



DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Jubilee Year of Mercy
December 8, 2015

Dear Brothers and Sisters: Disciples of Christ,

Pope Francis has called for a Jubilee Year of Mercy to begin Wednesday, December 8, 2015 and to continue until November 22, 2016. In his Bull of Indiction he tells us, *Jesus Christ is the face of the Father's mercy* and then goes on *We want to live this Jubilee Year in light of the Lord's words: MERCIFUL LIKE THE FATHER.*

With gratitude to the Holy Father for this initiative, I write to all of you, the members of the Church of Rockville Centre, to invite us all to set out on a pilgrimage of mercy here in our Diocese beginning on December 12th. Inspired by the Pope's letter, *Misericordiae Vultus*, we as a Church will have many opportunities to live mercy and to let the Father's mercy flood our hearts and make our hearts like that of His Son. I urge all of you to read prayerfully the Holy Father's letter which can be found on the Vatican website, www.im.va under Pope Francis and the rubric "Bulls". He gives us all a moving explanation of divine mercy, the mercy that forgives, embraces and renews, and transforms every human heart open to receive God's grace.

In our Diocese I have designated four pilgrimage places. Each place, Saint Agnes Cathedral in Rockville Centre, The Basilica of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary in Southampton, The Shrine of Our Lady of the Isle in Eastport, and The Seminary of the Immaculate Conception in Huntington, will have a specific day every week during the Jubilee Year when priests and others will be available to receive pilgrims who come to enter through the Holy Door to confess their sins, pray before the Blessed Sacrament, join in devotions and receive the Lord's blessing in Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

There will be a pilgrimage as well to the Basilica Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington on September 24, 2016. Parishes and deaneries will be organizing events. During Lent the priests will preach on the themes of mercy during this special season.

The Jubilee Year will be officially opened in our Diocese on Saturday December 12th at the 5:00PM Mass in Saint Agnes Cathedral which will also be televised by Telecare. These and many other moments to "encounter the Father's mercy" can be found on our website www.drvc.org.

For the moment I write to urge you to begin NOW to prepare your hearts and those of your families, parishioners and friends truly to live mercy so that *the balm of the Father's mercy may heal everyone* and we all become merciful as the Father is merciful, *the Father whose mercy is greater than any sin and more fulfilling than any other promise of life.*

May the Merciful Father enter our hearts and transform our lives so that we might be His instruments of mercy to one another and the entire world.

Yours devotedly in Christ,

Bishop of Rockville Centre