

Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy

Rite of the Opening of the Door of Mercy
in Local Churches

December 13, 2015
Third Sunday of Advent



Closing Celebrations of the Extraordinary Jubilee
in Local Churches

November 13, 2016
Thirty-Third Sunday of Ordinary Time



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INTRODUCTION

The following *Rite of the Opening of the Door of Mercy in Local Churches* pertains both to the Churches of the Roman Rite and western Churches not of the Roman Rite. The competent authorities of the latter may adjust the ritual to meet local cultural norms.

Bishops of the Eastern Churches, if they wish, may adapt the rite in harmony with their own liturgical traditions.

The day

1. In the bull of indiction *Misericordiae Vultus (MV)*, Pope Francis decreed that the Holy Year will begin on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, December 8, 2015, with the opening of the Holy Door in the Basilica of St. Peter at the Vatican. On the following Sunday, December 13, the Third Sunday of Advent, the opening of the Holy Door of the Cathedral of Rome, the Basilica of St. John Lateran, will take place. After that, the Holy Doors of the other Papal Basilicas will be opened. Moreover, the Holy Father decreed that on the same Sunday, “in every local church, at the cathedral — the mother church of the faithful in any particular area — or, alternatively, at the co-cathedral or another church with special meaning, a Door of Mercy will be opened for the duration of the Holy Year. At the discretion of the local ordinary, a similar door may be opened at any shrine frequented by large groups of pilgrims, since visits to these holy sites are so often grace-filled moments as people discover a path to conversion” (*MV*, 3).

The place

2. The Jubilee Year will be inaugurated in the cathedral of each diocese with the opening of the Door of Mercy at a single celebration of the Liturgy of the Eucharist. If, according to the norms of Canon Law, there is a co-cathedral in the diocese, an opening of the Door of Mercy will also take place there.

Furthermore, a Eucharistic celebration will take place in other churches and shrines in which the diocesan bishop has designated a Door of Mercy. A delegate of the bishop will preside over these ceremonies, at which one of the prayers below is recited at the main door (cf. nos. 40-45).

The nature of the celebration

3. The elements that make up the rite of the opening of the Door of Mercy reflect its character and meaning:

- the mystery of God, rich in mercy and compassion (Eph 2:4 and Jas 5:11), manifested and brought about in Christ, the Father's face of mercy (*MV*, 1), continually at work through the gift of the Holy Spirit (Jn 20:22-23);
- the recognition of Christ as the sole door through which we enter salvation (cf. Jn 10:9) and the one way that leads to the Father (Jn 14:6);
- the Church's ongoing pilgrimage toward "Jesus Christ (who) is the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Heb 13:8).

The celebrant

4. The diocesan bishop presides over the entire ceremony. This accords, on the one hand, with the Lord's Day and the Church's ancient tradition, and, on the other, with the extraordinary event of the Jubilee Year. The Mass of December 13, 2015, will be observed as a stational Mass (cf. *Caeremoniale Episcoporum*, 120) at which the priests, especially the bishop's closest collaborators, concelebrate with him; the deacons, acolytes, and lectors perform their respective ministries, and the lay faithful are encouraged to attend inasmuch as possible.

The specific symbolism of the opening celebration

5. Within the context of the Eucharistic celebration, the specific gesture that marks the beginning of the extraordinary Holy Year is the opening of the Door of Mercy and the solemn procession of the local church — the bishop, clergy, and people — into the cathedral, the Mother Church of all the faithful, where the Pastor of the diocese exercises his magisterial role, celebrates the sacred mysteries, carries out the liturgical acts of praise and supplication, and guides the ecclesial community.

6. This liturgy is composed of five parts:

- the *statio*, either in the church or in another appropriate place,
- the solemn procession,
- the opening of the Door of Mercy and the entrance into the cathedral,
- the renewal of Baptismal promises,
- and the celebration of the Eucharist.

