

WILLIAM PATRICK

By the Grace of God and



the Favor of the Apostolic See

BISHOP OF LA CROSSE

DECREE

**On the Designation of Holy Doors and Pilgrimage Churches
for the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy
in the Diocese of La Crosse**

Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, has “proclaimed an *Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy* as a special time for the Church, a time when the witness of believers might grow stronger and more effective.”¹ The Jubilee of Mercy will open on 8 December 2015, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, and conclude on 20 November 2016 the Solemnity of Christ the King. His Holiness states:

I will have the joy of opening the Holy Door on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. On that day, the Holy Door will become a *Door of Mercy* through which anyone who enters will experience the love of God who consoles, pardons, and instills hope.

On the following Sunday...I will announce that in every local church, at the cathedral – the mother church of the faithful in any particular area... a Door of Mercy will be opened for the duration of the Holy Year. At the discretion of the local ordinary, a similar door may be opened at any shrine frequented by large groups of pilgrims, since visits to these holy sites are so often grace-filled moments, as people discover a path to conversion. Every Particular Church, therefore, will be directly involved in living out this Holy Year as an extraordinary moment of grace and spiritual renewal. Thus the Jubilee will be celebrated both in Rome and in the Particular Churches as a visible sign of the Church’s universal communion.²

Therefore, in communion with our Holy Father and in the spirit of pastoral solicitude for the Christian faithful entrusted to my care, I, William Patrick Callahan, Bishop of La Crosse, in accordance with the Papal Bull for the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, designate the center door of Saint Joseph the Workman Cathedral, and the eastern door of the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, both in La Crosse, as Holy Doors for the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy. In

¹ Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, *Misericordiae Vultus* (11 April 2015), n. 3.

² *Ibid.*

preparation for the opening of the Holy Doors on 13 December 2015, the Third Sunday of Advent, I further instruct that the door at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe be sealed on 9 November 2015, the Feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica in Rome at the 12:15 PM celebration of the Holy Eucharist; and that the door at Saint Joseph the Workman Cathedral be sealed on 15 November 2015, the Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time, at the 10:30 AM celebration of the Holy Eucharist. These doors will be closed on 13 November 2016 in preparation for the conclusion of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy.

In the letter granting the Indulgence for all the faithful on the occasion of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, Pope Francis states:

I wish that the Jubilee Indulgence may reach each one as a genuine experience of God's mercy, which comes to meet each person in the Face of the Father who welcomes and forgives, forgetting completely the sin committed. To experience and obtain the Indulgence, the faithful are called to make a brief pilgrimage to the Holy Door, open in every Cathedral or in the churches designated by the Diocesan Bishop, and in the four Papal Basilicas in Rome, as a sign of the deep desire for true conversion. Likewise, I dispose that the Indulgence may be obtained in the Shrines in which the Door of Mercy is open and in the churches which traditionally are identified as Jubilee Churches.³

In addition to the Cathedral of Saint Joseph the Workman and the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, in order that as many of the faithful as possible may take part in a pilgrimage, one church in each of the remaining twelve deaneries of the Diocese of La Crosse is hereby designated as a place of pilgrimage during the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy. They are as follows:

- Arcadia Deanery, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus Church at Pine Creek
- Chippewa Falls Deanery, Sacred Heart of Jesus Church at Jim Falls
- Durand Deanery, Sacred Heart of Jesus Church at Spring Valley
- Eau Claire Deanery, Sacred Heart of Jesus Church at Eau Claire
- Marshfield Deanery, Sacred Heart of Jesus Church at Marshfield
- Prairie du Chien Deanery, Sacred Heart Church at Wauzeka
- Richland Center Deanery, Sacred Heart Church at Lone Rock
- Stevens Point Deanery, Sacred Heart Church at Polonia
- Thorp Deanery, Holy Rosary Church at Owen
- Tomah Deanery, Sacred Heart of Jesus Church at Cashton
- Wausau Deanery, Sacred Heart Church at Cassel
- Wisconsin Rapids Deanery, Sacred Heart of Jesus Church at Nekoosa

³ Letter to Archbishop Rino Fisichella, President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization (1 September 2015).

The Holy Father, in granting the grace of the Jubilee Indulgence states:

It is important that this moment be linked, first and foremost, to the Sacrament of Reconciliation and to the celebration of the Holy Eucharist with a reflection on mercy. It will be necessary to accompany these celebrations with the profession of faith and with prayer for me and for the intentions that I bear in my heart for the good of the Church and of the entire world.⁴

He also extends the grace of the Jubilee Indulgence to the sick and homebound stating, “Living with faith and joyful hope this moment of trial, receiving communion or attending Holy Mass and community prayer, even through the various means of communication, will be for them the means of obtaining the Jubilee Indulgence.”⁵

The ability to receive the Indulgence is also granted to those who are incarcerated. “They may obtain the Indulgence in the chapels of the prisons. May the gesture of directing their thought and prayer to the Father each time they cross the threshold of their cell signify for them their passage through the Holy Door.”⁶

The Holy Father desires us to live out mercy, so he has given the faithful another way to obtain the Jubilee Indulgence. Each time one or more of the Corporal or Spiritual Works of Mercy are performed, the grace of the Jubilee Indulgence is gained.

The Jubilee Indulgence can also be obtained for the deceased.

We are bound to them by the witness of faith and charity that they have left us. Thus, as we remember them in the Eucharistic celebration, thus we can, in the great mystery of the Communion of Saints, pray for them, that the merciful Face of the Father free them of every remnant of fault and strongly embrace them in the unending beatitude.⁷

It is my deepest desire that the priests, religious and lay leaders of our parishes encourage the faithful of the Diocese of La Crosse to embrace with great humility and a deep trust this great Jubilee of Mercy, and encourage participation in the sacraments of mercy, particularly the Most Holy Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. I also request these ministers to arrange representatives at each parish to be present at the Mother Church of the diocese, the Cathedral of Saint Joseph the Workman, on 13 December 2015 so that they may receive for the entire parish the diocesan prayer books for the Jubilee of Mercy.

⁴ Letter to Archbishop Rino Fisichella.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

Saint Faustina Kowalska writes in her diary these words of Our Lord:

I have opened my Heart as a living fountain of mercy. Let all souls draw life from it. Let them approach this sea of mercy with great trust. Sinners will attain justification, and the just will be confirmed in good. Whoever places his trust in My mercy will be filled with My divine peace at the hour of death.⁸

As Christ opened His Heart of Mercy to us, we open the Holy Doors and Pilgrimage Churches of the Diocese of La Crosse as places where you may enter to immerse yourselves in the great ocean of mercy that is Christ Himself.

Given at La Crosse, at the Chancery, on the seventh day of October in the year of Our Lord 2015, the Memorial of Our Lady of the Rosary.

SEAL


Very Rev. William A. Rhein
Chancellor

+ William Patrick Barron
Bishop of La Crosse

⁸ N. 1520