

**December 27th, 2015**

## **JUBILEE OF THE FAMILY**

### **RESOURCE FOR THE PASSAGE OF THE HOLY DOOR**

[This resource is intended to be used by a family, during the short itinerary for the entrance through the Holy Door. Depending on the composition of the family group, one of the older children may read the Pope's texts. However, the parents are clearly asked to lead the family.]

#### **Introduction**

***From the Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy "Misericordia Vultus"***

*The pilgrimage has a special place in the Holy Year, because it represents the journey each of us makes in this life. Life itself is a pilgrimage, and the human being is a viator, a pilgrim travelling along the road, making his way to the desired destination. Similarly, to reach the Holy Door 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. (MV 14)*

Sign of the Cross

A brief moment of silence

The parents remind their children of the steps that have led to this moment of grace, and, especially if they are very young, explain to them the meaning of the Jubilee and the significance of the Holy Door.

# “His mercy endures forever”

## Confession Laudis

### ***From the Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy “Misericordia Vultus”***

*“For his mercy endures forever.” This is the refrain that repeats after each verse in Psalm 136 as it narrates the history of God’s revelation. By virtue of mercy, all the events of the Old Testament are replete with profound salvific import. Mercy renders God’s history with Israel a history of salvation. To repeat continually “for his mercy endures forever,” as the psalm does, seems to break through the dimensions of space and time, inserting everything into the eternal mystery of love. It is as if to say that not only in history, but for all eternity man will always be under the merciful gaze of the Father. It is no accident that the people of Israel wanted to include this psalm – the “Great Hallel,” as it is called – in its most important liturgical feast days.*

*Before his Passion, Jesus prayed with this psalm of mercy. Knowing that Jesus himself prayed this psalm makes it even more important for us as Christians, challenging us to take up the refrain in our daily lives by praying these words of praise: “for his mercy endures forever.” (MV7)*

On this very important day, we will try to write the Great Hallel of our family. Just as Israel made a list of the most important events in its history and added to each one the refrain "for his mercy he endures forever," we, today, want to help one another to recognize the most beautiful and important events for our family. On each line, we write something that the Lord has done for us (the first two lines are suggestions); at the end, we can pray the text that we have written together:

*He made us meet and fall in love*

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For his mercy endures forever

*He has blessed our family*

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For his mercy endures forever

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For his mercy endures forever

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For his mercy endures forever

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For his mercy endures forever

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For his mercy endures forever

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For his mercy endures forever

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For his mercy endures forever

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For his mercy endures forever

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For his mercy endures forever

## **“Seventy times seven times”**

### Confession Vitae

#### ***From the Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy “Misericordia Vultus”***

*In the parables devoted to mercy, Jesus reveals the nature of God as that of a Father who never gives up until he has forgiven the wrong and overcome rejection with compassion and mercy. We know these parables well, three in particular: the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the father with two sons (cf. Lk 15:1–32). In these parables, God is always presented as full of joy, especially when he pardons. In them we find the core of the Gospel and of our faith, because mercy is presented as a force that overcomes everything, filling the heart with love and bringing consolation through pardon.*

*From another parable, we cull an important teaching for our Christian lives. In reply to Peter’s question about how many times it is necessary to forgive, Jesus says: “I do not say seven times, but seventy times seven times” (Mt 18:22). He then goes on to tell the parable of the “ruthless servant.”*

*Jesus affirms that mercy is not only an action of the Father, it becomes a criterion for ascertaining who his true children are. In short, we are called to show mercy because mercy has first been shown to us. Pardoning offences becomes the clearest expression of merciful love, and for us Christians it is an imperative from which we cannot excuse ourselves. At times how hard it seems to forgive! And yet pardon is the instrument placed into our fragile hands to attain serenity of heart. To let go of anger, wrath, violence, and revenge are necessary conditions to living joyfully.*

What should we forgive one another?

We keep silent for a moment, and each one asks him or herself: to whom, in the family, I offer my forgiveness today and for what? To whom, in the family, do I have to apologize and for what?

At this point, in a brief family dialogue, we ask one another for forgiveness and offer our pardon to the others.

For what should we let God forgive us? For what must we ask for forgiveness?

If you have not recently celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation, this is a good opportunity to do so (in the Basilica, until the beginning of the Mass, a number of priests will be available for confessions).

## **“Like the Father in heaven”**

### Confessio Fidei

Passage of the Holy Door and entrance into the Basilica

#### ***From the Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy “Misericordia Vultus”***

*Merciful like the Father, therefore, is the “motto” of this Holy Year. In mercy, we find proof of how God loves us. He gives his entire self, always, freely, asking nothing in return. He comes to our aid whenever we call upon him. The assistance we ask for is already the first step of God’s mercy toward us. He comes to assist us in our weakness. And his help consists in helping us accept his presence and closeness to us. Day after day, touched by his compassion, we also can become compassionate towards others.*

*In this Holy Year, we look forward to the experience of opening our hearts to those living on the outermost fringes of society: fringes which modern society itself creates. How many uncertain and painful situations there are in the world today! How many are the wounds borne by the flesh of those who have no voice because their cry is muffled and drowned out by the indifference of the rich. Let us not fall into humiliating indifference or a monotonous routine that prevents us from discovering what is new! Let us ward off destructive cynicism! Let us open our eyes and see the misery of the world, the wounds of our brothers and sisters who are denied their dignity, and let us recognize that we are compelled to heed their cry for help! May we reach out to them and support them so they can feel the warmth of our presence, our friendship, and our fraternity! May their cry become our own, and together may we break down the barriers of indifference that too often reign supreme and mask our hypocrisy and egoism!*

After the passage of the Holy Door, and perhaps after having taken place in the church, we look together for a moment at the crucifix that is closest to us: it is the face of God's mercy that welcomes and embraces us! At this point we can also embrace each other as a sign of reconciliation and gratitude. The parents mark the foreheads of their children with the sign of the cross, as they did on the day of their baptism.

In a final moment of family’s dialogue, accepting Pope Francis’s invitation, we decide on an attentive gesture to make toward the poor when we return home.

This is our decision:

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## To obtain the Jubilee indulgence

*Pope Francis has written this:*

*To experience obtain the Indulgence, the faithful are called to make a **brief pilgrimage** to the Holy Door, open in every Cathedral or in the churches designated by the Diocesan Bishop, and in the four Papal Basilicas in Rome, as a sign of the deep desire for true conversion. Likewise, I dispose that the Indulgence may be obtained in the Shrines in which the Door of Mercy is open and in the churches which traditionally are identified as Jubilee Churches. It is important that this moment be linked, first and foremost, to the Sacrament of **Reconciliation** and to the celebration of the Holy **Eucharist** with a **reflection** on mercy. It will be necessary to accompany these celebrations with the **profession of faith** and with **prayer for me and for the intentions** that I bear in my heart for the good of the Church and of the entire world.*