

## **St. Francis Xavier Church Jubilee Year 2024**

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Our parish church was blessed on December 4, 1999. The jubilee year is a tradition that dates to the ancient Israelites, who were commanded by God to observe a jubilee year every 50 years. During this year, the trumpet was sounded throughout the land, proclaiming the forgiveness of debt and the return of ancestral properties. It was a time of rest, restoration, and the reestablishment of justice and equality. (Leviticus 25:8-13)

The jubilee year was meant to remind the people of Israel that everything belongs to God, and that they are called to be faithful stewards of his gifts. It was also a time to celebrate God's mercy and generosity, and to extend the same to one another. The jubilee year was a sign of God's covenant with his people, and a foreshadowing of the ultimate jubilee that he would bring through his Son, Jesus Christ.

### **How does the jubilee year relate to Jesus and the Church?**

Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah (Luke 4:18-19) by proclaiming the good news of God's kingdom, by healing the sick and forgiving the sinners, by freeing the oppressed and giving hope to the hopeless. He accomplished the jubilee by offering himself as the perfect sacrifice for our sins, and by rising from the dead to give us new life.

### **Why is the parish jubilee year important?**

The parish jubilee year is a unique opportunity for the community to celebrate its history, its identity, and its mission. It is a time to thank God for the blessings and the challenges that have shaped the parish, to honor the saints and the heroes who have inspired the parish, and to remember the deceased who have enriched the parish.

It is also a time to look forward to the future, to discern the needs and the opportunities that lie ahead, to renew the parish vision and the parish plan, and to revitalize the parish ministries and the parish programs. It is a time to foster a spirit of joy and gratitude, of hospitality and service, of prayer and worship, of fellowship and friendship.

The parish jubilee year is a chance for each parishioner to grow in faith and holiness, to deepen their relationship with God and with their fellow parishioners, and to discover their gifts and talents for the building up of the parish. It is a chance to participate in the parish activities and events, to avail of the parish resources and services, and to support the parish projects and initiatives.

There are various committees working together to achieve the above said objectives. In the coming weeks we will inform you of the different programs and plans related to the jubilee year. It is my prayer that we all may grow in Christ, welcome the newcomers, reach out to those who are weak, and become a new creation in Christ.

Fr. James Cherickal, Pastor.