

The Jubilee Year as HERO (Hope, Efficacy, Resilience, Optimism): A Psycho-Spiritual Perspective

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ABSTRACT

The Jubilee Year is a religious tradition that has deep meaning for Catholics, seen as a moment of grace that emphasizes liberation, forgiveness, and renewal of life. From a psychological perspective, this celebration not only functions as a spiritual ritual, but also as a coping mechanism that strengthens psychological well-being. This study aims to explore the meaning of the Jubilee Year through the HERO (Hope, Efficacy, Resilience, Optimism) framework, emphasizing how these psychospiritual dimensions are present in the experiences of the faithful. The research methods used were qualitative, involving in-depth interviews with three informants who are active in spiritual communities and have undergone the Porta Sancta pilgrimage, and a literature review to support the analysis. The data were analyzed interactively through reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. The study results show that hope is understood as spiritual energy that encourages the faithful to make peace with the past and move towards the future; self-efficacy is reflected in the belief that prayer, devotion, and concrete actions can strengthen self-confidence in the face of challenges; resilience emerges in attitudes of surrender, humility, and forgiveness that help the faithful rise from difficult experiences; while spiritual optimism is seen as the power of faith that fosters a vision of a future full of love and justice. Overall, the Jubilee Year becomes a psychospiritual space that strengthens HERO capital, making this celebration not only a liturgical tradition, but also a means of character building and resilience in facing the dynamics of life.

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Introduction

The Jubilee Year holds a special place in Catholic life, regarded as a year of grace that offers the faithful liberation from sin. Celebrated every twenty-five years, it carries profound social and spiritual meaning. The tradition began in 1300 under Pope Boniface VIII and has since been marked by the granting of a plenary

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indulgence (Arifin, 2017). This indulgence is defined as the removal of all temporal punishment for sins already forgiven, contingent on confession, reception of Holy Communion, prayer for the Pope's intentions, and detachment from sin (Poto Obe et al., 2025).

A central symbol of the Jubilee is the Porta Sancta, or Holy Door. Opened only during the Jubilee Year, it represents the passage from sin to grace and the beginning of a new life in Christ (Smith, 2016). During the 2015–2016 Jubilee of Mercy, Pope Francis affirmed that mercy lies at the heart of Christian life and offers a path toward hope amid global crises (Francis, 2015). This underscores that the Jubilee is not merely a ritual, but an invitation to renew one's relationship with God and others.

This spirit closely parallels Easter, which commemorates Christ's resurrection following a period of repentance and sacrifice; both traditions convey liberation, spiritual restoration, and renewed hope, with Easter liturgy inviting the faithful to renew their baptismal promises and receive the light of Christ as a symbol of new life (Johnson, 2009; Pargament, 2007). Culturally, both occasions serve as symbolic spaces for strengthening religious identity and social solidarity; in Indonesia, such celebrations are often accompanied by social outreach, including service to the poor and interfaith reconciliation (Simanjuntak, 2021). The Jubilee, held once every twenty-five years, thus offers a rare opportunity for Catholics to obtain a plenary indulgence while renewing faith and reflecting on Christ's sacrifice (Junita, 2025). From a psychological standpoint, the Jubilee and Easter function as mechanisms of spiritual coping that help individuals manage life's pressures, with practices such as confession and spiritual reflection shown to enhance psychological well-being (Pargament, 2007). The HERO framework—Hope, Efficacy, Resilience, and Optimism—offers a relevant lens for understanding character strengths within this context (Pleeging et al., 2021; Schornick et al., 2023; Tambun& Tondok, 2024).

The origins of the Jubilee trace back to ancient Jewish law as recorded in Leviticus 25:8–10, which commands that every fiftieth year be consecrated and liberty proclaimed throughout the land for all its inhabitants. This provision required land to be restored to its original owners, slaves to be freed, and debts to be forgiven (Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia, 2023), embedding social justice, restoration, and mercy as core communal values. The Catholic Church adapted this concept, celebrating its first Jubilee in 1300 under Pope Boniface VIII, and has since observed it every twenty-five years as a time of grace, indulgence, and repentance. The Holy Door, opened at Rome's major basilicas, symbolizes an open heart toward divine love (Junita, 2025), making the Jubilee a spiritual space for renewing faith and deepening one's relationship with God. Its accompanying symbols—the Jubilee trumpet, the Holy Door, and pilgrimage—carry deep significance: the trumpet announces liberation, the door marks spiritual transition toward renewal, and a pilgrimage embodies concrete repentance and the search for meaning. According to Yese (2025), the Jubilee calls the faithful to reflect on God's presence throughout human history and to renew relationships with others through acts of love and forgiveness. Beyond its spiritual dimension, the Jubilee carries social significance as a space for reflecting on hope, reconciliation, and solidarity, calling the faithful in the modern era to pursue social justice and live out

