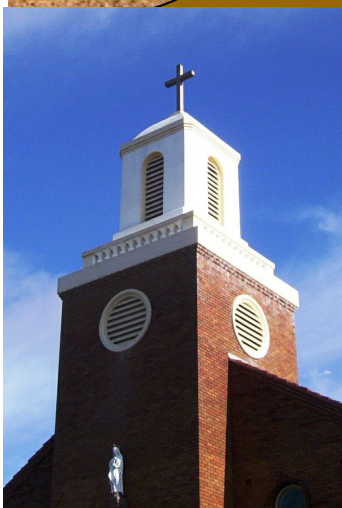
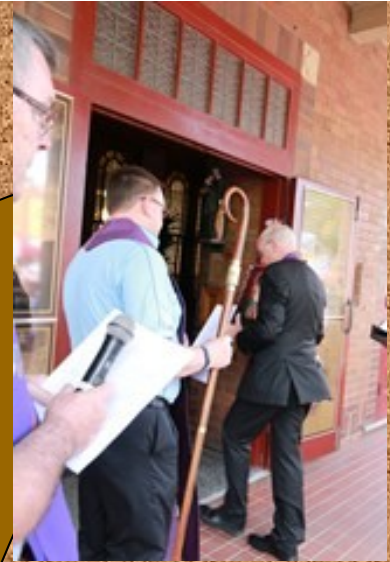
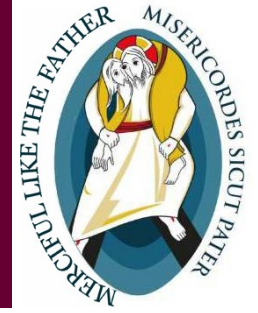


Sunday 24th April 2016
Immaculate Heart of Mary Community, Tighes Hill
Pilgrimage to the Holy Door
at Sacred Heart Cathedral, Hamilton



In his letter declaring the Year of Mercy, Pope Francis said:

*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!
May the balm of mercy reach everyone,
both believers and those far away,
as a sign that the Kingdom of God is already present in our midst!*

Mercy is first of all God's gift to us. We need to appreciate this before we think that God wants us to do anything. Most of all God wants us to know that His Works of Mercy have been, are being and will continue to be given to us. Jesus is the embodiment of God's mercy and in His life we see clearest the Corporal Works of Mercy and Spiritual Works of Mercy. In our lives today Jesus continues to nurture us with His Corporal Works of Mercy and Spiritual Works of Mercy. Regardless of what we do God continues to pour out His love – His mercy. Once we have been caught up in gratitude for God's mercy we may then want to work with God to bring that mercy to others. We would then live the Works of Mercy not because we "should" but because we want others experience the life and freedom that we have received.

Corporal Works of Mercy	Spiritual Works of Mercy
1. Feed the hungry	1. Admonish the sinner
2. Give drink to the thirsty	2. Instruct the ignorant
3. Clothe the naked	3. Counsel the doubtful
4. Shelter the homeless	4. Bear wrongs patiently
5. Visit the sick	5. Forgive offenses willingly
6. Visit the imprisoned	6. Comfort the afflicted
7. Bury the dead	7. Pray for the dead

Luke 6:32-38

If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.

If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners in order to receive back the same amount.



But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil people.

Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

Do not judge, and you will not be judged; and do not condemn, and you will not be condemned; pardon, and you will be pardoned.

Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure—pressed down, shaken together, and running over.

For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return.

1. The faith community of Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Cnr Union St & Tighes Tce, Tighes Hill

Leader:

On our pilgrimage journey from here to our Cathedral's Holy Door we will stop at seven places. Each stop is a place where in our name, the name of Church, works of mercy take place. At each stop we will reflect on one of the Corporal and one of the Spiritual Works of Mercy. When we reflect on the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy we remember that these are primarily God's giving to us and only secondarily our giving to others - in the same way that God is merciful to us.

Our first stop is here – our church.

We call to mind the works of mercy we complete as a community: praying for those in need, welcoming strangers at Mass, hospitality packs for the seafarers, collecting stamps for Josephite Missions, and collecting for Catholic Mission: Children's Mission Partners to name a few. There are also the many works of mercy completed by each of us in our own lives. Sisters Val and Moya have a visible role with their House of Mercy and many of us also bring God's love through our employment, voluntary work, donations and care for those we encounter.



