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The traditional norm for going to confession, receiving Holy Communion, and praying for the intentions of the pope, in order to gain a plenary indulgence, was 8 days before or after doing the prescribed work (counting the day of the work). In the Great Jubilee Year 2000, the Apostolic Penitentiary relaxed this norm to "several days (about 20) before or after the indulgenced act" (*Gift of the Indulgence*, General remarks, 5). The question often arises whether this norm of about 20 days applied only to the Great Jubilee Year Indulgence, or whether it remains in effect.

In an answer to a question posed by this author, the Apostolic Penitentiary responded that this norm of "about 20 days" remains in effect, since it was contained under the "General remarks on indulgences," and not under those specific to the Jubilee Indulgence.

This is how an indulgence is defined in the *Code of Canon Law* (can. 992) and in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (n. 1471): "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".

To gain indulgences, whether plenary or partial, it is necessary **that the faithful be in the state of grace at least at the time the indulgenced work is completed.**

[N.B. Thus, one must be a Catholic in communion with the Pope, i.e. not excommunicated or in schism.]

A plenary indulgence can be gained only *once a day*.

Prayer for the Pope's intentions is left to the choice of the faithful, but an "Our Father" and a "Hail Mary" are suggested. One sacramental Confession suffices for several plenary indulgences, but a separate Holy Communion and a separate prayer for the Holy Father's intentions are required for each plenary indulgence.

For the sake of those legitimately impeded, *confessors* can commute both the work prescribed and the conditions required (except, obviously, detachment from even venial sin).

Indulgences can always be applied either to oneself or to the souls of the deceased, but they cannot be applied to other persons living on earth.

Answered by Colin B. Donovan, STL

The Enchiridion of Indulgences

Issued by the Sacred Apostolic Penitentiary, 1968

+ Joseph Cardinal Ferretto,

Titular Bishop of the Suburban Church
of Sabina and Poggio Mirteto,

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This is a digest of the works and prayers listed in the Enchiridion of Indulgences. The Enchiridion recites each indulgenced prayer in full. Because most are recognizable they will only be listed by name. The un-translated Enchiridion lists each work and prayer in alphabetical order by their Latin names. The order shall remain the same in this listing. The descriptions of the works and details regarding obtaining the indulgence will be edited and abbreviated in this listing. The following is not represented to be an exact reprint of the Enchiridion but an accurate digest of what constitutes an approved indulgenced work by the Sacred Apostolic Penitentiary.

(In order to obtain it, the faithful must, **in addition to being in the state of grace:**) In all but the plenary indulgence of In Articulo Mortis, at the moment of death, a plenary indulgence mentioned below **MUST** be accompanied by the four prerequisites of a plenary indulgence.

1. Sacramental Confession,
2. Holy Communion
3. Prayer for the intention of the Holy Father, all to be performed within days of each other if not at the same time.
4. Have the interior disposition of *complete detachment from sin, even venial sin*.

Thus the formula for obtaining a plenary indulgence are the three constants mentioned above plus any one of the variable works mentioned below as being worthy of a plenary indulgence.

1. Direct, we beg you, O Lord.(Prayer from Roman Ritual) Partial indulgence.
2. Acts of the Theological Virtues and of Contrition. A partial indulgence is granted to those who devoutly recite, according to any legitimate formula, the acts of faith, hope, charity, and contrition.
3. ADORATION OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT. A PLENARY INDULGENCE is granted to those who visit the Most Blessed Sacrament for at least one half hour (together with the three prerequisites (constants) of a plenary indulgence. A partial indulgence is granted to those who visit and adore the Most Blessed Sacrament without the three constants or for any period less than one half hour.
4. Hidden God (Adoro te devote) — hymn, partial indulgence.
5. We have come (Adsumus) — prayer, partial indulgence.