a spirit of liberation. As [Susanto \(2025\)](#) notes, the Jubilee forms a spiritual trace connecting past and present, inviting the faithful to live in a spirit of love, justice, and hope.

Through the lens of the HERO framework, the Jubilee's meaning becomes more precise. In light of Leviticus 25:10, the Jubilee represents collective hope for spiritual and social restoration—not merely a wish, but a directed vision toward a more just and compassionate future. Currently, HERO-based training has been shown to cultivate hope as psychosocial capital that strengthens individual resilience in the face of life's challenges ([Khairuddin et al., 2023](#)). Efficacy is reflected in the Jubilee's call to repentance, relational repair, and concrete steps toward renewal, as the Catholic Church encourages pilgrimage, openness of heart, and acts of love as expressions of spiritual responsibility. This efficacy plays a key role in shaping positive intentions and behavior, including within religious and social contexts ([Lukito, 2018](#)), giving the faithful confidence in their capacity to meaningfully transform their lives and surroundings. Resilience is especially significant for those experiencing suffering, alienation, or injustice, as the Jubilee calls the faithful to rise from past wounds and rebuild their lives through forgiveness and reconciliation. Similarly, HERO-based training has been found to strengthen adolescents' psychological resilience against social and emotional pressure ([Khairuddin et al., 2023](#)), positioning spiritual resilience as the strength to continue living with integrity and hope. Optimism, finally, is reflected in the belief that the future can improve when the faithful open themselves to divine grace and strive for justice—an optimism grounded not in mere positive thinking but in lived faith and communal support; optimism has been shown to contribute to positive intention and persistence in achieving goals ([Lukito, 2018](#)), making the Jubilee a moment to reignite optimism in building a more humane and compassionate world.

Despite this rich body of theological and cultural scholarship, existing studies on the Jubilee have largely remained confined to historical, liturgical, and cultural analysis, while the HERO framework has predominantly been applied within educational, organizational, and leadership contexts. A conceptual gap therefore exists between collective religious experience and established models of psychological capital, with limited scholarly attention paid to how a communal spiritual tradition such as the Jubilee can be systematically understood through a positive-psychology lens. This study addresses that gap by integrating the Jubilee as a collective spiritual experience with the HERO framework, offering a psychospiritual perspective that positions the Jubilee as a form of collective coping and a source of faith-based psychological capital, particularly within the pluralistic context of Indonesian society. In doing so, the study extends the application of the HERO framework into the domain of communal religious experience, an area that remains underexplored in the scientific literature.

Accordingly, this study seeks to explore and analyze the meaning of the Jubilee Year as a transformative space integrating spiritual and psychological dimensions through the HERO framework, and to examine how religious practices within the Jubilee—such as repentance, pilgrimage, and spiritual reflection—contribute to strengthening the faithful's hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism. Theoretically, the study contributes to the enrichment of the psychology

of religion and positive psychology by fostering dialogue between Catholic theological tradition and the HERO concept. Practically, its findings may serve as a reference for pastoral care, spiritual counseling, and the development of faith-formation programs oriented toward strengthening the psychological resilience of the faithful.

Method

This study employed a qualitative method, with data collected through interviews and a literature review. The participants consisted of three informants: two women (Informant 1 and Informant 2) and one man (Informant 3), all aged between 30 and 35 years. Informants were selected based on specific criteria, namely active involvement in a spiritual community and having undertaken a pilgrimage to the Porta Sancta, located either in Indonesia or abroad. In addition to the interviews, the researcher also conducted a literature review of three journal articles to complement the primary data. The data were then analyzed interactively by discussing the findings and drawing conclusion in relation to the relevant theory.

Data analysis was carried out through three stages—data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing—as proposed by [Miles and Huberman \(1994\)](#). The first stage was used to select and focus on essential information, the display stage was organized to facilitate comprehension, and conclusion drawing and verification aimed to ensure the meaning and consistency of the findings.

