

# Opening the Door of Mercy



Every day, we walk through hundreds of doors, hardly ever recognising that that is what we are doing. Unless, of course, there is a problem! Not being able to open the door when we have arms filled with groceries, when we have stepped outside for a minute and come back to find the door closed and the key is inside, when the door is warped and just won't close properly. But in the everyday of life we walk easily through many doors – doors of wood and glass, doors that are brightly coloured, doors that open automatically, doors that are always open, doors that are security bolted.

Doors are the means by which we move in and out of spaces. Sometimes there are doorkeepers. They can reflect the spirit of the place. Is this a place where we are welcome? Are there conditions on our being in this space? Are we made to feel 'at home'?

In the doors that are part of our lives, what is the spirit of hospitality we offer to those who knock? Are we welcoming and gracious? Is our response to the one who knocks a conditional one? Do we sometimes refuse to open the door? Are we tentative? Does our way of opening our door indicate that the one who knocks is received with welcome and love?

And what about the door to our own hearts? Do we dare to open that door? Can we go inside and sit a while? Are we able to welcome ourselves to this space of grace? Can we be at home with ourselves? Do we come face-to-face with the gratuitous God of mercy who welcomes us unconditionally?

Let us take the opportunity in the week that marks the beginning of the Year of Mercy to ponder our own experience of opening doors of mercy.