

From our young Pilgrims of Hope:

On Monday 4th August, we returned from Rome (thankfully, the flight was relatively smooth despite the weather!) Now that we have returned, we would like to share our experience.

The theme of the 2025 Jubilee year was “Pilgrims of Hope” and our spiritual journey in Rome truly reflected this theme. From waking up each day in an unfamiliar place to the rough and ready sleeping arrangements, our time there was an unforgettable experience that emphasised pilgrimage and hope in each moment.

We participated in many pilgrim activities, including visiting the Christian catacombs, confessions in the Circus Maximus, and a Ceilidh with the other Scottish pilgrim groups (special thanks to the Aberdeen Diocese, who played a monumental role in providing the infrastructure that allowed our small group to participate in the pilgrimage). The most memorable and humbling experience was most definitely the vigil and morning Mass with Pope Leo XIV. The Pope himself was a very warm character, clearly moved by the large number of young people present (over 1 million!)

On top of celebrating two services with Pope Leo we were also fortunate enough to visit three out of the four papal basilicas (St John Lateran, Mary Major and Saint Paul's) which were dedicated to Catholicism through centuries of workmanship, which was evident in the grand and unique styling of them all, culminating in many awestruck moments. The many like-minded young people we met along the way helped strengthen our relationship with God, creating an infectious atmosphere, which we hope to carry this renewed love for the Lord in our daily lives.

Of course, we did our fair share of tourist activities; eating pizza, visiting the Colosseum and drinking many, many espressos. Yet it all centred around this vision of Hope, as even though there were highs and lows everything seemed to work out in the end, and through all the noise and bustle, refuge could be taken in silent prayer – a relief and an escape from the scale of everything! Overall, our experience as Pilgrims of Hope in Rome was a time of immense blessings and memorable moments that we will undoubtedly cherish forever. This couldn't have happened without the generosity of the Parish and the eagerness and positivity of Fr John, so we would like to thank everyone from the bottom of our hearts once again. God bless you all!

