

The Holy Door

How to do a pilgrimage during the Year of Mercy

Pope Francis declared this year to be a Jubilee Year of Mercy. The Year of Mercy will include the use of a Holy Door that has spiritual and symbolic meaning for Catholics. Passing through a Holy Door is part of the pilgrimage that all Catholics are encouraged to make. This pilgrimage comes with special graces, and it allows each of us to share in the many blessings of the Holy Year. Jesus said in John 10: "I am the door" bringing to fruition the words of the psalmist, who said, "this is the door of the Lord where the just may enter." Passing through the Holy Door symbolizes our leaving the world outside and entering the realm of salvation. The tradition of the Holy Door most likely originated during the time when sinners were given public penances that had to be performed before they could receive absolution. On completion of the penance, the penitent was then allowed through the "holy door" of the Church to confess and be reunited with the Church. The ritual invites each of us to recall that the "door" to salvation is Jesus Himself. Christ is now open and waiting for each person. During the Holy Year of Mercy, we are all called to pray that our own personal "shut doors" of sin and temptation may be opened that that we open our hearts to those on "the outermost fringes of society." Pope Francis says that this year is "the opportune moment to change our lives. This is the time to allow our hearts to be touched." A Holy Year provides an opportunity for each of us to participate in and experience the healing Sacrament of Reconciliation. After having confessed our sins and received absolution, we may also receive a "plenary indulgence," which lessens the effects of our sin here on earth. Pope Francis explains: "To gain an indulgence is to experience the holiness of the Church, who bestows upon all the fruits of Christ's redemption, so that God's love and forgiveness may extend everywhere. Let us live this Jubilee intensely, begging the Father to forgive our sins and to bathe us in his merciful "indulgence." Traveling to a pilgrimage site and crossing through a holy door is a spiritual journey that signals, as the Holy Father said, "the deep desire for true conversion."

For the able bodied...You are invited to do the following:

- Go to confession.
- Receive the Holy Eucharist while reflecting on God's mercy.
- Make a profession of faith (Nicene or Apostles' Creed are good options).
- Pray for the Pope's intentions.
- Perform one of the Spiritual or Corporal Works of Mercy.

On completion of these exercises a Plenary Indulgence will be granted to you. An indulgence is defined as “the cancellation of debt (remission) before God of the temporal punishment due for sins already forgiven as far as their guilt is concerned.” Indulgences are of two kinds: partial and plenary. A partial indulgence removes part of the temporal punishment due for sins. A plenary indulgence removes all of it.

It is appropriate that the sacramental confession and especially Holy Communion and the prayer for the pope’s intentions take place on the same day of the pilgrimage, but it is not necessary. The sacramental rites and prayers may be carried out within several days (about three weeks) and at a place other than the pilgrimage site.

For the elderly, those confined to home, and the ill...you are invited to do the following:

For persons physically unable to visit a pilgrimage site, Pope Francis has said that they may obtain the indulgence by “living with faith and joyful hope this moment of trial.” Receiving Communion or attending Holy Mass will be for them the means of obtaining the Jubilee Indulgence.” (If you are unable to get to Mass at St. Catherine’s you may pray watching Mass on television. Give the Parish Office a call and we can bring Communion to you.) These persons may also perform one of the Spiritual or Corporal Works of Mercy as their abilities permit.

The nearest Holy Door to St. Catherine of Siena is **The Holy Door at St. Mary’s Cathedral.**

Please note there is construction work being done at the Cathedral through the Summer. This may restrict your activity.

Mass Times at the Cathedral:

Weekday Masses: Monday through Friday: 6.30am & 12.05pm.

Sunday Masses: Saturday Vigil: 5.30pm, Sunday: 8.00am, 9.30am, 12.05pm, 1.45pm (Spanish), 5.30pm

Reconciliation:

Monday through Saturday: 11.00am-12.00pm.

Saturday 5.00pm -5.25pm. Sunday: 3.00pm-3.30pm.