

Welcome & Lighting of Pilgrimage Candle

Welcome:

- Welcome to- **the founding house of Catherine**
- Welcome to **-the wellspring of Mercy**
- Welcome to **Baggot Street, the Mercy International Centre**
- Welcome **HOME** for this is truly your home and over the next four days we want you to feel at home and to be at home here.
- There are heart shaped images here in the centre piece with the words ***Homecoming, Welcome Home.***
- So welcome home to Mercy
- And to the homecoming to your own inner spirit

Lighting of Candle

Catherine is here to welcome you. We keep a candle burning continuously at her grave. This morning we have taken this candle in here among us as a symbol of Catherine's presence with us. We will now light our Pilgrimage candle with Catherine's light and invite her to accompany us on the journey of this week.

Pilgrimage

And so we begin the Young Mercy Leaders' Pilgrimage of 2016. Pilgrimage is a very ancient ritual and a very special event in our lives. It is a journey undertaken in the light of a story – in this instance the Mercy story and also our own personal stories. The sandals on this beautiful centrepiece invite us to enter into that story , ready and willing to be led wherever the journey takes us.

Be alert for the surprises, the unexpected on the way. Those skilled in the art of pilgrimage tell us that the it is often in the surprises that the meaning of our pilgrimage is revealed.

Your journal will be a valuable companion to you in harvesting the blessings of this pilgrimage

Year of Mercy

What a privilege it is to be on pilgrimage in this special Jubilee Year of Mercy. In announcing the year Pope Francis said:

May pilgrimage be an impetus to conversion – by crossing the threshold of the Holy Door, we will find the strength to embrace God’s Mercy and to dedicate ourselves to being merciful with others.

In our centre piece we will now symbolically open the Holy Door of Mercy – the replica of the door here in Baggot St., which has been granted the status of a Holy Door for this special year.

In spirit, cross its’ threshold and experience the impetus to deeper immersion in Mercy.

The globe represents our world and underneath it is a fractured heart, reminding us of the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor to us. May this pilgrimage enable us in the words of Pope Francis to dedicate ourselves anew to being merciful with other..

And so let us begin our Pilgrimage. Let us **Gather....**

-Mary Reynolds rsm