



CENTRAL WASHINGTON CATHOLIC

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FEBRUARY 2016
Newsletter

God's Mercy Shines Forth In Special Blessings, Including 'Indulgences'

By Christine Corbett Conklin

Lent is a perfect time to receive some of the special graces offered through practice of our Catholic Faith, including "indulgences" -- which many of us may find a little confusing but can have meaningful, eternal rewards.

Combined with the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy proclaimed by Pope Francis, we can obtain particular blessings as we prepare for Easter, the most important day of the Catholic Church year.

"With the Year of Mercy, the Holy Father is trying to call us to be more compassionate, understanding, merciful, to appeal to the goodness of God and His mercy," explained Very Rev. Michael Ibach, judicial vicar for the Diocese of Yakima.

As part of this special time, Pope Francis has asked that every diocese in the world, like St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, have a Jubilee Door of Mercy.

"The door is a way of reminding us that we enter into a relationship with God so that we can be more holy," Father Ibach said. "We are deliberately going in to seek His mercy and then show His mercy to others."

If you have not already planned a visit to the Holy Door at St. Paul Cathedral in Yakima with your parish, Lent can be a particularly appropriate time for individuals to come. By following a few relatively simple steps, you can receive an "indulgence," Father explained.

In brief, you should receive or have recently received the Sacrament of Reconciliation. While in the Cathedral, after entering through the Holy Door, you should make a profession of Faith, such as saying the Nicene Creed or Apostles Creed (which may be found in the missalettes in the pews). Finally, pray for Pope Francis and his intentions, perhaps saying a few prayers



Pope Francis prayed before the Jubilee Door of Mercy in St. Peter's Basilica, Rome.

like the Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be, Father Ibach suggests.

By faithfully following these steps, you may receive an indulgence, which means full (plenary) or partial remission of "temporal" punishment for sins which have been committed. It is even possible to merit these graces for a loved one who has died.

"Although forgiven (through Reconciliation), we still need to repair the damage that sin creates in our relationship with God and others," Father Ibach explained. "We need to restore the relationship."

Temporal punishment refers to penalties which might arise in this life or in Purgatory. As the concept of an indulgence was explained on "Call to Communion," the Catholic radio program, it's kind of like breaking a window of someone's home. You can be truly sorry and forgiven, but you still may need to sweep up some glass!

As we prepare for Easter Sunday, other opportunities await for blessings such as indulgences. By making the Stations of the Cross or saying the

Rosary, with others, for example, we may receive a plenary indulgence, Father Ibach said. Acts of almsgiving, or donating, to Rice Bowl, Catholic Charities, St. Vincent DePaul and other charitable endeavors may also merit some indulgence graces. The homebound, who have Communion brought to them, are in a state of grace and say prayers for the Holy Father, also may gain indulgences.

The Year of Mercy encourages us "to be more unified by overcoming whatever separates us from each other," Father Ibach stressed. This could be a family argument, misunderstanding or even an unintentional hurt.

"How can we be more united with one another, through acts of kindness, acts of mercy?," he asked. "It's a positive way to try to restore the goodness for each other in our relationship, to help support each other in our walk with God."

So, why not begin a closer walk with God during Lent, pursuing with others the opportunities to obtain abundant blessings?

A Message from Bishop Tyson...

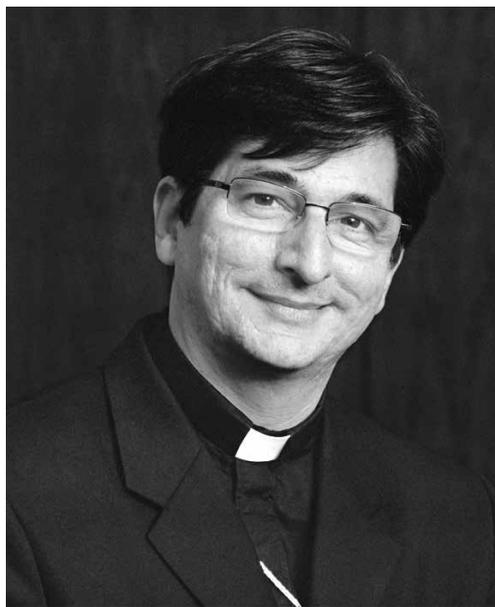
Dear Friends:

We are deep into the “Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy” declared by Pope Francis. How might we understand God’s mercy? Simply put: When God’s love meets human sin, the fruit is always mercy.

This month, we feature a story by one of our own seminarians, Jesús Mariscal. He and His brother, Yakima seminarian César Izquierdo, spent time together this summer with other seminarians teaching English in China. Any kind of preaching or evangelization is strictly forbidden in that nation. But as Jesús Mariscal’s article reveals, such restrictions did not prevent local Chinese students studying English to begin asking about the spiritual language of mercy embedded in the life of Jesus Christ and the teachings of His Church.

How does God’s love meet our sin? Often the starting point is in prayer. Prayer marks the first step in mercy. In Psalm 51, we often pray the phrase, “Create in me a clean heart, O God.” This penitential psalm captures our great Lenten desire for God to meet us in our sinfulness.