6. To you, O blessed Joseph (Ad te, beate Ioseph) — prayer, partial indulgence.
7. We Give You Thanks — prayer from Roman Breviary, partial indulgence
8. Angel Of God — prayer, partial indulgence.
9. The Angel Of The Lord — prayer, partial indulgence.
10. Soul of Christ (Anima Christi) — prayer, partial indulgence.
11. Visit to the Patriarchal Basilicas in Rome. A PLENARY INDULGENCE to those who devoutly visit one of the Patriarchal Basilicas in Rome and recite one Our Father and the Creed,
 - a. On the titular feast of the Basilica;
 - b. On any Holy Day of Obligation;
 - c. Once a year on any other day of one's choice. (Remember the three constants are also required to obtain ANY plenary indulgence.)
12. PAPAL BLESSING. A PLENARY INDULGENCE is granted to those who “piously and devoutly” receive, even by radio, the Blessing of the Pope when imparted to Rome and the world (Urbi et Orbi). (3 constants.)
13. Visit to a Cemetery. Only applicable to the souls in Purgatory when one devoutly visits and prays for the departed. A PLENARY INDULGENCE is bestowed for this work each day between November 1 and November 8.
14. Visit to a “Catacomb” (early Christian cemetery.) Partial indulgence.
15. Act of spiritual Communion according to any pious formula — partial indulgence.
16. Recitation of the Apostles Creed or the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed — partial indulgence.
17. ADORATION OF THE CROSS. A PLENARY INDULGENCE to those who in solemn liturgical action of Good Friday devoutly assist in at the adoration of the Cross and kiss it.
18. Office of the dead. A partial indulgence to those who devoutly recite Lauds or Vespers of the Office of the Dead.
19. “Out of the Depths” (De profundis). Psalm 129. Partial indulgence to those who recite.
20. Christian Doctrine. Partial indulgence to those who take part in teaching or learning christian doctrine.
21. “Lord God Almighty.” (Roman Breviary.) Partial indulgence.

22. “Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus.” “Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, while before your face I humbly kneel, and with burning soul pray and beseech you to fix deep in my heart lively sentiments of faith, hope and charity, true contrition for my sins, and a firm purpose of amendment, while I contemplate with great love and tender pity your five wounds, pondering over them within me, calling to mind the words which David, your prophet, said of you, my good Jesus: “They have pierced my hands and my feet; they have numbered all my bones.” PLENARY INDULGENCE when recited on a Friday in Lent and Passiontide, when recited after Communion before an image of Christ crucified. On any other day the indulgence is partial.
23. Eucharistic Congress. PLENARY INDULGENCE to those who devoutly participate in the customary solemn eucharistic rite at the close of a Eucharistic Congress.
24. “Hear Us” (Roman Ritual) — partial indulgence.
25. RETREAT. (*Exercitia spiritualia*). PLENARY INDULGENCE to those who spend at least three (3) whole days in the spiritual exercises of a retreat.
26. “Most sweet Jesus –Act of Reparation” PLENARY INDULGENCE when this prayer is publicly recited on the feast of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. Otherwise the indulgence is partial.
27. “Most sweet Jesus, Redeemer — Act of Dedication of the Human Race to Jesus Christ King.” PLENARY INDULGENCE when this prayer is publicly recited on the feast of our Lord Jesus Christ King. Otherwise the indulgence is partial.
28. The Moment of Death (*In articulo mortis*). PLENARY INDULGENCE. EXCEPTION TO THE THREE CONSTANTS. (*Verbatim recitation of the grant follows:*) “To the faithful in danger of death, who cannot be assisted by a priest to bring them the sacraments and impart the Apostolic Blessing with its plenary indulgence (see can. 468, Sec.2 of Code of Canon Law), Holy Mother Church nevertheless grants a plenary indulgence to be acquired at the point of death, provided they are properly disposed and have been in the habit of reciting some prayers during their lifetime. The use of a crucifix or a cross to gain this indulgence is praiseworthy.” The condition: ‘provided they have been in the habit of reciting some prayers during their lifetime’ supplies in such cases for the three usual conditions required for the gaining of a plenary indulgence.” The plenary indulgence at the point of death can be acquired by the faithful, even if they have already obtained another plenary indulgence on the same day.”
29. Litanies. Partial indulgence to those who recite the following litanies: the litany of the Most Holy Name of Jesus; The litany of The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus; The litany of the Most Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ; The litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary; The litany of St. Joseph; and the litany of All Saints.

