



September 2015

Dear Brother Priests and Pastoral Coordinators,

As you know, Pope Francis has declared this coming year the Jubilee of Mercy. Beginning on December 8, 2015, and continuing until November 20, 2015, the Year of Mercy is an Extraordinary Jubilee – a time of forgiveness and reconciliation, a time to celebrate the mercy of God.

A pilgrimage to Rome has for centuries been a feature of Jubilee Years, and this year is no exception. However, in addition to a pilgrimage to the four Major Basilicas in Rome, the cathedral church of every diocese has been designated as a place of pilgrimage. On December 8, 2015, I will open the Jubilee Year at our own St. James Cathedral and bless the Holy Doors, which will open for pilgrims throughout the Jubilee Year of Mercy.

I encourage you to consider planning a parish Jubilee pilgrimage to the Cathedral during the coming year. The Cathedral staff will be happy to welcome small or large groups from parishes and schools. All will be invited to walk through the Holy Doors and pray in the Cathedral. In order not to interfere with the Sunday morning schedule in your parishes, the Cathedral encourages groups to plan to visit the Cathedral on a Sunday afternoon and join in the Cathedral parish's Vespers with Benediction. Visits can be arranged at other times as well. The Cathedral staff has prepared a self-guided pilgrimage of prayer (copy enclosed). Intended for individuals or groups, it includes a profession of faith and prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father, two of the requirements for obtaining the Jubilee indulgence. To schedule a pilgrimage for your parish, please contact Corinna Laughlin, the Cathedral's Pastoral Assistant for Liturgy. She can be reached at 206-264-2086 or claughlin@stjames-cathedral.org.

In addition to the pilgrimages, we have planned a series of Archdiocesan events for the Jubilee, including Jubilees for priests, deacons, religious, young people, and many others-- echoing the schedule for the Jubilee in Rome. You'll find many of these events listed on the enclosed posters, which I hope you will put in a prominent place in your churches/schools for display throughout the year. You will be hearing more about each of these events as they draw near. You will also be receiving suggested activities for your parish from Pam Gunderson, Jubilee Year Coordinator, and Andrew Casad, Archdiocesan Director of Liturgy.

I want to call your attention to one event in particular – the DAY OF MERCY on Saturday, March 5. On this day – and in conjunction with a similar event in Rome – the Cathedral will offer confessions from 9:00am until 5:00pm. I intend to participate as a confessor, as does Bishop Elizondo, and I encourage all our priests to mark your calendars and to come spend an hour or two hearing confessions in the Cathedral that day, encouraging your parishioners to come as well. It will be a great way to celebrate the great Sacrament of God’s Mercy during the Year of Mercy, and I consider it a high point in our observance of the Year of Mercy. I’m also sure that similar observances will be held in every deanery.

For the most up-to-date information about Jubilee events, please visit www.seattlearchdiocese.org or www.stjames-cathedral.org/mercy. May you and all those you serve know the blessings of the God who is mercy and love during the coming Jubilee Year of Mercy.

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "J. Peter Sartain".

Most Rev. J. Peter Sartain
Archbishop of Seattle

Encl.