



YEAR OF MERCY

8 DEC 2015 - 20 NOV 2016

Our Holy Father, Pope Francis has announced an Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy which will begin on December 8, 2015, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception and conclude on November 20, 2016, the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of the Universe. The Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy was declared with the Bull of Indiction, 'Misericordiae Vultus' (MV) of April 11, 2015.

"*Merciful like the Father*" (Lk. 6:36) is the motto of the Holy Year of Mercy and this serves as an invitation to follow the example of the compassionate Father who asks us not to judge or condemn but to forgive and give love and forgiveness without measure. We wish to live this Jubilee Year in the light of the Lord's words: "*Be merciful just as your Father is merciful*" (Lk 6:36).

The Holy Father said "It is indeed my wish that the Jubilee be a living experience of the closeness of the Father, whose tenderness is almost tangible, so that the faith of every believer may be strengthened and thus testimony to it be ever more effective."

At this juncture, here are some important areas to which we could give extra attention:

1. **Opening of the Holy Door of Mercy:** "*On the same Sunday, (the third Sunday of Advent, December 13, 2015) I (Pope Francis) will announce that in every local Church at the Cathedral – the Mother Church of the faithful in any particular area or alternatively at the co-cathedral or another church of special significance, a Door of Mercy will be opened for the duration of the Holy Year*" (MV 3). At the discretion of the Diocesan Bishop a similar door may be opened at any Shrine. It would be particularly appropriate if the National Shrines and Basilicas are chosen for this.
2. **Closing of the Holy Door of Mercy:** On November 20, 2016, the day of the closing of the Holy Year of Mercy, all the doors designated as Holy Doors of Mercy will be solemnly closed (MV 5).
3. **Corporal Works of Mercy:** "*Jesus introduces us to these works of Mercy in his preaching so that we can know whether or not we are living as his disciples. Let us rediscover these corporal works of Mercy: i) to feed the hungry, ii) give drink to the thirsty, iii) clothe the naked, iv) welcome the stranger, v) heal the sick, vi) visit the imprisoned and vii) bury the dead.*" (MV15). We can motivate every Jesus Youth to do "One small Act of Mercy daily".
4. **Spiritual Works of Mercy:** "*And let us not forget the spiritual works of Mercy: i) to counsel the doubtful, ii) instruct the ignorant, iii) admonish sinners, iv) comfort the afflicted, v) forgive offences, vi) bear patiently those who do us ill and vii) pray for the living and the dead*" (MV 15). We are recommended to form Missionary Disciples (MD) (Evangelii Gaudium 120) who can exercise the above spiritual works and motivate others to do the same."
5. **Pilgrimage:** "*The Practice of Pilgrimage has a special place in the Holy Year, because it represents the journey each of us makes in this life*" (MV 14). "*May pilgrimage be an impetus to conversion, by crossing the threshold of the Holy Door, we will find the strength to embrace God's Mercy*" (MV14).

We are invited to announce some Pilgrimages where people can have the opportunity to enter the Holy Door and encounter God's Mercy and obtain an Indulgence.

6. **Lent 2016:** "*The season of Lent during this Jubilee Year should also be lived more intensely as a privileged moment to celebrate and experience God's Mercy*" (MV 16). Lent 2016 should be considered with new fervour and more reading and meditation of the Sacred Scriptures should be promoted. "*In order to be capable of Mercy, therefore, we must first of all dispose ourselves to listen to the Word of God*" (MV13).

7. **Regular Confession Initiatives:** *"Let us place the Sacrament of Reconciliation at the centre once more in such a way that it will enable people to touch the grandeur of God's Mercy with their own hand"* (MV 17). We need to lead penitents to experience Divine Mercy through the sacrament of Reconciliation. We can go for regular confessions and lead others to this sacrament.
8. **Mercy Outreaches:** *"May we reach out to them (wounded and hurt) and support them so that they can feel the warmth of our presence, our friendship and our fraternity"* (MV 15). As members of the Body of Christ, we are called upon to respond with deep compassion and mercy to all our brothers and sisters who have been hurt in some way by any member of the Church or by any minister of the Church. There is an urgent need to identify 'Agents of Reconciliation' who will take the initiative to reach out to those who feel wounded by the ministers and the members of our own community.
9. **24 Hours for the Lord:** *"The initiative of 24 Hours for the Lord to be celebrated on the Friday and Saturday preceding the Fourth week of Lent, should be implemented in every diocese"* (MV 17) March 4 and 5, 2016 can be marked as the days of intense prayer in every Diocese, Parish, Religious House, Institution and Mission Stations. A 24-hour Chain Prayer involving different ministries can be organised.
10. **Household Catechesis:** For the whole of next year we will have our Household Catechesis focusing on the year of mercy. We would be encouraged to engage in Spiritual and Corporal works of mercy after each Household.
11. **Time of Reconnecting for Jesus Youth:** From Easter Sunday to Pentecost (March 27th to May 15th) - during this time we would be focusing on the dimension of 'reconnecting' within the Jesus Youth movement. This will also help us prepare prayerfully and meaningfully for our Commitment Day.
 - i) **Week one** - will be a time to reconnect with all Jesus Youth in our regions/place. We will take special initiative to go and meet all the Jesus Youth, specially those who are not connected with the movement at present or have been keeping away from the movement for different reasons, maybe because of some misunderstanding or hurt feelings, difference of opinion etc. As a team we will take the initiative to reconnect with these people.
 - ii) **Week two** - we will reach out to our neighbours/workplaces etc. All Jesus Youth will be encouraged to go into their neighborhoods and meet new people. This applies to workplaces also. The intent is to go out and meet your neighbour, one you have not met before. This is an opportunity to reconcile and make peace with people.
 - iii) **Week three** - we will reach out to our parish. During this week we could take special initiatives in the parish, do something specific in the parish like meeting the priests in our parishes or else anyone who needs help or support and reaching out to them.
 - iv) **Week four** - we will reach out to family members, those in our families whom we have drifted away from and reconnect with them.
 - v) **Week five** - we will reconnect with our fellow Jesus Youth, those in your team, in your region, and spend time with each other in prayer.
 - vi) **Week six** - we will reach out to those on the periphery. Let this week be specifically dedicated to reach out to those in need.
 - vii) **Week seven** - we will pray and prepare for our Commitment Day.