Reader 1

The Corporal Work of Mercy: Give drink to the thirsty. In the prophet Isaiah we hear God say:

*Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.* (Isaiah 55:1)

Reader 2

The Spiritual Work of Mercy: Instruct the ignorant. In the second letter to Timothy we hear God say:

I solemnly urge you to preach the message, to insist upon proclaiming it (whether the time is right or not), to convince, reproach, and encourage, as you teach with all patience. The time will come when people will not listen to sound doctrine, but will follow their own desires and will collect for themselves more and more teachers who will tell them what they are itching to hear. They will turn away from listening to the truth and give their attention to legends. But you must keep control of yourself in all circumstances; endure suffering, do the work of a preacher of the Good News, and perform your whole duty as a servant of God. (2 Timothy 4:1b-5)

Prayer

God of Mercy we thank you for quenching our many thirsts and instructing us in our growth.

Help us to be always open to your mercy at work in our lives.

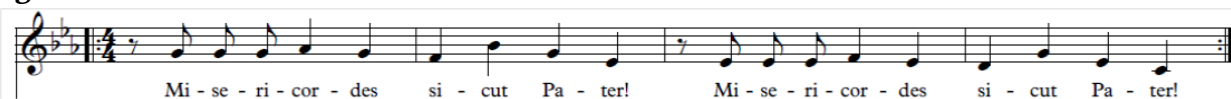
We pray that as you so generously give to us; we may also give to others.

May others experience us as people who quench their thirsty hearts and nurture their development.

We ask this through Jesus, our Lord.

Amen

All sing:



2. Mercy Services, 32 Union St., Tighes Hill

Leader:

Since 1976 Mercy Services has operated from here - the site of our former Parish primary school. Monday to Thursday there is a day centre providing a midday meal, activities and friendship to about 25 people per day. This is also the site for the nurses and other staff who support about 300 elderly and disabled people remain independently living in their own homes. In November each year Mercy Services holds a memorial service to pray for all its clients, volunteers and staff who have died in the previous year.

Reader 1

The Corporal Work of Mercy: Visit the sick. In The Gospel of Matthew we hear God say:

When Jesus came down from the hill, great crowds followed him. Then a man with a skin disease came to Jesus. The man bowed down before him and said, "Lord, you can heal me if you will."

Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man and said, "I will. Be healed!"

And immediately the man was healed from his disease.

(Matthew 8:1-3)



Reader 2

The Spiritual Work of Mercy: Pray for the dead. In the second book of Maccabees we hear God say:

And the day following Judas came with his company, to take away the bodies of them that were slain, and to bury them with their kinsmen, in the sepulchres of their fathers.

And they found under the coats of the slain some of the donaries of the idols of Jamnia, which the law forbiddeth to the Jews: so that all plainly saw, that for this cause they were slain.

Then they all blessed the just judgment of the Lord, who had discovered the things that were hidden.

And so betaking themselves to prayers, they besought him, that the sin which had been committed might be forgotten. But the most valiant Judas exhorted the people to keep themselves from sin, forasmuch as they saw before their eyes what had happened, because of the sins of those that were slain.

And making a gathering, he sent twelve thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection,

And because he considered that they who had fallen asleep with godliness, had great grace laid up for them.

It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins.

(2 Maccabees 39-46)

Prayer

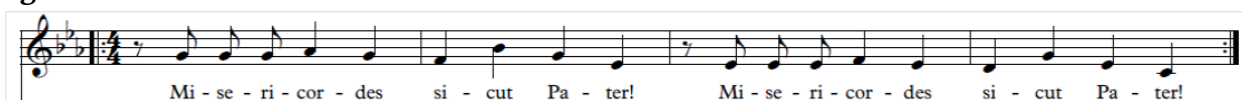
God of Mercy we thank you for visiting us in our sick times and caring for us in our times of grief. Help us to be always open to your mercy at work in our lives.

We pray that as you so generously give to us; we, and Mercy Services, may also give to others.

May others experience us as people who give our time and concern to them when they are feeling sickness or loss. We ask this through Jesus, our Lord.

