



Infifax



Holy Door and Indulgence

In Infifax n. 39, I presented some information on the opening of the Holy Year and the blessing of the Holy Door: *“All people present will be invited to pass through this Door, to show their desire to personally receive the mercy of God and their commitment to become instruments themselves of the mercy of God in their daily lives.”*

On September 1st, our Holy Father Pope Francis went deeper into these two aspects in his letter to Archbishop Rino Fisichella, President of the Pontifical Council for New Evangelization. In fact he hoped that *« the Jubilee be a living experience of the closeness of the Father »*.

Passing through the Holy Door becomes a concrete gesture expressing the desire of all the faithful to expose themselves to the mercy of God, to be touched by his love. *« I wish that the Jubilee Indulgence may reach each one as a genuine experience of God’s mercy, which comes to meet each person in the Face of the Father who welcomes and forgives, forgetting completely the sin committed. To experience and obtain the Indulgence, the faithful are called to make a brief pilgrimage to the Holy Door, open in every Cathedral »*. In our Diocese, in addition to Saint Anthony of Padua Cathedral, *Sainte-Croix Church* in Haileybury will also have its Holy Door.

- 1- All of the faithful who pass through the Holy Door can obtain the indulgence under the usual conditions: confession, communion, reflection on mercy, prayer for the intentions of the Sovereign Pontiff (profession of faith, *Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be To The Father*).
- 2- The sick and the elderly who may have difficulty getting around can obtain the indulgence by offering their illness and their suffering in union with the Lord. The Pope writes: *« Living with faith and joyful hope this moment of trial, receiving communion or attending Holy Mass and community prayer, even through the various means of communication, will be for them the means of obtaining the Jubilee Indulgence »*.
- 3- Prisoners : The Pope does not forget people who are imprisoned. *« They may obtain the Indulgence in the chapels of the prisons. May the gesture of directing their thought and prayer to the Father each time they cross the threshold of their cell signify for them their passage through the Holy Door, because the mercy of God is able to transform hearts, and is also able to transform bars into an experience of freedom »*.

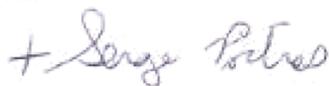
- 4- The deceased : The Pope invites us not to forget our deceased relatives and friends. « *We can, in the great mystery of the Communion of Saints, pray for them, that the merciful Face of the Father free them of every remnant of fault and strongly embrace them in the unending beatitude*».

- 5- The tragedy of abortion. The Pope also touches on the great problem of abortion that might be experienced with « *superficial awareness, as if not realizing the extreme harm that such an act entails*.» « *The forgiveness of God cannot be denied to one who has repented, especially when that person approaches the Sacrament of Confession with a sincere heart in order to obtain reconciliation with the Father. For this reason too, I have decided... to concede to all priests for the Jubilee Year the discretion to absolve of the sin of abortion those who have procured it and who, with contrite heart, seek forgiveness for it.*”

Finally, the Pope invites each one of us to become instruments of mercy. « *I have asked the Church.... to rediscover the richness encompassed by the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. The experience of mercy, indeed, becomes visible in the witness of concrete signs as Jesus himself taught us. Each time that one of the faithful personally performs one or more of these actions, he or she shall surely obtain the Jubilee Indulgence*». I made a detailed presentation of these works in my Pastoral Letter, *To Be a More Visible and Dynamic Catholic Church, a Place of Mercy*.

With the concrete gesture of passing through the Holy Door, the Holy Year desired by the Holy Father is an extraordinary opportunity to rediscover the infinite love of God for each one of us, love that goes beyond our hardships and our sins and that urges us to spread this mercy in our everyday lives.

With my kindest regards in Our Lord.



✠ Serge Poitras
Bishop of Timmins