the Holy Door on their own ‘Pilgrimage of Hope.’



ACN UNITED KINGDOM

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Cover Image: The Holy Door at St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican, Italy.

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