Amen

All sing:



3. CatholicCare Night Care Van, Islington Park, Maitland Rd, Islington

Leader:

Since 2004, CatholicCare has operated a custom built catering trailer with the purpose of providing food and beverages to people who are homeless, suffering from a mental illness or who are otherwise disadvantaged. This trailer - known as the Night Care Van - currently operates in Islington, every Saturday between 4pm and 7pm. The Night Care Van is supported and staffed by 16 teams of volunteers from around the Diocese and is visited by approximately 100 people each Saturday.



Reader 1

The Corporal Work of Mercy: Feed the hungry. In the Gospel of Matthew we hear God say:

That evening the disciples came to him and said,

“This is a remote place, and it’s already getting late. Send the crowds away so they can go to the villages and buy food for themselves.”

But Jesus said, “That isn’t necessary—you feed them.”

“But we have only five loaves of bread and two fish!” they answered.

“Bring them here,” he said. Then he told the people to sit down on the grass. Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, looked up toward heaven, and blessed them. Then, breaking the loaves into pieces, he gave the bread to the disciples, who distributed it to the people.

(Matthew 14:15-18)

Reader 2

The Spiritual Work of Mercy: Bear wrongs patiently. In the Gospel of Luke we hear God say:

“But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who mistreat you.

If anyone hits you on one cheek, let him hit the other one too; if someone takes your coat, let him have your shirt as well.

Give to everyone who asks you for something, and when someone takes what is yours, do not ask for it back. Do for others just what you want them to do for you.

(Luke 6:27-31)

Prayer

God of Mercy we thank you for the many ways you feed us and for your never ending forgiveness.

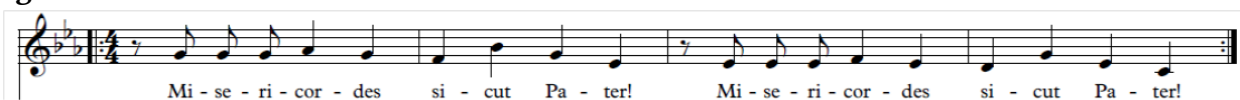
Help us to be always open to your mercy at work in our lives.

We pray that as you so generously give to us; we, and CatholicCare's Night Care Van, may also give to others.

May others experience us as people who give our time and concern to them when they hunger and feel guilt. We ask this through Jesus, our Lord.

Amen

All sing:



4. Society of St Vincent de Paul

Local Conference & Vinnie's shop 125 Maitland Rd, Islington

Leader:

In the early 1830s a French university student by the name of Frédéric Ozanam was moved by compassion to help the poor of Paris. The story goes that he was taunted by an atheist friend who said: *"You are right, Ozanam, when you speak of the past! In former times Christianity worked wonders, but what is it doing for mankind now? And you, who pride yourself on your Catholicity, what are you doing now for the poor? Show us your works"*.



This year the St Vincent de Paul Society celebrated its 150th anniversary of activity in Australia, with over 40,000 members participating in activities such as this shop. From such humble beginnings the Society continues Christ's work of mercy towards the poor in what can only be considered an on-going miracle. Today, despite recent events, we are proud of our Catholic faith, thanks also to organisations like Vinnies.

Reader 1

The Corporal Work of Mercy: Clothe the naked. In the Gospel of Matthew we hear God say:

When the Son of Man comes as King and all the angels with him, he will sit on his royal throne, and the people of all the nations will be gathered before him. Then he will divide them into two groups, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the righteous people at his right and the others at his left.

Then the King will say to the people on his right, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father! Come and possess the kingdom which has been prepared for you ever since the creation of the world. I was hungry and you fed me, thirsty and you gave me a drink; I was a stranger and you received me in your homes, naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you took care of me, in prison and you visited me.'

The righteous will then answer him, 'When, Lord, did we ever see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you a drink? When did we ever see you a stranger and welcome you in our homes, or naked and clothe you? When did we ever see you sick or in prison, and visit you?'

The King will reply, 'I tell you, whenever you did this for one of the least important of these followers of mine, you did it for me!'

