



#### BISHOP'S MESSAGE

## FRUITS OF THE

# *Year of Mercy*

**O**ne year ago, I wrote to you about the Jubilee Year of Mercy, which began on Dec. 8, 2015. Today I write again to mark the upcoming end of the Year of Mercy, which will come to a close Nov. 20, on Christ the King Sunday.

And what a Year it has been! Over the course of the Jubilee Year, we here in the Diocese of Manchester have joined with the rest of the Church throughout the world in responding to our Holy Father Francis' invitation to show mercy to all those we encounter, and in turn, to experience the incredible, boundless mercy of almighty God. One of our own, Msgr. Anthony Frontiero, the rector of St. Joseph Cathedral, was named a Missionary of Mercy – one of only 800 in the world – by our Holy Father and has spent the Year living out his mandate to be a sign of “the Father’s readiness to welcome those in search of his pardon,” as Pope Francis put it. We have also welcomed pilgrims at the Holy Doors throughout our state – some 6,000 at the cathedral alone! – who have experienced God’s loving kindness through the sacrament of reconciliation. And there have been joyful times as we’ve gone on pilgrimage to Rome and to Washington, D.C.



*Bishop Peter A. Libasci is the Tenth Bishop of the Diocese of Manchester.*

*“As this Year of Mercy draws to a close I pray that you and all those close to you experience in full measure the fruits of the Jubilee.”*

Of course, I would be remiss if I failed to note that the past year has not been without its share of tragedies. To name only a few: the deaths of civilians, especially minorities, and of law enforcement officers that feed the continuing civil unrest in many parts of the United States; the sufferings of so many on Bastille Day in Nice; the attack on the airport and subsequent attempted coup in Turkey; the ongoing sufferings of those in the Middle East – indeed, these are just a few of countless examples of those who cry out in grief and mourning in our country and throughout the world, and the reason I called for a Day of Atonement this past August.

The Year of Mercy has taught us that as Catholics we are called to show mercy especially in the midst of the most terrible earthly suffering, to bind up the wounds of our brothers and sisters as the Good Samaritan did, after the example of our Father in Heaven and his son, Jesus Christ. Huge numbers of people around the globe are living in poverty, amidst disease and hunger: refugees on the move, UN housed dwellers in the cities of our nation and world, the victims of war, terrorism and violence. Of course our own acts of mercy are but a small reflection of the mercy of our heavenly Father, but it is my fervent prayer that the Jubilee Year has helped us all in some small way to see the needy as our brothers and sisters, and to turn toward them, not away from them.

In our diocese, we will continue the work of the Holy Year of Mercy by drawing more closely to the needs outlined by the Holy Father: family life, newly married couples, families in transition, those struggling with mental illness and the incarcerated and their families. This will address the most urgent issues here in New Hampshire, where certainly the need is great but the ability to help is within our scope.

As this Year of Mercy draws to a close, I pray that you and all those close to you experience in full measure the fruits of the Jubilee: an inward conversion of the heart that, mindful of our need for God’s mercy, leads us to show mercy and forgiveness to the “other” – the stranger in our midst, those with whom we disagree politically, the poor. In doing so our own petty worries, fears and political agendas become less and less significant, and we begin to experience the inner peace that Christ promised. ■

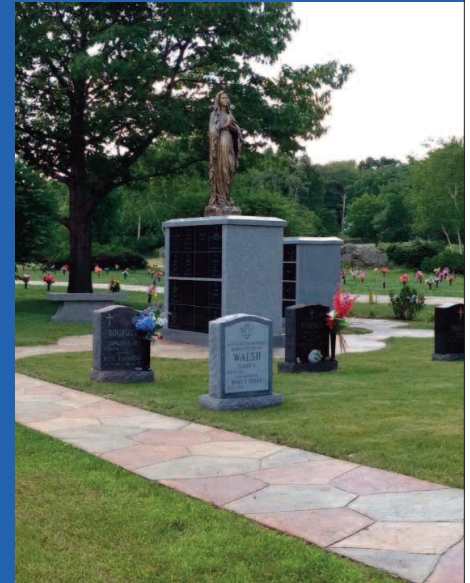
◆ **YOU'RE INVITED** On Nov. 13, the Holy Door at the Cathedral in Manchester will be closed at the 10:30 a.m. Mass. For the dates and times of the closings of Holy Doors throughout the state, visit [catholicnh.org/mercy](http://catholicnh.org/mercy).



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