



# “MERCIFUL like the Father”

## Holy Year of Mercy

8th. December 2015 – 20th. November 2016

**Experience  
an exceptional year  
in Lourdes**

**Because mercy  
is inexhaustible...**



# Welcome to Lourdes

For the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy

8th. December 2015 – 20th. November 2016



“Mercy is the key word of the Gospel - you might say that this is the «Face» of Christ, the face he showed when he went out to meet people [...] and especially when, nailed to the cross, he forgave: here we have the face of divine mercy. And the Lord calls you to be «channels» of this love, first and foremost in respect of the poorest in our society, who are most special to him. Let yourself be continually challenged by instances of fragility and poverty with which you come into contact, and seek to be a proper witness of the charity that the Spirit pours into your hearts (cf. Rm 5,5), «explained Pope Francis when he announced, last March, an Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy from 8th. December 2015 to 20th. November 2016.

## 1 What is a jubilee?

In the Bible (Leviticus 25: 8), every 50 years, a year called the year of remission, is dedicated to God. Debts, failings and penalties are forgiven, slaves are given their freedom, and the land left in peace. Drawing on this tradition, the Church declares every 25 years an «ordinary» jubilee to prompt reconciliation and forgiveness. But, as has happened this time, the Pope may, on his own initiative, declare an «Extraordinary» jubilee to highlight an important aspect of the faith.

## 2 Why a jubilee?

A jubilee marks a break in the passage of time: it marks a year with a difference in which each one of us, Christians especially, is invited to do something for others and for God. This is the invitation sent out by Pope Francis: « *Mercy – this is the best thing we can feel. It changes the world. It makes it a little less cold and a little more just. It is important that each one of us lives it and carries it in all walks of life. Forward! Now is the time of mercy.* »

« Mercy is the pillar that upholds the life of the Church. »

Pope Francis

## 3 What is mercy ?

It is not because a word seems to have disappeared from our vocabulary that its essence or its reality have also been erased. Indeed what would our world be if it was left to itself without mercy, that is to say without forgiveness, without generosity and without love? Mercy is all of that. And even more so as it comes from God as revealed by His Son, Jesus Christ by associating himself to sinners, by being close to the small and humble, to those who suffer and those who lack hope.

To each one of us, Our Lord Jesus reveals the overabundance of God's love: not only does God love me but he wants to find my lost dignity. God does not condemn me in my wrongdoings nor ostracize me in what I have suffered. It is now time for each of us to be merciful towards others, to help them get up, it's now their turn to get back on their feet.



## 1 - LOURDES, SANCTUARY OF MERCY

There are special places in the world where grace is at work. Ever since the Virgin Mary appeared to St. Bernadette, millions of pilgrims have experienced it: the Sanctuary of Lourdes is the heart of God's mercy. The presence of the sick or disabled, members of the hospitality and pilgrims from around the world is its symbol. They all come here to look for something they will not find elsewhere: God's forgiveness and grace, the tenderness of Mary, love, consideration and joy. The Jubilee of Mercy in Lourdes is an opportunity for millions of pilgrims to find faith and hope, and, by serving others, to find a deeper meaning to their lives.

**Nicolas Brouwet puts it well: «All those who come to the Sanctuary are touched, at the Grotto, by the unconditional love of Jesus (...) so that he may accomplish his work in our hearts, a work of mercy» (excerpt from the guidance for the Sanctuary of Lourdes).**



## 2 - A JUBILEE DOOR IN THE SANCTUARY

### Why a holy door?

Traditionally, the beginning of the jubilee was marked by the opening of a Holy Door by the Pope in Rome. To make this Jubilee accessible to all, Pope Francis wishes there also to be a holy door in the different dioceses throughout the world.