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CALENDAR 2015 - 2016



2015	
8 DEC TUESDAY	<i>Immaculate Conception</i> Opening of the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica
13 DEC SUNDAY	<i>III Sunday of Advent</i> Opening of the Holy Door of the Basilica of St. John Lateran and in the Cathedrals of the world.
2016	
1 JAN FRIDAY	<i>Mary, the Holy Mother of God</i> World Day for Peace. Opening of the Holy Door of the Basilica of Saint Mary Major.
19 JAN TUESDAY - 21 JAN THU	Jubilee for those Engaged in Pilgrimage Work
25 JAN MONDAY	<i>Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul</i> Opening of the Holy Door of the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls
2 FEB TUESDAY	<i>Feast of the Presentation of the Lord and the Day for Consecrated Life</i> Jubilee for Consecrated Life and the closing of the Year for Consecrated Life.
10 FEB WEDNESDAY	<i>Ash Wednesday</i> Sending forth of the Missionaries of Mercy, St. Peter's Basilica
22 FEB MONDAY	<i>Feast of the Chair of St. Peter</i> Jubilee for the Roman Curia
4 MAR FRIDAY - 5 MAR SATURDAY	"24 Hours for the Lord" with a penitential liturgy in St. Peter's Basilica on the afternoon of Friday, March 4.
20 MAR SUNDAY	<i>Palm Sunday</i> The diocesan day for youth in Rome
27 MAR SUNDAY	Easter
3 APR SUNDAY	<i>Divine Mercy Sunday</i> Jubilee for those devoted to the spirituality of Divine Mercy
24 APR SUNDAY	<i>5th Sunday of Easter</i> Jubilee for young boys and girls (ages 13 – 16): To profess the faith and construct a culture of mercy.
15 MAY SUNDAY	<i>Pentecost</i> Jesus Youth Commitment Day
27 MAY FRIDAY - 29 MAY SUNDAY	<i>The Corpus Christi in Italy</i> Jubilee for deacons
3 JUN FRIDAY	<i>The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus</i> Jubilee for priests. 160 years since the introduction of the Feast by Pius IX in 1856
12 JUN SUNDAY	<i>XI Sunday of Ordinary Time</i> Jubilee for those ill and with disabilities
26 JUL TUESDAY - 31 JUL SUNDAY	Jubilee for young people. World Youth Day in Krakow, Poland
4 SEP SUNDAY	<i>Memorial of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta – September 5</i> Jubilee for workers and volunteers of mercy
25 SEP SUNDAY	<i>XXVI Sunday</i> Jubilee for catechists
8 OCT SATURDAY - 9 OCT SUNDAY	<i>Saturday and Sunday after the Memorial of Our Lady of the Rosary)</i> Marian Jubilee
1 NOV TUESDAY	<i>All Saints</i>
6 NOV SUNDAY	<i>XXXII Sunday</i> In St. Peter's Basilica, the Jubilee for prisoners
13 NOV SUNDAY	<i>XXXIII Sunday</i> Closing of the Holy Doors in the Basilicas of Rome and in the Dioceses of the world
20 NOV SUNDAY	<i>Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe</i> Closing of the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica and the conclusion of the Jubilee of Mercy



HYMN FOR THE YEAR OF MERCY

Misericordes sicut Pater!
Misericordes sicut Pater!

[cf. Lk 6,36] [motto of the Jubilee]

1. Give thanks to the Father, for He is good
in aeternum misericordia eius [cf. Ps 135/6]
He created the world with wisdom
in aeternum misericordia eius
He leads His people throughout history
in aeternum misericordia eius
He pardons and welcomes His children [cf. Lk 15]
in aeternum misericordia eius

2. Give thanks to the Son, Light of the Nations
in aeternum misericordia eius
He loved us with a heart of flesh [cf. Jn 15,12]
in aeternum misericordia eius
As we receive from Him, let us also give to Him
in aeternum misericordia eius
Hearts open to those who hunger and thirst [cf. Mt 25,31 ff.]
in aeternum misericordia eius

Misericordes sicut Pater!
Misericordes sicut Pater!

3. Let us ask the Spirit for the seven holy gifts
in aeternum misericordia eius
Fount of all goodness and the sweetest relief
in aeternum misericordia eius
Comforted by Him, let us offer comfort [cf. Jn 15,26-27]
in aeternum misericordia eius
Love hopes and bears all things [cf. 1Cor 13,7]
in aeternum misericordia eius

4. Let us ask for peace from the God of all peace
in aeternum misericordia eius
The earth waits for the Good News of the Kingdom [cf. Mt 24,14]
in aeternum misericordia eius
Joy and pardon in the hearts of the little ones
in aeternum misericordia eius
The heavens and the earth will be renewed [cf. Ap 21,1]
in aeternum misericordia eius

Misericordes sicut Pater!
Misericordes sicut Pater!



PRAYER OF POPE FRANCIS FOR THE JUBILEE

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 your 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.