



December 3, 2015

To all the faithful of the Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth

Dear Friends,

On December 8, 2015, we will inaugurate the Jubilee Year of Mercy. This is an opportunity for all of us to experience the compassionate love of our God. I invite all of us to open our hearts to this amazing grace and accept the extended hand of God's tenderness towards all his sons and daughters, no matter who they are or where they are. No one is excluded from the love of God!

As I reflect on the state of the world and consider the many burdens, issues and concerns that affect our minds and hearts every day, I see the great human need to be welcomed, accepted, cared for and encouraged. In our world, province, parishes and families, we all need to know that we are loved in spite of our failures and sinfulness.


The image of Rembrandt's loving father who receives his prodigal son will be a constant reminder of Christ's teaching, throughout the year, that our God is a merciful Father, whose spirit not only welcomes and forgives, but whose heart is also full of tenderness, expressed in the caress of his maternal hand.

As we enter into this journey of mercy and reconciliation, let us recognize that we are sinners, but let us also rejoice in the knowledge that we have been redeemed. This is the common denominator and foundation for being the Church, the refuge of sinners. Let us also acknowledge as the church, our collective sinfulness, by recognizing all the many and various ways in which we have offended others, by our hardness of heart, by our imposition of rigid rules, by our deliberate exclusion of the imperfect.

When we open our doors, symbolically on December 13th, 2015, we will do so in the hope of welcoming all, but we must also recognize in that gesture that too often our church has closed too many doors to too many of God's children. May the opening of the "Holy Door" in our Cathedral of St. Mary's and in the Co-Cathedral of St Ambrose in Yarmouth symbolize the desire to transform our lives; may it also reflect a renewed commitment to a second chance, to begin again the relationship which God and Jesus Christ our Lord, wishes to have with each one of us.

May the mercy of God transform each one of us, as well as the Face of the Church in Halifax-Yarmouth.

Sincerely in Christ,


† Anthony Mancini
Archbishop of Halifax-Yarmouth