Results

Literature Review on the Meaning of the Jubilee Year

Findings from prior studies on how Catholic communities interpret the Jubilee Year used to reinforce the interview results obtained in this study. The literature review revealed meanings closely aligned with the psychospiritual HERO framework (Hope, Efficacy, Resilience, Optimism), as summarized in [Table 1](#).

Table 1. Interpretations of the Jubilee Year from the Literature

Author (Year)	Meaning
Yese (2025)	The Jubilee Year represents the mystery of faith in Christ's resurrection. The work of salvation becomes a source of renewed hope for believers in daily life.
Renanda (2025)	The Jubilee Year embodies hope in God's promise, providing strength to face crisis, injustice, poverty, and strained human relationships. It serves as a call for the renewal of life.
Komisi Kateketik Keuskupan Surabaya (2025)	The Jubilee Year is a year of hope inseparable from faith and love, inviting the faithful to trust in God's mercy, live in holiness alongside the Blessed Mother, and rekindle hope amid the world's conflicts.

Source: Primary Data (2025)

Interview Findings

The demographic profiles of the three informants are presented in [Table 2](#) prior to the discussion of interview results.

Table 2. Demographic Profile of Informants

Informant Code	Age	Sex	Profile
I1	34	Female	An active Catholic involved in parish, territorial, and young workers' community ministries, who has passed through the Porta Sancta within the Diocese of Surabaya.
I2	35	Female	An active Catholic involved in categorical Church ministries and young workers' communities, who has passed through the Porta Sancta within the Diocese of Surabaya, in Rome, and along the Camino de Santiago.
I3	30	Male	An active Catholic involved in categorical Church ministries and Catholic youth activities, who has passed through the Porta Sancta within the Diocese of Surabaya.

Source: Primary Data (2025)

Hope as the Foundation of Spirituality and Growth

The faithful carried a profound sense of hope throughout the Jubilee Year, observed from 24 December 2024 to 6 January 2026. As a spiritual strength, hope sustained the faithful in their pilgrimage through life, and the Jubilee theme "Pilgrims of Hope" deepened their understanding of God's mercy—consistent with Catholic teaching that believers are called to live in faith, hope, and the love of Christ. The three informants described this spiritual energy in varying yet complementary ways. For Informant 1 (I1) and Informant 2 (I2), hope carried a shared meaning: an opportunity and an invitation to grow beyond what had already been achieved, serving as capital for self-love and a chance to reflect on past experience. As I1 explained, hope teaches one to love oneself more deeply, while I2 added that hope shifts attention toward the present and future, allowing one to move on and make peace with the past. Hope thus became a driving force in the continued pursuit of God's love; although sustaining such hope was not always easy, it provided the motivation needed to remain faithful in pursuit of the ultimate goal—eternal life with the Father in heaven. This aligns with [Donaldson et al. \(2020\)](#), who identify hope as a psychological resource that consistently enhances motivation and contributes to well-being, and with [Khairuddin et al. \(2023\)](#), who note that hope strengthens the faithful in confronting life's challenges. Informant 3 (I3) further described faith and hope as a flame that never fully extinguishes, one that fuels the drive to seek a way out of difficult times, stating that hope keeps the inner fire from truly going out and provides the push needed to emerge from hardship.

Efficacy: The Transformation of Faith through Worldly Challenges

Undertaking a pilgrimage is rarely easy; despite the physical exhaustion and numerous challenges that must be overcome, and believers sometimes overlook or underestimate certain aspects, especially during the process of repentance. The opening of the Holy Door during the Jubilee Year served as an invitation to receive the grace of forgiveness granted by God—a grace that, for some of the faithful, remains accessible even after the Jubilee Year concludes, whether before Mass, during Lent, or throughout Advent. Even so, God invites believers to experience His miracles through the sacrament of reconciliation during this special season.