The *statio*

7. The church chosen as the *statio* should be significant and sufficiently large to accommodate those participating in the introductory rites. It should be neither too far from the cathedral nor too close, but rather at a distance conducive to a procession.

8. The constitutive moments of the *statio* are: the greeting and the initial exhortation, the proclamation of a Gospel passage, and the recitation of the opening section of the Bull of Indiction, *Misericordiae Vultus*.

The procession

9. The procession represents the Church's pilgrimage, a practice that "has special place in the Holy Year, because it represents the journey each of us makes in this life" (*MV*, 14). The procession recalls the fact that "mercy is also a goal to reach and requires dedication and sacrifice" (*ibid.*)

10. Particularly appropriate for the procession are Psalm 86 which resonates with a sense of trust, total abandonment to God, and the hope of his saving help; and Psalm 25 which sings of the goodness of God in whom the Psalmist places his trust and finds serenity and peace. Due to its ancient and multifaceted role in solemn processions, the Litany of the Saints is also very suitable to this occasion.

11. The Book of the Gospels plays an important role in this procession. It should be carried by a deacon. It represents both Christ walking among his people and his Word, the light that guides his disciples.

The opening of the Door of Mercy and the entrance into the cathedral

12. The procession should proceed through the main door of the cathedral, which has particular Christological significance (cf. Jn 10:7,9) and serves as the Door of Mercy, a constant reminder of the meaning of this Extraordinary Jubilee. Using the words of Psalm 118, the bishop invokes the opening of the Door that leads to God's merciful heart made accessible through the open side of Christ on the cross (cf. Jn 19:34). It is in fact the door that leads to salvation as the antiphon based on John 10:9 makes clear. The entrance should therefore be rendered solemn by:

- decorating the door with leafy branches or other ornamentation specific to the local culture, and with fitting Christological symbols;
- by placing special emphasis on the crossing of the threshold: before proceeding inside the cathedral, the bishop should pause together with the entire procession. During this pause, the door itself should be opened and the Book of the Gospels, the word of mercy, should be solemnly displayed, first toward the outside of the cathedral and then toward the inside while the antiphon "I am the door" is sung.

13. Once the pause at the door is completed, the bishop, bearing the Book of the Gospels, moves in procession with the concelebrants toward the altar while the faithful take their places. During this time, the entrance antiphon for the Third Sunday of Advent or some other appropriate hymn is sung.

Renewal of baptismal vows

14. The sacrament of Baptism is the door through which one enters the community of the Church. The rite of blessing the water and sprinkling the community with it is a living reminder of this sacrament. Indeed, Baptism is "the first sacrament of the New Law, through which those who firmly accept Christ in faith and

receive the Spirit of adoption become in name and in fact God's adopted children. Joined with Christ in a death and resurrection like his, they become part of his Body. Filled with the anointing of the Spirit, they become God's holy temple and members of the Church, 'a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people'" (*The Book of Blessings*, no. 1080).

The celebration of the Eucharist

15. The celebration of the Eucharist, "as the action of Christ and of the People of God arrayed hierarchically, is the center of the whole Christian life for the Church both universal and local, as well as for each of the faithful individually. For in it is found the high point both of the action by which God sanctifies the world in Christ and of the worship that the human race offers to the Father, adoring him through Christ, the Son of God, in the Holy Spirit" (*The General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, 16). It is precisely for this reason that it stands at the apex of the inaugural celebrations of this Jubilee Year. In the Eucharist, the Father rushes with mercy to meet everyone who seeks God "with a sincere heart," continually offering his covenant to mankind and giving us a foretaste of the eternity of his kingdom, where, we pray, "with the whole of creation, freed from the corruption of sin and death," we may "glorify" the Father for ever (*Eucharistic Prayer IV*).

Things to prepare

16. The following items should be prepared in the sacristy of the stational church:

- the liturgical vestments to be worn by the Bishop, the concelebrating priests, the deacons, and the other ministers at Mass;
- the cope, if the bishop is to wear one during the procession;
- the processional cross and candles;
- the Book of the Gospels;
- the thurible and incense.