The Church puts forth Ezekiel 36:26 as one of the Easter Vigil readings because the prophet’s words foretell



Bishop Joseph Tyson

a God who responds mercifully to our prayer this way: “I will give you a new heart and place a new spirit within you, taking from your bodies your stony hearts and giving you natural hearts.”

As we experience God’s mercy in our lives, we are then called to be merciful to others. The Valentine’s Day boxes put together by Catholic Charities volunteers, and the Good Friday Collection for the Holy Land, are concrete ways of giving alms to help serve those most in need here, as well as in the lands where Jesus first proclaimed

His message of mercy.

Indeed, in the Gospel of Luke, Jesus’ first proclamation of the Good News in His hometown of Nazareth was to quote the prophet Isaiah, who announced “a year of favor from the Lord.”

These scriptures, to be proclaimed at our Chrism Mass March 15, provide the scriptural basis for our jubilee years. Jesus ended His quotation of Isaiah without proclaiming “a day of vindication by our God.” It is not that Jesus was saying justice is not important, but that our understanding of justice often does not align with God’s view. “When human sin meets God’s love, the fruit is always mercy.”

As we move through Lent toward Holy Week and then Easter March 27, followed by Divine Mercy Sunday the following week, I hope this issue inspires you to walk through the Door of Mercy at St. Paul Cathedral in Yakima, or the Door of Mercy I will be blessing at the St. Vincent Center in Kennewick on Saturday, April 2.

With my every best wish and blessing!

Devotedly yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Joseph J. Tyson
Bishop of Yakima

Good Friday Collection Will Support Christians in the Holy Land

Catholics throughout the world will answer Pope Francis’ call to support Christians in the Holy Land through the annual Pontifical Good Friday Collection March 25.

The collection in our Diocese helps the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in America support the work of Franciscans in the Middle East. The Order of Saint Francis was entrusted with the care of many of the shrines in the Holy Land more than 800 years ago.

“In these challenging times in the Middle East, your support means that our church will conduct parish ministry, provide Catholic education, feed the hungry, build housing for Christians, maintain shrines and operate refugee centers in the Holy Land,” said Yakima Bishop Joseph Tyson.

“Christians, along with all of the clergy and religious who serve in the Holy Land, will deeply appreciate your prayers and financial help,” he said. “The political, religious and military challenges in the Holy Land are more complex than ever. The wars, unrest and instability have been especially hard on Christians.”

For more information about Christians in the Holy Land, visit www.myfranciscan.org/good-friday.

If you have been abused or victimized by a member of the Catholic clergy, please believe in the possibility for hope and help and healing. We encourage you to come forward and speak out.

The Yakima Diocese has a sexual abuse hotline for those who wish to report some incident concerning that issue as regards a bishop, priest, deacon or diocesan employee or volunteer. (888) 276-4490

Central Washington Catholic

February 2016 · Volume 52 · Issue 2

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The Central Washington Catholic (ISSN 0195-1831) is published monthly by the Diocese of Yakima, 5301-A Tieton Drive, Yakima, WA 98908-3493.

Submission schedule: Deadline for the submission of material is at noon on the first day of the month of publication.

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The friction between the Chinese state and the Church has alienated most students from Christianity. This made me realize that my primary mission was not teaching English, but mentoring about the Gospel. I knew that the Chinese government could arrest and deport anyone who engaged in evangelization. Nevertheless, I spoke openly about Christ and the Catholic Church to my students.

To get to know them better, I asked the students to share the meaning and history of their names. I then shared my name and its meaning. Through a PowerPoint presentation, I reviewed the meaning of Jesus, His history, and how His birth, life, death, and resurrection had been predicted and later fulfilled for the salvation of those who believe in Him. I presented a timeline of my life, with photos, including one of me taken with Pope Francis as we exchanged a zucchetto (skullcap) during a papal audience. I discussed my vocation to the priesthood, the Seat of Peter, the Pope, and the Church. These topics were new to my students and they wanted to learn more.

One day after class, a student asked me about Mass. I told her the best way to learn about it was to witness it. We attended two Masses sitting in the front pew, after which she thanked me for “opening [her] eyes to a new and beautiful world.” This was moving – God had used me as His instrument to spread His message to someone new.

I gave her my Bible and she learned the Lord’s Prayer in minutes. Since returning to the seminary, I have kept in touch with her. She continues to read the Bible and attend Mass, and is now introducing some of her friends to Mass.

This summer experience has reinforced my appreciation for religious missionaries – like the Maryknolls – who continually work to evangelize the world. Every baptized Christian, missionary or not, is called to have a missionary heart. I am most grateful to Father Barrons and to all the Maryknolls for offering this opportunity and for their generous hospitality.

Note: Jesús Mariscal and César Izquierdo are on track to be ordained transitional deacons in Rome in 2017, and to be ordained priests the following year. First published in Roman Echoes, the magazine of the Pontifical North American College.