(Matthew 25:31-40)

Reader 2

The Spiritual Work of Mercy: Admonish the sinner. In the Gospel of Luke we hear God say:

"Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them—what do you do? You leave the other ninety-nine sheep in the pasture and go looking for the one that got lost until you find it. When you find it, you are so happy that you put it on your shoulders and carry it back home. Then you call your friends and neighbours together and say to them, 'I am so happy I found my lost sheep. Let us celebrate!' In the same way, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine respectable people who do not need to repent.

(Luke 15:4-7)

Prayer

God of Mercy we thank you for the many ways you clothe us and correct us.

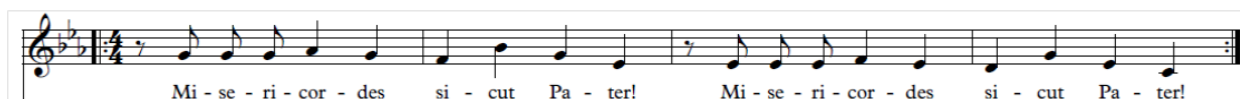
Help us to be always open to your mercy at work in our lives.

We pray that as you so generously give to us; we, and Vinnie's, may also give to others.

May others experience us as people who give our time and concern to them when they are vulnerable and disconnected. We ask this through Jesus, our Lord.

Amen

All sing:



5. Matthew Talbot Hostel, 82 Hannell St Wickham

Leader:

The Matthew Talbot Homeless Service is a work of the Society of St Vincent de Paul. It does not currently provide emergency accommodation at Wickham but does provide outreach support to homeless men across the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie Local Government areas.



Reader 1

The Corporal Work of Mercy: Shelter the homeless. In the prophet Isaiah we hear God say:

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin? Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; (Isaiah 58:6-8a)



Reader 2

The Spiritual Work of Mercy: Forgive offenses willingly. In the Gospel of Luke we hear God say:

“If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. If he sins against you seven times in one day, and each time he comes to you saying, ‘I repent,’ you must forgive him.” (Luke 17:3-4)

Prayer

God of Mercy we thank you for the many ways you shelter us and forgive us.

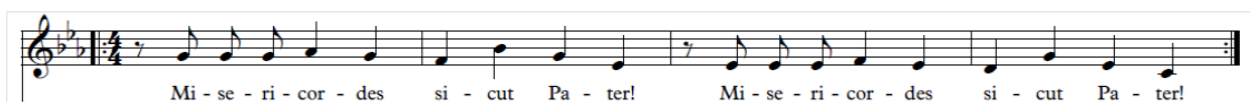
Help us to be always open to your mercy at work in our lives.

We pray that as you so generously give to us; we, and Matthew Talbot Hostel, may also give to others. May others experience us as people who give our time and concern to them when they feel helpless or ashamed.

We ask this through Jesus, our Lord.

Amen

All sing:



6. Mission to Seafarers/Stella Maris, 96 Hannell St Wickham

Leader:

The Anglican Mission to Seafarers and Catholic Stella Maris (Apostleship of the Sea) work together to assist the approximately 40,000 seafarers who annually enter the port of Newcastle. They aim to be a warm, loving “home away from home”. They provide chaplaincy, drive, serve tea and coffee, act as tourist guides, cooks, entertainers and a whole lot more. Most importantly – they generously give of their time, have caring ears to listen and hearts to love.



Reader 1

The Corporal Work of Mercy: Visit the imprisoned. In the Letter to Hebrews we hear God say:

Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.

(Hebrews 13:3)

Reader 2

The Spiritual Work of Mercy: Comfort the afflicted. In the Gospel of Matthew we hear God say:

“Come to me, all of you who are tired from carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke and put it on you, and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in spirit; and you will find rest. For the yoke I will give you is easy, and the load I will put on you is light.”

(Matthew 11:28-30)

Prayer

God of Mercy we thank you for the many ways you come to us and comfort us.

Help us to be always open to your mercy at work in our lives. We pray that as you so generously give to us; we, and Seafarer ministries, may also give to others.

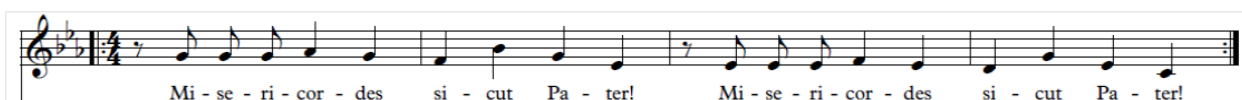
May others experience us as people who give our time and concern to them when they are feeling imprisoned and distressed.