These items should be prepared in the cathedral:

- the basin with water to be blessed and used for the sprinkling rite;
- everything necessary for the celebration of Mass (cf. *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, 117-118).

The Opening of the Jubilee Year in Churches and Shrines Designated By the Diocesan Bishop

40. In the churches and shrines where the bishop has designated a Door of Mercy, the Bishop's delegate, at the appointed time, presides over a Eucharistic liturgy for the Third Sunday of Advent.

At the beginning of the celebration, the celebrant makes his way to the main door of the church or shrine where, after the entrance antiphon has been sung, he begins the celebration with the Sign of the Cross and the greeting as indicated in n. 19. He then invites the congregation to bless and praise the Lord using one of the formulas indicated in n. 20. Once these invocations are finished, he says the following prayer:

Let us pray.

**Blessed are you, Lord, holy Father,
who sent your Son into the world
to gather all men and women,
wounded and scattered by sin,
into one body through the shedding of his blood.**

**You appointed him both shepherd and gate for the
sheep,
so that whoever enters may be saved,
and whoever comes in and goes out
will find pasture for eternal life.**

**Grant that your faithful may pass through this gate,
and be welcomed into your presence,
so that they may experience, O Father, your abundant
mercy.
Through Christ our Lord.**

Cf. Book of Blessings, 1229

R. Amen.

41. At the conclusion of this prayer, the celebrant introduces the sprinkling rite with these or similar words:

Dear brothers and sisters, this year of mercy, inaugurated by the Holy Father, invites each of us to a profound experience of grace and reconciliation.

The sprinkling of this holy water is a reminder of our baptism.

It recalls the mercy and salvation we have received through the power of Christ's resurrection.

42. After this introduction, the celebrant, accompanied by the ministers, begins to move toward the altar, sprinkling the people with holy water taken from the font at the main entrance. In the meantime, the antiphons indicated in n. 34, or other appropriate songs, are sung.

43. After making a profound bow before the altar and reverencing it with a kiss, the celebrant incenses it and makes his way to the chair where he pronounces the formula indicated in n. 35.

44. The Mass continues as usual with the Collect.

45. At the end of Mass, the assembly may be dismissed with the formula indicated in n. 39.

The Closing Celebration of the Extraordinary Jubilee in Local Churches

November 13, 2016

Thirty-Third Sunday of Ordinary Time

INTRODUCTION

The following directives for the *Closing Celebration of the Extraordinary Jubilee in Local Churches* regards the Churches of the Roman Rite and Churches of other Western, non-Roman rites. The competent authorities of the latter may make changes to adapt the ritual to their particular cultures.

Pastors of Eastern Churches may, if they desire, offer directives in harmony with their own liturgical traditions.

The day

1. In the Bull of Indiction *Misericordiae Vultus*, Pope Francis decreed that the Holy Year would conclude on November 20, 2016, the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, with the closing of the Holy Door in the Basilica of St. Peter's at the Vatican. On the preceding Sunday, November 13, the Thirty-Third Sunday of Ordinary Time, the Jubilee will be brought to a close in local churches.

The place

2. In local Churches, there should be a single celebration of the Eucharist in the cathedral for the closing of the Jubilee Year.

In other churches and shrines that have been designated by the diocesan Bishop as sites of a Door of Mercy, a Eucharistic celebration of thanksgiving should be celebrated, presided over by a delegate of the Bishop.

The celebrant

3. Both the nature of the day and the Church's tradition make it most fitting that the Bishop preside over the entire celebration. Priests, especially his closest collaborators, should concelebrate with the Bishop. Deacons, Acolytes, and Lectors each exercise their respective ministries, and the faithful are strongly encouraged to attend inasmuch as possible. If a closing celebration occurs simultaneously in the co-cathedral, the latter ceremony should be presided over by a delegate of the Bishop.