30. "The Magnificat". Partial indulgence.
31. "Mary, Mother of Grace." (Roman Ritual) Partial indulgence.
32. "The Memorare." (Remember, O Most gracious Virgin Mary.) Partial Indulgence.
33. "The Miserere" (Have mercy of me.) Psalm 50. Partial indulgence.
34. Novena Devotions. Partial indulgence to those who participate in a public novena before the feast of Christmas or Pentecost, or the Immaculate Conception.
35. Use of Articles of Devotion. (Verbatim follows:) "The faithful, who devoutly use an article of devotion (crucifix or cross, rosary, scapular or medal) properly blessed by any priest, obtain a partial indulgence. "But if the article of devotion has been blessed by the Sovereign Pontiff or by any Bishop, the faithful, using it, can also gain a **PLENARY INDULGENCE** on the feast of the Holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, provided they also make a profession of faith according to any legitimate formula."
36. Little Offices. The following Little Offices are each enriched with a partial indulgence: the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Joseph.
37. Prayer for Sacerdotal or Religious Vocations. Partial indulgence is granted to those who recite a prayer approved by ecclesiastical Authority for the above intention.
38. Mental Prayer. Partial indulgence to those who spend some time in pious mental prayer.
39. "Let us pray for our Sovereign Pontiff" (Roman Breviary) Partial Indulgence.
40. "O Sacred Banquet" (Roman Breviary) Partial indulgence.
41. Assistance as Sacred Preaching. **PLENARY INDULGENCE** is granted to those who attend a Mission, hear some of the sermons and are present for the solemn close of the Mission. A partial indulgence is granted to those who assist with devotion and attention at the sacred preaching of the Word of God.
42. **FIRST COMMUNION**. **PLENARY INDULGENCE** is granted to those who receive Communion for the first time or to those who **ASSIST** at the sacred ceremonies of a First Communion.
43. First Mass of a Newly Ordained Priest. **PLENARY INDULGENCE** granted to the priest and to the faithful who devoutly assist at the same Mass.
44. "Prayer for Unity of the Church." Partial indulgence.
45. Monthly Recollection. Partial indulgence to those who take part in a monthly retreat.

46. "Eternal Rest." A partial indulgence only to the souls in purgatory. "Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord, and let the perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace."
47. "May it Please you, O Lord." Partial indulgence. "May it please you, O Lord, to reward with eternal life all those who do good to us for your Name's sake. Amen."
48. RECITATION OF THE MARIAN ROSARY. (The following is verbatim.) "A PLENARY INDULGENCE is granted, if the Rosary is recited IN A CHURCH OR PUBLIC ORATORY OR IN A FAMILY GROUP, A RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY OR PIOUS ASSOCIATION; a partial indulgence is granted in other circumstances. "Now the Rosary is a certain formula of prayer, which is made up of fifteen decades of 'Hail Marys' with an 'Our Father' before each decade, and in which the recitation of each decade is accompanied by pious meditation on a particular mystery of our Redemption. "The name 'Rosary,' however, is commonly used in reference to only a third of the fifteen decades. "The gaining of the plenary indulgence is regulated by the following norms: "
- a. The recitation of a third part only of the Rosary suffices; but the five decades must be recited continuously. "
 - b. The vocal recitation MUST be accompanied by pious meditation on the mysteries. "
 - c. In public recitation the mysteries must be announced in the manner customary in the place; for private recitation, however, it suffices if the vocal recitation is accompanied by meditation on the mysteries. "
 - d. For those belonging to the Oriental rites, amongst whom this devotion is not practiced, the Patriarchs can determine some other prayers in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary (for those of the Byzantine rite, for example, the Hymn 'Akathistos' or the Office 'Paralipsis'); to the prayers thus determined are accorded the same indulgences as for the Rosary."
49. Jubilees of Sacerdotal Ordination. A PLENARY INDULGENCE is granted to a priest on the 25th, 50th and 60th anniversaries of his ordination when he renews before God his resolve to faithfully fulfill the duties of his vocation. If the priest celebrates a jubilee Mass, the faithful who assist at it can acquire a Plenary Indulgence.
50. READING OF SACRED SCRIPTURE. While a partial indulgence is granted to those who read from Sacred Scripture with the veneration which the divine word is due, a PLENARY INDULGENCE is granted to those who read for at least one half an hour.
51. "Hail Holy Queen." (Roman Breviary.) Partial indulgence.
52. "Holy Mary, help the helpless." (Roman Breviary.) Partial indulgence.
53. "Holy Apostles Peter and Paul." (Roman Missal.) Partial indulgence.