**Passing through the holy door symbolises the passing from sin to grace. Always open, the door symbolises God standing, waiting on the threshold to welcome us with open arms into his mercy. When we pass through the door we are thus required to leave behind sin and turn again towards love and forgiveness.**

**In Lourdes, a holy door will be installed at Saint Michael's Gate near the Breton Cross.**



« Pilgrimage is a particular characteristic of the **Holy Year** »

*Pope Francis*

### You mentioned "indulgence"?

On the occasion of a jubilee, it is often all about the indulgence attached to it. But what is it exactly? We call it a plenary indulgence, a remission of the penalties incurred in reparation of sins committed, granted by the Church on certain occasions and on certain conditions. In order to receive one, you have to go to a place that is celebrating the jubilee, such as the Sanctuary of Lourdes, go to confession, receive communion and pray for the Pope.

### 3 - A JUBILEE FOR EVERYONE

Throughout the year, you will be able to take part in the Pilgrimage of Mercy, with celebrations highlighting the merciful love of God and his compassion, especially through the celebration of the Sacraments of Mercy (Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Eucharist) and through opportunities to be at the service of others (hospital, pilots, youth). Some people may prefer to participate in a particular event as part of the jubilee year. In Lourdes, everyone has a place and Mary looks forward to welcoming each one of us.

**So whether you are young or old, student or entrepreneur, mother or priest or religious, the Jubilee Year be an opportune time to respond to the love that God gives in abundance. A calendar of events therefore complements the activities on offer throughout the year (see page 5).**



People always say that they will go to Lourdes, one day. This year is the perfect opportunity to realise this wish or to fulfill the dream of a person who is dear to us: the sick, disabled, children, and the young. Through its medical and support services, the Sanctuary makes every effort to accommodate vulnerable persons and their families in the highest standards of care and safety.

**WE'RE BUSY BEHIND THE SCENES!** For several months now, the different teams at the Sanctuary, with the help of their partners, have been hard at work organising the Jubilee Year in Lourdes. Various committees are working to offer events appropriate to the diverse requirements of pilgrims. A call for tenders has been made for the Holy Door project, and pilgrimage organisations are working energetically to support this Jubilee, as are the local institutions and socio-professional organisations of Lourdes.



#### How do you organise a jubilee?

*Father Xavier d'Arodes,  
chaplain of the Sanctuary of Lourdes explains.*

#### **F**ather Xavier d'Arodes, having worked with the Holy See, you must know the Vatican well. Why are we having a Jubilee at this time?

Before his election, Pope Francis already had an idea like this in mind for his diocese of Buenos Aires. He wanted to resurrect the idea to show that the Church, driven by faith in Christ, is not a place of judgment but mercy. There are many important events going on in the Church at the end of the year, yet the Pope is insistent, because he sees the urgency for Catholics to put mercy at the heart of their faith and to be living examples of mercy in the world.

#### **What are the challenges that dioceses and the sanctuary must consider if they want to make the most of this Jubilee Year?**

Through his ministry, the Pope has set a phenomenal idea in motion. But it would be nothing if it did not become a reality through the Church. Everyone must now consider the invitation of Pope Francis in their own situation, they must deepen it and then translate it into concrete actions, each according to their culture and context. Rather than everyone saying, «I had a jubilee», the challenge will for everyone to be able to say, «I had my jubilee.» Thus mercy will shine, because everyone will be involved.

« May  
the gentle  
gaze of  
Mary  
accompany us  
during  
this Holy  
Year »

*Pope Francis*

## 4 - ACTIVELY LIVING THE JUBILEE

### A spiritual pathway

*To witness mercy both received and given*

The pathway, which will be available to all pilgrims to Lourdes, will take them to see the grace of mercy which is particularly visible, almost palpable, in certain places in the Sanctuary including the Holy Door, which will be the starting point for the pathway, the Chapel of Reconciliation, the Grotto, the Baths, the Stations of the Cross and the various places that welcome and receive the sick.

For each step, a special ritual will be available. It will encourage a simple and very concrete approach to the mystery of mercy.

« Let our thoughts turn to the Mother of Mercy. »

*Pope Francis*



# Une année ponctuée d'évènements

*Parce que la miséricorde de Dieu est inépuisable...*

## DECEMBER 2015

- Wednesday 8: Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception and opening of the Holy Door.
- Thursday 24: Christmas Eve - Solemnity of the Incarnation.
- Friday 25: Christmas Day.
- Thursday 31: Vigil of the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God.