The celebration of the Eucharist

4. The Mass that concludes the Extraordinary Jubilee is essentially a Sunday celebration of the Eucharist. If the Bishop deems it appropriate, he may use the Mass for Giving Thanks to God, found among the Masses for Various Needs (no. 49) in the Roman Missal. The readings are those assigned to the Thirty-Third Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year C.

Expression of thanksgiving

5. After the Prayer after Communion, the Bishop, in a way harmonious with the liturgical celebration, gives thanks to God for the graces received during the Jubilee Year and invites the assembly to join him in rendering thanks. The Magnificat, insofar as it is the Virgin Mary's song of thanksgiving shared by the Church, is particularly appropriate here.

INTRODUCTORY RITES

6. On the Thirty-Third Sunday of Ordinary Time, at the appointed time, the faithful gather in the cathedral church.

7. Once the people have gathered, the Bishop, concelebrating Priests, and Deacons, vested in green liturgical vestments, begin their entrance procession. The choir and people join in singing the official hymn of the Jubilee Year.

8. The Bishop reverences the altar and proceeds to his chair. He then addresses the assembly in these words.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

The people reply: **Amen.**

He then greets the people:

**May the mercy of the Father,
the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with all of you.**

The people reply: **And with your spirit.**

9. The Bishop introduces the assembly to the celebration in these or similar words:

**Dearly beloved brothers and sisters,
we have reached the end of the Jubilee Year.
It has been an extraordinary time of grace and mercy.
In this Eucharistic celebration, we raise our voices to
the Father
in a hymn of praise and thanksgiving
for all the gifts he has bestowed upon us.
Once more, before approaching these sacred mysteries,
let us invoke the soothing balm of his mercy
acknowledging that we are sinners
and forgiving one another from the bottom of our
hearts.**

**10. After a brief period of silence, the Deacon or another
minister says or sings the following invocations:
Cf. the Roman Missal, Season of Lent**

**You command us to forgive one another before
approaching your altar: Lord, have mercy.**

R. Lord, have mercy. Or: Kyrie, eleison.

**You invoked mercy upon sinners as you hung upon the
cross: Christ, have mercy.**

R. Christ, have mercy. Or: Christe, eleison.

**You entrust the ministry of reconciliation to your
Church, Lord, have mercy.**

R. Lord, have mercy. Or: Kyrie, eleison.

11. The Bishop concludes:

**May Almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life.**

R. Amen.

**12. The Gloria in excelsis (Glory to God in the highest)
is then sung and the Mass continues as usual.**

CONCLUDING RITES

13. Following the Prayer after Communion, the bishop invites all those present to thank the Lord for all the spiritual gifts he has bestowed upon them during the Jubilee Year. He may do this in these or similar words:

**Brothers and sisters,
let us joyfully thank God,
the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Throughout this year of grace,
he has bestowed on us every heavenly blessing in
Christ.
He has given us this precious time
of mercy and conversion.**

**Let us express our thanks and joy
in the words of the Virgin Mary, our Mother.
As we sing the Lord's mercy extending to every genera-
tion,
let us ask him to pour out, like the morning dewfall,
that same mercy unceasingly upon the entire world.**

14. The Bishop and people then sing the Magnificat.

15. Once the canticle is finished, the Deacon says:

Bow down for the blessing.

16. Then the Bishop, with hands extended over the people, says the following prayer. Cf. Roman Missal, Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Collect

**Show us your mercy, Lord,
and come to the aid of your people
who call upon you as their shepherd and guide;
restore what you have created
and keep safe what you have restored.
Through Christ our Lord.**

R. Amen.

**And may the blessing of almighty God,
the Father, + and the Son, + and the Holy + Spirit,
come down on you and remain with you for ever.**

R. Amen.

17. After the blessing, the Deacon announces the dismissal as usual. If deemed appropriate, he may say: "Be merciful, just as your heavenly Father is merciful. Go in peace." The people reply: "Thanks be to God." The assembly then goes forth, praising and thanking God.

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