

Celebrating the Extraordinary Year of Mercy

(December 8, 2015 – November 20, 2016)

General Information and Schedule of Special Masses at Sacred Heart Cathedral

The *Extraordinary Year of Mercy* is to be the “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).



Periodically, Jubilee Years are called by the Sovereign Pontiffs to lead the faithful to a closer relationship with God and as a sign of unity and charity. The Extraordinary Year of Mercy is the first Holy Year (hence, *extraordinary*) which does not commemorate an anniversary of some kind, but focuses our attention on the attribute of God the Father which is exalted in both the Old and New Testaments, His Mercy. In announcing the Year of Mercy, our Holy Father wrote: “The Church makes herself a servant of this love of Christ and mediates it to all people: a love that forgives and expresses itself in the gift of oneself. Consequently, wherever the Church is present, the mercy of the Father must be evident.”

Pope Francis asks that Catholics make pilgrimages

In each of the Jubilee years since the fifteenth century, a “Holy Door” has been used as a ritual expression of conversion. Pilgrims and penitents pass through it as a gesture of leaving the past behind and crossing the threshold from sin to grace, from slavery to freedom, travelling along the road, making his way to the desired destination. “The practice of pilgrimage has a special place in the Holy Year, because it represents the journey each of us makes in this life. Similarly, to reach the Holy Door of Mercy in Rome or in any other place in the world, everyone, each according to his or her ability, will have to make a pilgrimage. This will be a sign that mercy is also a goal to reach and requires dedication and sacrifice... May pilgrimage be an impetus to conversion: by crossing the threshold of the Holy Door, we will find the strength to embrace God’s mercy and dedicate ourselves to being merciful with others as the Father has been with us.” (Pope Francis). In accordance with the rich tradition of the Church, these pilgrimages to the Holy Door of Mercy are associated with prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession).

The diocesan Holy Door of Mercy at Sacred Heart Cathedral to be opened December 13

The Holy Door of Mercy, which Pope Francis asked to be designated at each Cathedral in all of the Dioceses throughout the world, will be the main entrance of Sacred Heart Cathedral, 296 Flower City Park, Rochester. Through the course of the Year of Mercy, the Cathedral will be open for private, group and parish pilgrimages, specifically at Diocesan celebrations listed below. At these celebrations, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and Confession will be readily available to the faithful.

Obtaining a Plenary Indulgence

Pope Francis has declared that passing through the Holy Door of Mercy will offer the possibility of obtaining a Plenary Indulgence, a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, through certain pious exercises, namely: celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation; the Sacrament of the Most Holy Eucharist; praying for the Holy Father and the intentions he bears in his heart; and praying the Profession of Faith (the Creed) which unites us to the universal Church. These indulgences may be obtained for ourselves or for those who are deceased. When we have made this pilgrimage and committed ourselves to live by

mercy, "the Jubilee Indulgence is thus full, the fruit of the very event which is to be celebrated and experienced with faith, hope and charity." (Pope Francis).

Schedule of Celebrations at Sacred Heart Cathedral

December 13, 2015: 2:00 p.m. Mass preceded by the Opening of the Holy Door of Mercy. *Bishop Salvatore R. Matano, celebrant.*

January 1, 2016: 6:30 p.m. Mass for First Friday, followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and individual Confessions until 8 p.m.

February 5, 2016: 6:30 p.m. Mass for First Friday, followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and individual Confessions until 8 p.m.

March 4, 2016: 6:30 p.m. Mass for First Friday, followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and individual Confessions until 8 p.m. Meditation as the homily: "Wherever the Church is present, the mercy of the Father is present." *Bishop Salvatore R. Matano, celebrant.*

April 1, 2016: 6:30 p.m. Mass for First Friday, followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and individual Confessions until 8 p.m.

April 3, 2016: 3:00 p.m. Chaplet of the Divine Mercy, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Sung Chaplet of the Divine Mercy, and individual Confessions.

May 6, 2016: 6:30 p.m. Mass for First Friday, followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and individual Confessions until 8 p.m.

June 3, 2016: 6:30 p.m. Mass for the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and individual Confessions until 8 p.m. *Bishop Salvatore R. Matano, celebrant.*

June 22, 2016: 6:30 p.m. Mass to commemorate Saint John Fisher, patron saint of the Diocese of Rochester. *Bishop Salvatore R. Matano, celebrant.*

July 1, 2016: 6:30 p.m. Mass for First Friday, followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and individual Confessions until 8 p.m.

August 5, 2016: 6:30 p.m. Mass for First Friday, followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and individual Confessions until 8 p.m.

September 2, 2016: 6:30 p.m. Mass for First Friday, followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and individual Confessions until 8 p.m.

October 7, 2016: 6:30 p.m. Mass for First Friday, followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and individual Confessions until 8 p.m. Meditation as the homily: "Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness, our hope." *Bishop Salvatore R. Matano, celebrant.*

November 2, 2016: 6:30 p.m. Mass for All Souls Day, followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and individual confessions until 8 p.m. Meditation as the homily: "Through the Mercy of God, may they rest in peace." *Bishop Salvatore R. Matano, celebrant.*

November 4, 2016: 6:30 p.m. Mass for First Friday, followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and individual Confessions until 8 p.m.

November 20, 2016: Closing of the Holy Door of Mercy at the 5 p.m. Mass.



*Holy Door at
the Cathedral*