
**A JUBILEE
YEAR OF MERCY**

December 8, 2015 - November 20, 2016

Dear Friends,

On the second anniversary of his pontificate (March 13, 2015), Pope Francis announced **A Jubilee Year** also called an extraordinary holy year, dedicated to the theme **“Mercy”**.

This jubilee will begin with the opening of the holy door of St. Peter’s Basilica on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception on **December 8, 2015** and conclude on the Feast of Christ the King on **November 20, 2016**.

A year of jubilee is a time of joy, remission, or universal pardon. Pope Francis explained, “I am convinced that the whole Church will find in this jubilee the joy needed to rediscover and make fruitful the mercy of God, with which all of us are called to give consolation to every man and woman of our time. From this moment, we entrust this holy year to the Mother of Mercy, that she might turn her gaze upon us and watch over our journey.”

The Holy Father also urges Catholics to learn the seven spiritual and seven corporal works of mercy, which illustrate the ways to show charity towards others. These works of mercy are listed on the back of this letter.

The Opening of the Doors of Mercy

After the solemn inauguration of the Holy Year — marked by the opening of the Holy Door of Saint Peter’s Basilica on December 8th — all the particular Churches will open their own Doors of Mercy in communion with the Church of Rome as part of the Eucharistic celebration of the Third Sunday of Advent (*Gaudete Sunday—December 13*). As a matter of fact, the Holy Father will open the Holy Door of the Cathedral of Rome, the Basilica of Saint John Lateran, on that Sunday, December 13, 2015. Every particular Church will also open any other Doors of Mercy, namely those designated at important Shrines, during the celebration of the Eucharist for the Third Sunday of Advent, which may be presided at by a delegate of the Bishop.

A special rite for the opening of the Holy Doors has been prepared by this Pontifical Council, with the approval of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments.

I am pleased to announce that Archbishop William Lori has named St. Ignatius, Hickory’s Historic Church one of the Seven Holy Year Shrines for the Holy Year of Mercy. On December 13, 2015, after the Noon Mass, Msgr. Jim will process over to the Historic Church asking the people to do the same, and there, unlock the Holy Year Door for our Harford County Region of the Archdiocese of Baltimore. After praying the opening rite;

Adoration will begin and continue thru until Monday morning at 7:00 AM.

Having Crossed the Doorway

Once pilgrims have crossed through the Holy Door or Door of Mercy, or have fulfilled one of the other conditions under which Pope Francis has granted the Jubilee indulgence (for example, for the sick, for the imprisoned, or for anyone who carries out in person a work of mercy), in addition to the usual conditions which require a heart well-disposed for the grace to bring its desired fruits, the faithful should stop in prayer to fulfill the final actions asked for the profession of faith, and prayer for the Holy Father and his intentions. The latter should be at least an “Our Father” — the prayer in which Jesus himself taught us to turn as children to the Father — but it could possibly be more. In particular, taking into consideration the spirit of this Holy Year, it is suggested that pilgrims recite the lovely prayer of Pope Francis for the Jubilee and that they conclude the time of prayer with an invocation to the merciful Lord Jesus (for example, “Merciful Jesus, I trust in You”).

During this Holy Year, it is expected that many pilgrims will visit our Historic Church which is open Monday thru Friday—7 AM to 3 PM and usually on Saturday during Mass times and on Sunday from 7 AM thru until Monday at 7 AM with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

In March, there will be a region-wide Penance Service for our county held simultaneously with the other sites around the Archdiocese along with a special 24-Hour Eucharistic Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. (More details on this will following in the bulletin.)

The Holy Father’s Prayer for the Holy Year, along with the designated Holy Year sites in the Archdiocese, the Our Father and Profession of Faith are on the reverse side of this letter .

I am extremely grateful to Archbishop Lori for designating St. Ignatius as one of the seven Holy Year Sites in the Archdiocese. May this special Year of Mercy be a time for our parish to extend welcome, love and mercy to all whom we encounter and to all who visit us.

