



Recognition of the Holy Doors



As tradition prescribes, a few days before the beginning of the Jubilee Year, the rite of the *recognitio* of the Holy Doors takes place. During this ceremony the wall that closes the door from the inside is broken down, and the contents of the metal box walled up inside of it are verified, a box that was sealed at the closing of the previous Jubilee.

On Monday, 16 November, the first of the four rites of *recognitio* took place, that of the Lateran Basilica, which was presided over by Cardinal Agostino Vallini, the Vicar for the Diocese of Rome.

The stone with a large cross that stood in the central part of the wall was detached and the *capsa* was recovered, the zinc box in which were contained the announcement of the closure of the Holy Door and its key, along with 41 medals with the papal seal of John Paul II and the keys of the Holy Door.

On Tuesday, 17 November, the same ceremony took place for the Holy Door of Saint Peter's Basilica.

The *recognitio* at the Vatican Basilica was begun with a prayer by Cardinal Angelo Comastri, Archpriest of the Basilica, who let the procession of the Chapter of the Basilica, followed by an admonition by a master of ceremonies. Then, four of the “sampietrini”, the workmen of the Basilica, broke down the wall that sealed the Holy Door on the inside of the Basilica with blows of their pickaxes, and removed the metal box preserved there since the closure of the Great Jubilee of 2000. In the box were kept the documents of the last Holy Year, and, among them, the key that will open the Holy Door, and its handles, along with the parchment deed, bricks, and commemorative medals.

After having prayed before the altar of the Confession, the procession reached the Chapter Room, where the metal box removed from the Door was opened with a blowtorch. In addition to Monsignor Guido Marini, Master of the Papal Liturgical Celebration, to whom were consigned the documents and the objects from the *recognitio*, also present was Archbishop Rino Fisichella, President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization.

The same ceremonies took place in the Basilicas of Saint Mary Major and Saint Paul Outside the Walls on Thursday, 29 November and Monday, 23 November, respectively; they were presided over by the respective archpriests of the Basilicas: Cardinal Santos Abril y Castelló for Saint Mary Major and Cardinal James Michael Harvey for the Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls.

It is customary that it is subsequently the responsibility of the Master of the Pontifical Liturgical Celebrations to bring all the objects found in the four *recognitio* to the Holy Father.