



January 5, 2016

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Pope Francis, in proclaiming the Jubilee Year of Mercy, has urged us to both reflect on the mercy we receive from God, and to bear witness to this mercy in our lives. The Jubilee Year of Mercy began on December 8, 2015, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and will conclude on November 20, 2016, the Solemnity of Christ the King.

Throughout this year, Pope Francis will be leading the Church in a renewed appreciation of mercy in our lives through his teaching and personal witness. I encourage you to keep informed of what he says and does by downloading the *Pope App* on your mobile device.

During this Jubilee Year of Mercy, St. Bernard School, in union with Catholics around the world, will be placing a special emphasis on both receiving and giving mercy. Some ways I would like to invite you to participate in this special year are:

- Receiving of the Sacrament of Reconciliation;
- Learning about Psalms of Mercy (Ps. 25, 41-43, 51, 57, 92, 103, 119, and 136), Parables of Mercy (i.e. *Finding the Lost Sheep and Lost Coin*, Lk. 15:1-10, and *The Merciful Father*, Lk. 15:11-32), and Saints that teach us about God's mercy (i.e. St. Faustina Kowalska, St. Damien de Veuster, St. Martin de Porres, and St. Katherine Drexel);
- Practicing the corporal works of mercy, which (as defined in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*) are to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, shelter the homeless, clothe the naked, visit the sick, visit the prisoners, bury the dead, and give alms to the poor;
- Practicing the spiritual works of mercy, which (as defined in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*) are counseling the doubtful, instructing the ignorant, admonishing the sinner, comforting the sorrowful, forgiving injuries, bearing wrongs patiently, and praying for the living and the dead; and
- Participating in St. Bernard School and Archdiocesan events in celebration of this Jubilee Year, which will be communicated on a regular basis.

In addition to staying informed through the *Pope App* and communications that come from the school, I encourage you to take time to visit the Archdiocese of Hartford website, <http://archdioceseofhartford.org/>, and the Office of Catholic Schools' Jubilee Year of Mercy web page <http://catholicschoolsct.org/resources/jubilee-of-mercy> for videos, prayers, and resources to make your family's celebration of this Jubilee meaningful.

May the merciful gaze of Christ bring you hope and joy as we begin this Jubilee Year!

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