## JANUARY 2016

- Monday 1st: Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God.
- Tuesday 19 – Thursday 21: Jubilee of Shrines at the Vatican.

## FEBRUARY 2016

- Tuesday 2: Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, Jubilee of Consecrated Life and closure of the Year of Consecrated Life.
- Wednesday 10: Ash Wednesday.
- Thursday 11: Solemnity of Our Lady of Lourdes.
- Thursday 11 – Saturday 13 February: days in February for pilgrimage directors and hospitality presidents.

## MARCH 2016

- Friday 4 – Saturday 5: «24 hours for the Lord.»
- Saturday 19: Solemnity of St. Joseph.
- Sunday 20: Palm Sunday.
- Thursday, 24: Maundy Thursday.
- Friday 25: Good Friday.
- Saturday 26: Easter Vigil.
- Sunday 27: Solemnity of Easter.

## APRIL 2016

- Sunday 3: Sunday of Divine Mercy.
- Monday 4: Annunciation of the Lord.
- Sunday 24: Jubilee for Adolescents.

## MAY 2016

- Thursday 5: Ascension of the Lord.
- Sunday 15: Solemnity of Pentecost.
- Tuesday 17 – Thursday 19: anniversary of the first pilgrimage to the Grotto.
- Tuesday 31: Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

## JUNE 2016

- Friday 3: Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and anniversary of the First Holy

Communion of Bernadette Soubirous.

- Saturday 4: Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

## JULY 2016

- Monday 4: Anniversary of Bernadette's departure to the Sisters of Nevers
- Monday 4 – Wednesday 6: Jubilee for Priests
- Saturday 16: Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and Anniversary of the last apparition.
- Tuesday 26 – Sunday 31: World Youth Day (WYD) and the Youth Jubilee.



## AUGUST 2016

- Monday 15: Solemnity of the Assumption.
- Monday 22: Feast of the Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Jubilee for shrines dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes.

## SEPTEMBER 2016

- Tuesday 4: Jubilee for Hospitaliers.
- Thursday 8: Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- Thursday 15: Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows.
- Sunday, 25: Jubilee for Catechists.

## OCTOBER 2016

- Friday 7: Feast of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary.
- Friday 7 – Sunday 9: Marian Jubilee.

## NOVEMBER 2016

- Tuesday 1st: Solemnity of All Saints.
- Wednesday 2: Feast of All Souls
- Sunday 13: Closing of the Sanctuary's Holy Door.

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

### Jubilee Website

The Vatican is providing extensive information on the jubilee: the papal bull of Pope Francis calling for the Jubilee, a jubilee prayer and hymn, a calendar of events that will mark the year for pilgrims travelling to Rome.

[www.iubilaeummisericordiae.va](http://www.iubilaeummisericordiae.va)

### Follow the Jubilee in Lourdes

For information about the various initiatives that will be taking place throughout the year in the Sanctuary and for news of the Jubilee pilgrimages, the Shrine is opening a web page with direct access from the home page of the Sanctuary's official website.

[www.lourdes-france.org/jubile](http://www.lourdes-france.org/jubile)



**A unique phone line**  
For all information about the Jubilee in Lourdes

**0033 (0)5 62 42 78 00**



### AN INTERNATIONAL LOGO

The logo of the Jubilee of mercy was produced by Jesuit Father Marko Ivan Rupnik, well known in Lourdes for creating the mosaics of the Luminous Mysteries that adorn the Rosary Basilica. It is presented as a little theological summary of the theme of mercy.

It shows Christ carrying Adam on his shoulders, a symbol of our humanity. As the Good Shepherd, Christ takes upon himself the burden of our injured humanity not to condemn but to raise it up. Mercy is to be seen in the exchange of glances when Christ's eyes merge with those of man: through love they are restored to one another and emerge from the darkness.

Finally, the motto «merciful like the Father», which accompanies the logo, taken from the Gospel of Luke, suggests that our lives should be the embodiment of mercy following the example of the Father, who asks us not to judge or condemn but to forgive and to love without measure.

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