

Year of Mercy



## Holy Door at Clonard *A Pilgrim's Guide*



How much I desire that the year to come will be steeped in mercy, so that we can go out to every man and woman, bringing the goodness and tenderness of God!  
**Pope Francis**



## The Holy Door at Clonard

The Holy Door at Clonard was opened on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2015 by Bishop Noel Treanor to mark the Extraordinary Year of Mercy inaugurated by Pope Francis. In order to make more clear the Church's mission to be a witness of Mercy, Pope Francis asked that a Holy Door of Mercy be opened in each Diocese and in other specially designated churches where people gather in devotion.

The Holy Door at Clonard has been decorated with specially commissioned art pieces, designed and created by local father and son artists, Séamus and Séamus Óg Ó Labhradha. Based on the story of the *Prodigal Son*, the painted panels are a contemporary interpretation of forgiveness received and offered. The copper plaques display the insignias of the Redemptorist Congregation and the Year of Mercy, assuring us that *With the Lord there is Mercy and Fullness of Redemption* and instructing us to *Be Merciful like the Father is Merciful*.

### What is the significance of a Holy Door?

For over 700 years the Church has celebrated Holy Years, commemorating special anniversaries or events. A major aspect of a Holy Year has been a pilgrimage to St Peter's in Rome to pass through the Holy Door. Christ identified Himself as the door and the way to salvation. Therefore, to pass through the Holy door is to pass from this world into the presence of God through Christ. It is a moment of conversion, of forgiveness - a chance to start again. In addition, pilgrims can attain a special plenary indulgence for themselves or for loved ones who have died. In this Year of Mercy, the same pilgrimage can be done at Clonard.

### What is an indulgence?

When we sin, we not only break communion with God but also with each other. Even though our sins are forgiven, they have consequences that must also be healed. The church teaches us that during this Year of Mercy, we can gain a plenary indulgence which is full remission of all the pain and suffering that is a consequence of sin. This can be attained for oneself or for someone who has died. Therefore, an indulgence is a bold expression of faith that:

- 1) We are intimately bound together with our loved ones alive or dead in the communion of saints
- 2) We can help each other on our journey to full union with God through prayer and penance for each other. God listens to our prayer for each other and sees our love in our willingness to do penance for each other.



## How to make pilgrimage through the Holy Door at Clonard?

There is a big difference in coming to the door of a house where you are welcomed and one that is slammed in your face. Doors are very significant! Think of the door of your own home on a cold, wet day. The door is the point of change between cold and warmth, between homelessness and security. The church must always be a place of welcome – a door to the God of Mercy who comes to carry us on his shoulders when we are most wounded.

Before you enter through the Holy Door remember that God comes to meet you with the same love as the father of the prodigal son. He doesn't blame you if you have wounds, are sinful, confused, vulnerable, guilty, fearful or feel powerless. His merciful heart rejoices at your sight. Remember, you enter through Christ whose wounds will heal you.

These are the suggested steps for to fulfil the conditions for the pilgrimage:

1. Outside, pray the scripture passage on the first plaque: 'With the Lord there is Mercy and Fullness of Redemption.'
2. Pass through the door as you pray the Confiteor or simply pray: 'Heavenly Father, we have sinned. Save us and Heal us.'
3. Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
4. In the Church, pray 1 Our Father, 1 Hail Mary, 1 Glory be, for the Holy Father's Intentions.
5. Receive Holy Communion within a short period of time.
6. As you leave, pray the scripture passage on the second plaque: 'Be Merciful like the Father is Merciful.'
7. Do a work of mercy such as forgiving someone, visiting a sick person, donating to charity or helping someone in need.

## When will the Holy Door at Clonard be open?

The Pilgrimage through the Holy door will be open anytime confessions are available in the church or Monastery.

**Monday – Wednesday: 9.00am - 7.00pm**  
**Thursday: 9.00am – 9.00pm**  
**Friday – Saturday: 9.00am – 7.00pm**  
**Sunday: Closed**

The Holy Door will not be open for pilgrimage on a Sunday or during mass times as confessions are not



The Church is commissioned to announce the mercy of God, the beating heart of the Gospel, which in its own way must penetrate the heart and mind of every person.





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