Informant 2's journey toward obtaining the plenary indulgence illustrates a striking transformation of faith. I2 recounted that God strengthened her through unpredictable circumstances, describing a 118-kilometer pilgrimage undertaken on foot while relying solely on prayer and God's grace. This testimony encourages the faithful to have confidence in their capacity to achieve their goals, echoing [Bandura \(1986\)](#), who identifies self-efficacy as a critical factor in motivation and performance. This spiritual strength was further reinforced through devotional practices such as the Rosary, adoration, and the Holy Eucharist, as reflected in I3's experience of affirming faith when facing challenges. Such spiritual practices cultivate a form of self-efficacy that fosters positive behavior—namely, confidence in one's ability to confront worldly difficulties. This conviction of faith extends beyond devotional symbolism into lived physical and spiritual journeys, as faith nurtured through the Eucharist provides strength that affirms both oneself and others ([Wilhelmus, 2018](#)).

Spiritual Capital through Resilience

Beyond strengthening self-efficacy, believers must also cultivate resilience—the capacity to rise from adversity. Resilience functions as both spiritual and physical capital for endurance, though each individual pursues it differently. Throughout the Jubilee Year, the faithful were encouraged toward deeper reflection. Informant 1 (I1) drew resilience from an attitude of surrender, choosing to do what was possible and entrusting the outcome to God, while informant 2 (I2) emphasized humility and forgiveness as central sources of resilience. In line with [Van Tongeren \(2024\)](#), these two values help cultivate inner peace as well as peace with others, while reducing internal conflict and enhancing well-being; I2 specifically noted that humility and the teaching of forgiveness supported her pilgrimage of hope.

People live by hope: although the future remains unknown, holding onto hope opens a way forward. As [Khairuddin et al. \(2023\)](#) observe, resilience is not merely about "enduring" but about "growing" from a difficult past, and the Jubilee tradition educates the faithful to rise again and pursue new goals. Conviction in faith builds spiritual fortitude that enables believers to face life's challenges with a positive outlook ([Kristiani, 2019](#)), a sentiment mirrored in I3's belief that hope never disappears but remains ever-present, stating that "hope exists and will always exist."

Optimism as the Strength of Faith

Faith does not simply emerge and grow on its own; it requires strong roots to develop into a firm and enduring conviction, one that embodies hope for the future. Believers need a positive outlook toward what lies ahead in order to face challenges with greater strength, and such optimism must be grounded in reliance on God's will. As I3 expressed, spiritual optimism must be rooted in God, so that all undertakings align with His will.

The Jubilee Year served as a reminder to live in continual reliance on God's presence. I2 described it as a turning point—a return to God—characterizing the year as one of hope and a "reset point" for divine mercy. Optimism was further nurtured through the faith community, whose mutual support fostered renewed hope in building a future rooted in love (Santosa, 2020). As Sutton and Roemer (2024) explain within the HERO framework, optimism is grounded in an individual's positive attitude, ultimately becoming a strength of faith that cultivates genuine hope for the future.

Conclusion

The Jubilee Year is understood as a psychospiritual space that strengthens the dimensions of HERO (Hope, Efficacy, Resilience, Optimism). The findings show that hope emerges as a spiritual energy that encourages the faithful to make peace with the past and face the future with renewed confidence. Efficacy is reflected in the belief that prayer, devotion, and concrete action can foster resilience in confronting life's challenges. Resilience is manifested through surrender, humility, and forgiveness, which help the faithful rise from difficult experiences. Optimism, in turn, emerges as a strength of faith that cultivates a vision of a future filled with love and justice.

Thus, the Jubilee Year is not merely a liturgical tradition but also a mechanism of spiritual coping that strengthens the psychological well-being and character of the faithful. Its implication is that this celebration can be regarded as a means of building psychospiritual capital relevant to navigating the dynamics of modern life, while also strengthening social solidarity and religious identity. This study affirms that the Jubilee Year functions as a transformative space that integrates spiritual and psychological dimensions, thereby demonstrating that the Jubilee is capable of strengthening the capacity of HERO (Hope, Efficacy, Resilience, Optimism) in the lives of the faithful.

Recommendations

This study has several limitations, including a very limited number of informants, a narrow age range, and insufficient diversity in cultural and geographical context, which together restrict the generalizability of the results. In addition, the qualitative method employed—relying solely on interviews and a limited range of literature sources—carries the potential for religious bias. Future research is therefore encouraged to expand both the number and diversity of informants, incorporating a wider range of cultural backgrounds. It is further recommended that subsequent studies employ triangulation methods to deepen and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the outcomes. The findings of

this study may nevertheless serve as a conceptual foundation for other researchers seeking to test, extend, or adapt analytical models based on the HERO framework within broader and more diverse contexts.

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