We ask this through Jesus, our Lord.

Amen



All sing:



7. Cathedral precinct: Mercy Pastoral Team (*Mercy Walking Team*), 841 Hunter St., Hamilton

Leader:

Our Parish's Mercy Pastoral Team, popularly known as the walking team, is an outreach group with about two dozen members, who walk in residential areas and visit homes when invited, spending two to four hours each week in the same area. Former active team members take a role by telephoning and praying for people in need.

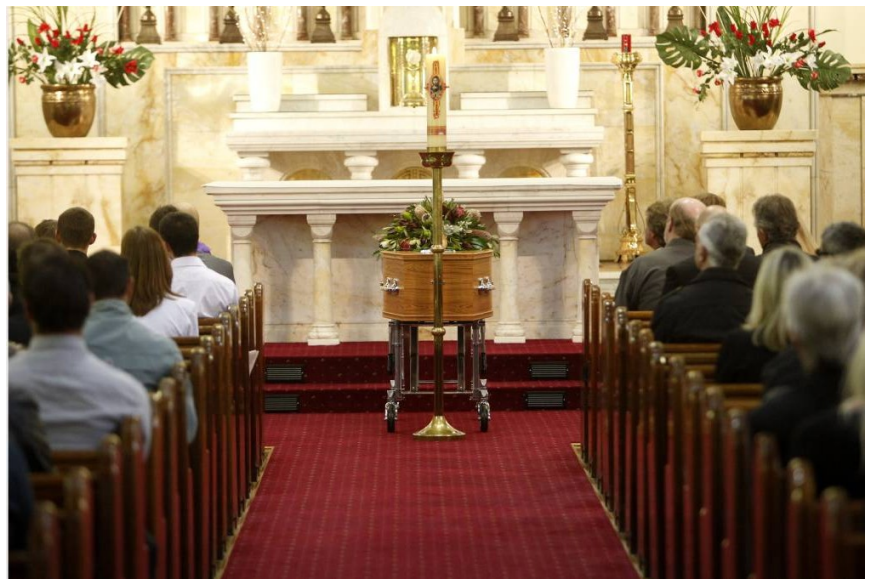


Reader 1

The Corporal Work of Mercy: Bury the dead. In the Book of Tobit we hear God say:

*If they were hungry,
I shared my food with them;
If they needed clothes,
I gave them some of my own.
Whenever I saw that the dead body of
one of my people had been thrown
outside the city wall,
I gave it a decent burial.*

(Tobit 1:17)



Reader 2

The Spiritual Work of Mercy: Counsel the doubtful. In the Gospel of John we hear God say:

*Peace is what I leave with you; it is my own peace that I give you. I do not give it as the world does.
Do not be worried and upset; do not be afraid.*

(John 14:27)

Prayer

God of Mercy we thank you for tenderly caring for us during periods of death in our lives and for strengthening us in our doubts.

Help us to be always open to your mercy at work in our lives.

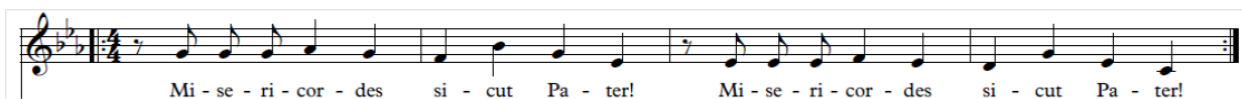
We pray that as you so generously give to us; we, and the Mercy Pastoral Team, may also give to others.

May others experience us as people who give our time and concern to them when they are feeling dead or anxious.

We ask this through Jesus, our Lord.

Amen

All sing:



8. The Holy Door, Sacred Heart Cathedral, 841 Hunter St., Hamilton

Leader:

One of the Church's resources for the Year of Mercy describes the meaning of the Holy Door:

Reader:

A holy door or porta sancta has been used since the fifteenth century as a ritual expression of conversion. Pilgrims and penitents pass through it as a gesture of leaving the past behind and crossing the threshold from sin to grace, from slavery to freedom, and from darkness to light. Often these rituals are associated with prayer, pilgrimage, sacrifice, confession, and indulgences.