God Bless You,
Msgr. James M. Barker, Pastor
St. Ignatius, Hickory

Jubilee Churches in Rome

Each of the **four Papal Basilicas in Rome (Saint Peter's in the Vatican, Saint John Lateran, Saint Mary Major, and Saint Paul Outside the Walls)** has a Holy Door. These are Jubilee Churches one can obtain the Jubilee indulgence by making a pilgrimage to one of them and fulfilling the other necessary conditions. The Basilicas of the **Holy Land** are also traditionally Jubilee Churches. In the **rest of the world**, the Jubilee Churches will be the **diocesan church and any shrines in which the**

local Ordinary decides to open a Door of Mercy.

In Rome, in addition to the four Papal Basilicas, there will be three other Jubilee Churches. They are **Saint Lawrence Outside the Walls (San Lorenzo fuori le Mura), The Church of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem (Santa Croce in Gerusalemme), and Saint Sebastian Outside the Walls (San Sebastiano fuori le Mura)**. These churches, with the Papal Basilicas, make up the traditional **"Seven Church Walk"**.

To Receive the Jubilee Indulgence

- A person should put into practice at least one or two of the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy
- Be in the state of grace — having received the Sacrament of Reconciliation recently
- Visit at least one of the designated shrines in your Archdiocese and cross through their Holy Year Door
- Pray an Our Father for the Holy Father's Intentions
- Pray the Holy Father's Prayer for the Jubilee of Mercy

The Jubilee Prayer

Pope Francis has composed a special prayer for the Jubilee Year of Mercy:

Lord, Jesus Christ, you have taught us to be merciful like the heavenly Father, and have told us that whoever sees you sees Him. Show us your face and we will be saved. Your loving gaze freed Zacchaeus and Matthew from being enslaved by money; the adulteress and Magdalene from seeking happiness only in created things; made Peter weep after his betrayal, and assured Paradise to the repentant thief. Let us hear, as if addressed to each one of us, the words that you spoke to the Samaritan woman: "If you knew the gift of God!"

You are the visible face of the invisible Father, of the God who manifests his power above all by forgiveness and mercy: let the Church be our visible face in the world, its Lord risen and glorified. You willed that your ministers would also be clothed in weakness in order that they may feel compassion for those in ignorance and error: let everyone who approaches them feel sought after, loved, and forgiven by God.

Send your Spirit and consecrate every one of us with its anointing, so that the Jubilee of Mercy may be a year of grace from the Lord, and your Church, with renewed enthusiasm, may bring good news to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives and the oppressed, and restore sight to the blind.

We ask this of you, Lord Jesus, through the intercession of Mary, Mother of Mercy; you who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

Corporal Works of Mercy

- Feed the hungry
- Give drink to the thirsty
- Clothe the naked
- Harbor the harborless
- Visit the sick
- Ransom the captive
- Bury the dead

Spiritual Works of Mercy

- Instruct the ignorant
- Counsel the doubtful
- Admonish sinners
- Bear wrongs patiently
- Forgive offences willingly
- Comfort the afflicted
- Pray for the living and dead

A Sample "To Do" List for "Living Out the Works of Mercy"

Here are just a few ways individuals, groups and parishes can mark the Year of Mercy. More ideas can be found on the Fellowship of Catholic University Students website at www.focus.org

- Make sandwiches and pass them out to the homeless.
- Prepare and take a meal to someone in your community who is seriously ill or welcoming home a newborn.
- Pass out water bottles to the homeless.
- Volunteer at a hospital
- Assist in a Faith Formation Program.
- Mentor a teen.
- Comfort someone who is lonely
- Visit a neighbor or friend who is sick.
- Donate baby formula to a local pregnancy help center.
- Go through your closet and give away what you don't need.
- Volunteer to do manual labor to help in the upkeep of a neighbor or tend to an errand for them.
- Become a mentor to a foster child.
- Take the Eucharist to the homebound in your community.
- Participate in a Growing in Faith activity at the parish
- Visit the cemetery and pray for the dead.



Jubilee Churches in the Archdiocese of Baltimore

1. Shrine of SS. Peter & Paul: Western Region
2. St. John's, Frederick: Central Region
3. Shrine of St. Anthony, Ellicott City: South Central Region

4. St. Mary's, Annapolis: Anne Arundel Region
5. St. Ignatius, Hickory: Harford Region
6. Basilica: East Baltimore Region
7. St. Ignatius, Hickory: Harford