

## **The Year of Mercy and the Archdiocese of Cardiff:** **Notes for Schools**

- The Year of Mercy is being celebrated throughout the diocese and there will be events organized on a local parish and diocesan level throughout the year. It would be desirable for parish and school to come together during the year for some celebration. Keep an eye on your local newsletter for events taking place within your parish, and be sure to visit <http://www.rcadc.org/yearofmercy.html> for information on what is happening on a diocesan level.
- When Pope Francis introduced the Year of Mercy he spoke of a number of key points:
  - The God we believe is a God of mercy
  - We see the mercy of God in action in the life of Jesus
  - We must constantly remind ourselves of the mercy of God
  - When faced with the gravity of sin, God responds with the fullness of mercy. Mercy is always greater than sin, and there is no limit on the love of God who is always ready to forgive
  - Pope Francis reminds us that the Church is truly authentic when she professes and proclaims mercy; and therefore it is necessary that she exemplifies and testifies to mercy
  - In order to be truly authentic members of the Church we need to be credible signs of the mercy of God in our lives. The “Lord asks us above all not to judge and not to condemn. God is the only one who can judge to the very depths of the heart
  - We are all called to be “Merciful Like the Father”, which is the motto of the Jubilee Year
  - We need to put mercy into concrete action most especially during this Jubilee Year. “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!” (Concrete examples of how we can put mercy into action in our communities are readily available e.g. feeding the homeless, aiding refugees etc.).
  - Pope Francis invites us to “reflect on the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. It will be a way to reawaken our conscience, too often grown dull in the face of poverty.”
  - This year is an opportunity for real change in our lives and follow the way of Jesus more closely
  - Experience of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is important during the year. Consideration should be given as to how we provide the Sacrament to pupils throughout the year. This could be done in school, in church or a combination of both

- “The practice of 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” There is provision within the diocese for making pilgrimage to five Holy Doors within the diocese, located within Cardiff, Belmont, Bridgend, Merthyr Tydfil and Newport. You may consider visiting one of these.
  - “I trust that this Jubilee year celebrating the mercy of God will foster an encounter with these religions (He is talking about Judaism and Islam) and with other noble religious traditions; may it open us to even more fervent dialogue so that we might know and understand one another better; may it eliminate every form of closed-mindedness and disrespect, and drive out every form of violence and discrimination.” When working with pupils on other faiths we should foster a culture of encounter, possibly through invitation of leaders of other faiths to visit our schools and speak to our pupils. Archbishop’s House can make contact details available for key people within other faiths within the diocese.
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