

# YEAR OF MERCY

## A Personal Guide: Your Visit To A Holy Door



### Welcome

A very warm welcome if this is your first visit to our church. The Catholic community here is delighted that you've come to this place of peace and prayer.

### This Guide

This resource aims to help you get the most out of your visit. You can use it as you walk around the church, or you may prefer to sit down and read it in one go.



## A time of blessing

During the Year of Mercy Pope Francis hopes that the mercy of God will be experienced by everyone. Every person yearns to, and needs to experience love, tenderness, compassion and forgiveness. May your visit to this holy place be a source of healing and blessing for you and your family.

**God's Mercy "...is not an abstract idea, but a concrete reality with which he reveals his love as of that of a father or a mother, moved to the very depths out of love for their child... It gushes forth from the depths naturally, full of tenderness and compassion, indulgence and mercy."**

*Pope Francis, Bull of Indiction 6*

**"Jesus, You have given me to know and understand in what a soul's greatness consists: not in great deeds but in great love."**

*St Faustina, Diary 889*



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## Jubilee of Mercy Indulgence

To experience and obtain the Jubilee of Mercy Indulgence, visitors are invited to:

- 1) Make a brief pilgrimage to the Holy Door.
- 2) Receive the Sacrament of Penance (go to Confession).
- 3) Participate in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist (Mass) with a reflection on mercy.
- 4) Make a profession of faith; e.g. The Creed (see page 3)
- 5) Pray for the Holy Father (the Pope) and the intentions that he holds in his heart for the good of the Church and of the entire world.

**“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.”**

Pope Francis

## Starting Point

You're invited to begin your visit by pausing for a moment of prayer. You may choose to make up your own prayer, or use the following:

Loving and merciful Father,

As I begin this journey,

Help me to open my heart to your love and mercy in a new way.

Through the power of your Holy Spirit,

may I grow in faith and in my capacity to love and forgive others.

I ask this through Jesus Christ Our Lord.

Amen.

Our Lady, Mother of Mercy, pray for us.

St Faustina, pray for us.

You are now invited to enter the church using the Holy Door.



Image source: <http://d.ibtimes.co.uk/en/full/1474125/jubilee-year-mercy-holy-door.jpg?w=735>

## The Apostles Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

## Confession

The Sacrament of Reconciliation, or Confession as it's better known, offers us an important way of getting closer to God - to be forgiven



for our sins. Pope Francis has described it as "an encounter with the Lord's mercy which spurs us on to do our best".

## Catechism of the Catholic Church:

### What is an indulgence?

1471 The doctrine and practice of indulgences in the Church are closely linked to the effects of the sacrament of Penance (Confession).

"An indulgence is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, which the faithful Christian who is duly disposed gains under certain prescribed conditions."

"An indulgence is partial or plenary according as it **removes either part or all of the temporal punishment due to sin.**"

People can gain indulgences for themselves, or apply them to the dead.

### What can you see inside this church?

Churches have a special 'atmosphere' that makes prayer easier. Whatever your faith background, you are welcome to use this building to find some peace and quiet, so that you can pray in your own way. Churches like this one have several features, which are specially designed with prayer in mind.

### The Tabernacle

At the front of the church, you will find what looks like a 'box', with a red light burning next to it. It is called The Tabernacle and it contains something which is extraordinary - the real presence of God. In front of the Tabernacle is a good place to talk to God from your heart to his heart, and then in the silence to listen for his prompting.

**"I am the Bread of Life. No one who comes to Me will ever hunger; no one who believes in Me will ever thirst."**

Jesus Christ, John's Gospel, chapter 6, verse 35

## What is prayer?

A well-known French saint called Thérèse of Lisieux wrote: “For me, prayer is a surge of the heart, a simple look turned toward heaven.” Prayer can include: asking for help, stilling the mind, praying for loved ones, meditating, but whether we use our own words or a set prayer, the important thing is to be honest. If you feel that you can't pray, ask God to help you to find a way to pray.

## How to begin praying

Here are some simple phrases that people have found helpful:

**Jesus, teach me to pray.**

**Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.**

**God, be merciful to me, a sinner.**

## The Statue of Mary

People who are holy - close to God - are attractive. We sense God's presence in them and ask them to pray for us, especially when we find it hard to pray ourselves. Mary, the Mother of Jesus, was especially close to God. People often ask her to pray for (intercede) their practical needs, or for a resolution to family problems. If you have anything like that on your mind now, why not ask Mary, also called Our Lady, for help?



## Candles

A candle is a sign of hope. Lighting one is a very tangible way of expressing our hope that God will answer our prayers. The symbolic lighting of a candle can visually show our concern for someone that we love, or for some situation. You are welcome to light one as you think of the person, or situation you are worried about, and place them or it in God's hands. Candle lighting can also be done as a gesture of thanksgiving.

## On leaving the church

As you leave the church, close to the door, you will see a bowl (font) with water in it which has been blessed. You can wet your finger in the bowl and place a drop of this blessed (holy) water on your forehead as a sign that God's presence will remain with you once you have left the church. If you know how to make the Sign of the Cross with the holy water, please feel free to do so.

**Thank you for visiting this holy place. You are very welcome to visit again.**

**God bless you.**