



Jubilee of Mercy

MERCIFUL LIKE THE FATHER



PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE NEW EVANGELIZATION

USEFUL INFORMATION REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE JUBILEE

The Jubilee of Mercy was announced by Pope Francis as a year to be lived intensely in each particular Church, allowing every person to encounter the mercy of God the Father through diligent labor for the Church's mission there. The most evident sign of this pastoral care is the chance to open a Door of Mercy in every diocese. These doors, analogous to the Holy Doors of the Papal Basilicas in Rome, will permit even people who cannot travel to Rome to make a Jubilee pilgrimage.

Doors of Mercy

It will be the responsibility of the local Ordinary to decide in which church of the diocese the Door of Mercy will be opened. There should be a Door of Mercy opened in every diocese and eparchy of the world (cfr. *MV* 3).

In addition to the Door of Mercy chosen for the diocese, the diocesan Ordinaries may also permit the opening of other Doors of Mercy at Shrines of particular importance, especially where there is the happy possibility that the many faithful who visit the shrine may always encounter the merciful embrace of the Father in confession (cfr. *MV* 3).

It is good for the extraordinary possibility for the Jubilee indulgence to be recognized by the faithful precisely as an opportunity out of the ordinary, so that they may live it as a time particularly fitting for embarking on the path of conversion. Fostering the proper appreciation for the special sign of the Door of Mercy will facilitate this invitation to conversion.

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 next 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). 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. 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. It has been published in the book “Celebrating Mercy”, the first of a series of pastoral resources for the Jubilee of Mercy. This volume gives a complete description of everything that is proper for the rite celebrating the opening of a Door of Mercy; for anything not expressly indicated therein, the ordinary liturgical norms apply, as confirmed by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. (Hence, for example, the proper liturgical color is violet or rose, as prescribed for *Gaudete* Sunday, and the Gloria is not sung, according to the norm for Advent).

The series of books, among them the volume containing the rite, is being published in seven languages (Italian, English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, German, and Polish). More information is available on the official web site of the Jubilee (www.im.va).

Jubilee Churches

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**”.

The importance of pilgrimages for the Jubilee suggests that the faithful rediscover and undertake this penitential itinerary left to the Romans by Saint Philip Neri in the 1500's. Therefore, pilgrimages to any one of these three additional churches will also be an occasion to gain the Jubilee Indulgence.

The diocese of Rome is home to many other churches and important shrines as well, pilgrimage destinations for many of the faithful, who always find priests in these places ready to welcome them in the mercy of the Father. During the Holy Year, the **Shrine of Divine Love (Santuario del Divino Amore)** and the Church of **Santo Spirito in Sassia**, also known as the “Shrine of Divine Mercy” will be designated as additional Jubilee Churches, where pilgrims can go to obtain the Jubilee Indulgence.

Finally, churches that already regularly have the possibility to grant indulgences to the faithful who devotedly fulfill the prescribed conditions in them will remain places in which to obtain an indulgence during the Jubilee of Mercy, according to the conditions already determined for each of these places.

Having Crossed the Doorway

Once they 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”).