



JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY
December 8, 2015-November 20, 2016

ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA

INDULGENCE OPPORTUNITIES DURING THE JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY

- **Passage through a Jubilee Holy Door of Mercy**

A Plenary Indulgence is attached to prayerfully passing through a Holy Door of Mercy under the usual conditions.¹ In the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, there are six Holy Doors of Mercy designated by Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap. The Holy Doors are located at the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul, Philadelphia, the National Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa, Doylestown, the Miraculous Medal Shrine, Philadelphia, the National Shrine of St. Rita of Cascia, Philadelphia, the National Shrine of St. John Neumann, Philadelphia and the Shrine of St. Katharine Drexel, Bensalem.

Also, a special Jubilee Holy Door of Mercy will be opened during The AbbeyFest: Faith & Music Festival on September 24, 2016 at Daylesford Abbey in Paoli, P.A. (theabbeyfest.com)

- **Living one or more of the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy**

A Plenary Indulgence is also attached under the usual conditions to faithfully performing one or more of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy during the Jubilee Year.² To learn about ways to live the spiritual and corporal works of mercy in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, visit <http://archphila.org/mercy/local/>.

The explanation of the Church's practice of granting indulgences and the conditions for obtaining an indulgence can be found below. Please continue reading to fully understand and benefit from the gift of indulgences.

For those who are sick, homebound, imprisoned or, for some other reason, unable to perform the Jubilee works listed above

The Church makes provision for her children who are sick, homebound, or imprisoned to have the opportunity to receive the Jubilee Indulgences. Persons in these circumstances have the opportunity to obtain the Jubilee Indulgence by uniting their sufferings to Jesus in the mystery of His Passion,

¹ Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization: www.im.va

² Letter to Archbishop Rino Fisichella, <http://www.im.va/content/gdm/en/giubileo/lettera.html>

Death and Resurrection. In so doing, and by “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

For those living the contemplative life

“Religious Men and Women bound to the cloistered life can obtain the Jubilee Indulgence according to the now usual practices granted for Jubilees... Cloistered Religious are among the category of those ‘for whom, for various reasons it will be impossible to enter the Holy Door.’ Therefore, they will obtain the Jubilee indulgence through a visit to the chapel of their own monastery, along with the profession of faith and prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father, as well as the usual conditions of sacramental Confession and Eucharistic Communion.”⁴

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CHURCH’S PRACTICE OF GRANTING INDULGENCES

What is an indulgence?

An indulgence is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven.⁵ There are specific conditions for receiving an indulgence.

As a result of the communion that exists between Christ and all the members of the Church, the Church has a treasury of spiritual goods that is inexhaustible. The source of these spiritual goods is Christ. Through her union with Christ, the Church has the authority to dispense this treasury. When the Church does this, in order to spur people to acts of piety and charity, the Church requires those who seek an indulgence to perform some good work or act of devotion.

An indulgence does not confer grace. An indulgence is not a remission of the guilt due to sin. The guilt due to sin is ordinarily taken away by the Sacraments of Baptism and Penance (confession), in which we receive forgiveness for sins through Jesus Christ. Although guilt is taken away, and with it the *eternal* penalty that is due to sin, namely, damnation, the eternal loss of the presence of God, there remain consequences for sins that those who have committed them must bear. There is what is traditionally called the *temporal* punishment for sin.

Every sinful act creates a disorder within the soul of the human person; it distorts our desires and affections, leaving us with "an unhealthy attachment to creatures, which must be purified either here on earth, or after death in the state called Purgatory." Furthermore, sin disrupts one's relationships with God, with the Church, with other people, and with the world as a whole. The communion intended by God is damaged or lost. Those who have received forgiveness for their sins through the sacraments still have an obligation to undergo a difficult and painful process (the temporal penalty for sin) to be purified of the consequences of their sins and to restore the disrupted relationships. The necessary and painful process that brings restoration and purification can take place either in this life or in Purgatory, as whatever part of the process remains unfinished at death must be completed in Purgatory.

Through an *indulgence*, God grants the prayer of the Church that the temporal penalty for sin due to

³ Letter to Archbishop Rino Fisichella, <http://www.im.va/content/gdm/en/giubileo/lettera.html>

⁴ Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization, Jubilee Year of Mercy website, <http://www.im.va/content/gdm/en/news/evidenza/2015-12-15-pcpne.html>

⁵ *Manual of Indulgences* N1

someone be reduced [partial indulgence], or possibly eliminated [plenary indulgence]. By God's grace, participation in a prayer or action that has an indulgence attached to it brings about the necessary restoration and reparation without the suffering that would normally accompany it. The granting of an indulgence by the Church is "the expression of the Church's full confidence of being heard by the Father when, in view of Christ's merits and, by his gift, those of Our Lady and the saints, she asks him to mitigate or cancel the painful aspect of punishment by fostering its medicinal aspect through other channels of grace."⁶

What is the difference between a partial and plenary indulgence?

An indulgence is partial or plenary according to whether it removes either part [partial] or all [plenary] of the temporal punishment due to sin.⁷

What are the conditions for obtaining an indulgence?

In order to be capable of gaining indulgences one must be baptized, not excommunicated, and in the state of grace at least at the completion of the prescribed works. To gain an indulgence, one must have at least the general intention of doing so.⁸

Plenary Indulgence: Furthermore, for reception of a Plenary Indulgence, which grants the remission of all temporal punishment due to sin, in addition to this good work or act of devotion, the Church specifies four conditions: (1) sacramental confession, (2) reception of Holy Communion, (3) prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father, and (4) complete detachment from all sin, even venial sin.⁹

Partial Indulgences: If the full disposition is lacking, or if the work and the four prescribed conditions are not fulfilled, [save certain specified exceptions], the indulgence will only be partial.¹⁰

Note on Partial Indulgences: In the past, partial indulgences were "counted" in days (e.g. 300 days) or years (e.g. 5 years). Catholics often mistakenly thought that this meant "time off of purgatory." Since there is no time in purgatory, as we understand it, it meant instead the remission of temporal punishment analogous to a certain amount of penitence as practiced in the early Church. This was a very generous standard, since the penitence required for sacramental absolution in the early centuries was arduous, indeed. However, with Pope Paul VI's 1968 revision of the *Enchiridion Indulgentiarum* (Collection or Handbook of Indulgences), this confusing way of counting partial indulgences was suppressed, and the evaluation of a partial indulgence left to God.¹¹

Can a baptized person obtain an indulgence for someone else?

The faithful can obtain Partial or Plenary indulgences for themselves, or they can apply them to the dead.¹²

⁶ From USCCB website: <http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/prayers-and-devotions/prayers/popular-devotional-practices-basic-questions-and-answers.cfm>

⁷ *Manual of Indulgences* N2

⁸ *Manual of Indulgences* N17

⁹ From USCCB website: <http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/prayers-and-devotions/prayers/popular-devotional-practices-basic-questions-and-answers.cfm>

¹⁰ *Manual of Indulgences* N20

¹¹ From EWTN website: <https://www.ewtn.com/Devotionals/mercy/what.htm>

¹² *Manual of Indulgences* N3