54. Veneration of the Saints. Partial indulgence granted to those who on the feast of any Saint recite in his honor the oration of the Missal or any other approved by legitimate Authority.
55. Sign of the Cross. Partial indulgence.
56. A Visit to the Stational Churches of Rome. A partial indulgence is granted to those who on the day indicated in the Roman Missal devoutly visit the stational church in Rome named for that day' but if they also assist at the sacred functions celebrated in the morning or evening, a PLENARY INDULGENCE is granted.
57. "We fly to your Patronage." Partial indulgence.
58. Diocesan Synod. PLENARY INDULGENCE is granted to those who during the time of a diocesan Synod, devoutly visit the church in which it is being held and there recite one Our Father and the Creed.
59. "Down in Adoration Falling" (Tantum ergo) (Roman Breviary) PLENARY INDULGENCE when recited on Holy Thursday and the feast of Corpus Christi. Otherwise a partial indulgence is granted for recitation.
60. The Te Deum. PLENARY INDULGENCE when recited publicly on the last day of the year. Otherwise a partial indulgence is granted to those who recite the Te Deum in thanksgiving.
61. "Come, Holy Spirit, Creator Blest." PLENARY INDULGENCE if recited on the first of January or on the feast of the Pentecost. Otherwise, a partial indulgence is granted to those who recite it.
62. "Come, Holy Spirit" Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your love. (Roman Missal) Partial indulgence.
63. EXERCISE OF THE WAY OF THE CROSS. PLENARY INDULGENCE. A Plenary indulgence is granted to those who piously make the Way of the Cross. The gaining of the indulgence is regulated by the following rules:
 - a. Must be done before stations of the cross legitimately erected.
 - b. 14 stations are required. Although it is customary for the icons to represent pictures or images, 14 simple crosses will suffice.
 - c. The common practice consists of fourteen pious readings to which some vocal prayers are added.. However, nothing more is required than a pious meditation on the Passion and Death of the Lord, which need not be a particular consideration of the individual mysteries of the stations.
 - d. A movement from one station to the next is required. But if the stations are made publicly and it is not possible for everyone taking part to go from station to station, it

suffices if at least the one conducting the exercise goes from station to station, the others remaining in their places.

e. Those who are “impeded” can gain the same indulgence if they spend at least one half and hour in pious reading and meditation on the Passion and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

f. For those belonging to the Oriental rites, amongst whom this pious exercise is not practiced, the respective Patriarchs can determine some other pious exercise in memory of the Passion and Death for the gaining of this indulgence.

64. “Visit, we beg you, O Lord.” (Roman Breviary) Partial Indulgence.

65. Visit to the Parochial Church. **PLENARY INDULGENCE** is granted to those who devoutly visit the parochial church either on its titular feast or on the 2nd of August when the indulgence of the “Portiuncula” occurs. In visiting the church **IT IS REQUIRED** that one Our Father and the Creed be recited. Both indulgences can be acquired either on the day designated above or on some other day designated by the Ordinary (bishop) for the benefit of the faithful. The same indulgences apply to the Cathedral church and, where there is one, to a Co-Cathedral church, even if they are not parochial churches; they apply to quasi-parochial churches also.

66. Visit to a Church or an Altar on the day of its consecration. **PLENARY INDULGENCE** is granted to those who visit a church or an altar on the day itself of its consecration, and there recite on Our Father and the Creed.

67. Visit to a Church or Oratory on All Souls Day. **PLENARY INDULGENCE**. A plenary indulgence, applicable **ONLY** to the souls in purgatory, may be obtained by those who, on All Souls Day, piously visit a church, public oratory, or -for those entitled to use it, a semi public oratory. It may be acquired either on the day designated as All Souls Day or, with the consent of the bishop, on the preceding or following Sunday or the feast of All Saints. On visiting the church or oratory it is required that one Our Father and the Creed be recited.

68. Visit to a Church or Oratory of Religious on the Feast of the Holy Founder. A **PLENARY INDULGENCE** is granted to those who piously visit a church or oratory of a religious order on the feastday of its canonized founder, and there recite one Our Father and the Creed.

69. Pastoral Visitation. Partial indulgence to those who visit a church during the time that a pastoral visitation is being held. But a **PLENARY INDULGENCE**, to be gained only once during the visitation, is granted if during the time of the visitation they assist at a sacred function at which the Visitor presides.

70. Renewal of Baptismal Promises. A partial indulgence is granted to those who renew their baptismal promises according to any formula in use; but a **PLENARY INDULGENCE** is granted if this is done in celebration of the Paschal Vigil or on the anniversary of one's baptism.

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