**OPENING OF THE JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY IN LOCAL CHURCHES**

**Third Sunday of Advent – 13th December 2015**

This is a suggested adaptation that could be used in parishes

*At the beginning of the celebrations, the celebrant makes his way to the closed Door of Mercy*

*Commentator:*  Welcomes the people.

*Acknowledgment to Country:*

We would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land on which we stand, and pay our respects to them and for their care of the land.

  May we all walk hand in hand gently and respectfully upon this land.

*Presider and servers move to the outside of the Door of Mercy and knock loudly and he says:*

*Presider:* Open the gates of justice,

 We shall enter and give thanks to the Lord.

*As the door opens, the presider continues*

*Presider:* This is the Lord’s gate

 let us enter through it

and obtain mercy and forgiveness.

*The priest turns to the people and says:*

*Presider:* In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

*All:* Amen

*He then greets the people with these words:*

Presider: The mercy of the Father,

 the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ,

 and the communion of the Holy Spirit

be with you all.

*All:* And with your spirit.

*He then invites the congregation to bless and praise the Lord (the response can be sung or spoken).*

*Presider:* Glory to you, Father, who forgives our faults

 and heal our infirmities.

*All:* R: Your mercy endures forever  *(sung or spoken)*

*Presider:* Glory to you, Lord, merciful and kind,

slow to anger and abounding in mercy.

*All:* R: Your mercy endures forever *(sung or spoken)*

*Presider:* Glory to you, Lord; you who are a

tender Father toward your children.

*All:* R: Your mercy endures forever *(sung or spoken)*

*Once these invocations are finished, the presider continues with the following prayer*

*Presider:* Let us pray.

 Blessed are you, Lord, holy Father,

 who sent your Son into the world

to gather all men and women,

wounded and scattered by sin,

into one body through the shedding of his blood.

You appointed him both shepherd and gate for the sheep,

so that whoever enters may be saved,

and whoever comes in and goes out

will find pasture for eternal life.

Grant that your faithful may pass through this gate,

and be welcomed into your presence,

so that they may experience, O Father, your abundant mercy.

Through Christ our Lord.

 Cf. Book of Blessings, 1229

*All:* Amen.

*At the conclusion of this prayer, the celebrant introduces the sprinkling rite with these or similar words:*

*Presider:* Dear brothers and sisters, this year of mercy, inaugurated by the Holy Father, invites each of us to a profound experience of grace and reconciliation.

The sprinkling of this holy water is a reminder of our baptism.

It recalls the mercy and salvation we have received

through the power of Christ’s resurrection.

*The celebrant, accompanied by the servers, begins to move toward the altar, sprinkling the people with holy water. During the sprinkling rite a Hymn of Mercy is sung.*

*Hymn: (a suitable hymn of Mercy)*

*The altar is incensed, then presider moves to the chair where he says:*

*Presider:* May almighty God cleanse us of our sins,

 and through the celebration of this Eucharist

 make us worthy to share at the table of his Kingdom.

*All:* Amen.

*The mass continues as usual with the Collect:*

**Final Blessing**

*Presider:* Be merciful, just as your heavenly Father is merciful.

 Go in peace.

*All:* Thanks be to God.