Maryknoll Father Brian Barrons (fourth from left) mentored Yakima seminarians Jesús Mariscal (second from right) and César Izquierdo (fourth from right) along with other seminarians and volunteer teachers.

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NEWS

From Around the Diocese

Chrism Mass Leads Off Special Rites

All are invited to attend the annual Chrism Mass scheduled for 7 p.m., Tuesday, March 15 at St. Paul Cathedral in Yakima.

This beautiful Mass will include the blessing of holy oils used in the administration of sacraments throughout the year. It also is an occasion when our diocesan priests renew their vows.

This will be the first of numerous special observances to come in this Lenten season leading to Easter. Check the diocesan website at www.yakimadiocese.net and your parish bulletin and website for schedules for the Triduum: Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday, March 24-26; followed by Easter Sunday, March 27.

Retreat on "Mercy" Scheduled

"Merciful Like the Father" is the theme of a one-day retreat scheduled for Saturday, March 5, at St. Andrew's Catholic Church in Ellensburg.

The retreat is open to adult men and women and will offer the opportunity for reflection on self and on the "merciful love of God to man." It also will provide more insight into what Pope Francis conveys on the "Extraordinary Holy Jubilee of Mercy."

Speakers will include Monsignor Robert Siler, Fathers Lawrence Reilly and Tomas Vazquez Tellez, and Youth Minister Thomas Megargle. Music will be provided by Jeremy and Rachel Hochstein. A testimony will be offered by Francine Dondji.

The event will run from 10 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. The cost is \$10 per person, which covers lunch, dinner, snacks and childcare. To register, call (509) 962-9819 or email standrewparishoa@yahoo.com.

Engaged Encounters Set for Ellensburg

Are you engaged or do you know someone who is? One way to get off to the best possible start in marriage is to attend a Catholic Engaged Encounter.

Two upcoming weekend encounters are planned for April 15-17 and June 24-26 at the Lazy F Camp and Retreat Center in Ellensburg.

Come and learn techniques for better communication, solving disagreements and more that will help you work together as a couple.

The cost of the weekend is \$295 per couple, which includes housing and meals. For more information or to register, contact Catholic Engaged Encounter of Central Washington at (509) 528-4653 or yakimace@yahoo.com.

Seminarians Help Bring the Good News to China

By Jesús Mariscal

Curious about missionary life, and the Catholic Church in China, I joined four of my classmates from the Pontifical North American College in Rome, including fellow Yakima seminarian

Cesar Izquierdo,

on their 2015 summer apostolate in Jilin City. This is the home of the first medical university of China's Air Force – now called Jilin Medical University. In addition to medical courses, the school offers English classes to help students learn medical terms. The English professor, Father Brian Barrons, a Maryknoll Missionary priest, also offers an English summer program.

Father Barrons generously hosted us at Jilin Medical University, where we helped him teach the summer program. Before going to Jilin City, we learned some survival Chinese phrases and cultural essentials during a week of orientation in Hong Kong. We also learned that, currently, the Catholic Church is in a difficult and risky situation in China, as the government perceives the Holy See as a foreign threat to its ideologies. Present in China today are both the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association, which is supported by the government and is not in full communion with the Holy See but celebrates valid Sacraments, and the underground Catholic Church which has greater communion with the Vatican.

Continued on page 3

Valentine's Day Boxes Bring Cheer to Many

More than 100 people had a little brighter Valentine's Day, thanks to the delivery of boxes of food, supplies and treats through Catholic Family & Child Service's (CFCS) Volunteer Services program.

Volunteers, with items donated by local businesses, churches, schools, individuals, and food banks, assembled the boxes for 68 low-income seniors and adults with disabilities enrolled in the CFCS program, and their family members.

Each Valentine's Day box contained a variety of non-perishable food, fresh produce, cleaning products, personal care items and treat bags. Special dietary treat bags were made for diabetic box recipients. CFCS volunteers picked up contributions from various churches and businesses, sorted items and checked for expiration dates. They assembled the treat bags, and with generously donated funds, shopped for missing items and packed the boxes.

"These boxes are welcomed by low-income elders, especially now when winter weather can create higher heating bills, affecting those on a fixed income the most," said organizer LouAnn Desgrosellier.

Volunteers filled the boxes, which had been decorated by La Salle Catholic High School sophomores, February 11. The boxes were delivered by La Salle students February 12. Most recipients were in Yakima, but some boxes also were delivered to Terrace Heights, Naches and beyond Wiley City.

Thanks to all of the caring individuals and groups who made this project possible. They included: La Salle High School, St. Joseph/Marquette School, Yakima Adventist Christian School, Riverside Christian School, Tree Top, Johnson Orchards, Chalet Dental, O'Connor Family Dental, Del Monte, Wray's Market, and the H.R. Spinner Corporation.



Chinese students and Yakima seminarian, Jesus Mariscal (in blue shirt), jumped for joy.



Peggy Roy was one of many volunteers who helped. Photo courtesy of CFCS.