But the door finds meaning only when the believer associates the door with Christ. Jesus is the Door! In the words of Pope Francis, "There is only one way that opens wide the entrance into the life of communion with God: this is Jesus, the one and absolute way to salvation. To him alone can the words of the Psalmist be applied in full truth: 'This is the door of the Lord where the just may enter' (Ps 118:20)."

Saint John Paul II offers a similar exhortation: "To focus on the door is to recall the responsibility of every believer to cross its threshold. To pass through that door means to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord; it is to strengthen faith in him in order to live the new life which he has given us. It is a decision which presumes freedom to choose and also the courage to leave something behind, in the knowledge that what is gained is divine life [cf. Mt 13:44-46]" (Saint John Paul II, Incarnationis Mysterium, 8, in the year 2000).

John's gospel clearly depicts this relationship between Jesus and us. "Amen, amen, I say to you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters through me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. A thief comes only to steal and slaughter and destroy; I came so that they might have life, and have it more abundantly" (John 10:7-10).

<http://jubileemercy.org/pdf/PartII-YearOfMercyHolyDoor.pdf>

Leader:

Our pilgrimage has brought us to the Holy Door. In choosing to walk through the door we accept God's invitation to seek Him within our communities of faith.

All pray:

*Jesus, in Baptism we became your own.
Today as we walk through this Holy Door
we ask your mercy for those occasions when
we have failed to speak and act as you would want.
In choosing to walk through this Holy Door
we pledge ourselves anew to be your people.
May this Door of Mercy open us to experience more fully
the love of God who consoles, pardons and instils hope.
Amen*

Leader:

I invite you to enter through the Holy Door.

As we enter the Holy Door Fr Andrew Doohan will sprinkle us with Holy Water to remind us of our baptism which we reaffirm now. In Baptism we are joined to God in Christ. May our pilgrimage today lead us to a deeper awareness of our bond with God that *“we may be merciful as our Father is merciful”*.

Leader:

After entering all are invited to gather at the sanctuary steps to pray together Pope Francis Prayer for the Year of Mercy.

All pray:

Lord Jesus Christ,

*you have taught us to be merciful like the heavenly Father,
and have told us that whoever sees you sees Him.*

Show us your face and we will be saved.

*Your loving gaze freed Zacchaeus and Matthew from being enslaved by money;
the adulteress and Magdalene from seeking happiness only in created things;
made Peter weep after his betrayal,
and assured Paradise to the repentant thief.*

Let us hear, as if addressed to each one of us, the words that you spoke to the Samaritan woman:

“If you knew the gift of God!”

*You are the visible face of the invisible Father,
of the God who manifests his power above all by forgiveness and mercy:
let the Church be your visible face in the world, its Lord risen and glorified.
You willed that your ministers would also be clothed in weakness
in order that they may feel compassion for those in ignorance and error:
let everyone who approaches them feel sought after, loved, and forgiven by God.*

*Send your Spirit and consecrate every one of us with its anointing,
so that the Jubilee of Mercy may be a year of grace from the Lord,
and your Church, with renewed enthusiasm, may bring good news to the poor,
proclaim liberty to captives and the oppressed,
and restore sight to the blind.*

*We ask this through the intercession of Mary, Mother of Mercy,
you who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever.*

Amen.

Pilgrimage stopping points:

1. Immaculate Heart of Mary Church (*street parking*)
2. Mercy Services 32 Union St., Tighes Hill (*car park available*)
3. CatholicCare Night Care Van, Islington Park, Maitland Rd, Islington
4. Vinnie's Local Conference & Vinnie's shop 125 Maitland Rd, Islington (*street parking*)
5. Matthew Talbot Hostel, 82 Hannell St Wickham (*street parking*)
6. Mission to Seafarers/Stella Maris, 96 Hannell St Wickham (*street parking*)
7. Mercy Pastoral Team Cathedral meeting room (*park off Tudor St (former Betta Brakes)*)
8. The Holy Door, Sacred Heart Cathedral, 841 Hunter St., Hamilton

