

Pope Francis Calls Us To A

# FESTIVAL OF FORGIVENESS

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Pope Francis has described his vision of the Church as a field hospital in the middle of a terribly wounded world. The Church herself is populated by wounded and sinful members, but by God's grace she still serves as an instrument of healing and forgiving mercy.

During Lent 2015, the Church in the Archdiocese of Chicago wants to bring the medicine of mercy not only to the Catholic faithful but also to anyone who stands in need of healing and forgiveness.

## Second Weekend in Lent

Across two days (Friday, February 27 and Saturday, February 28), the Church in Chicago will offer special opportunities for the celebration of the Sacrament of Penance and for prayers of healing. The Catholic faithful, especially those who have been away from the sacraments, are urgently invited to come and share in God's mercy. That second weekend of Lent, Paul's letter to the Romans will be read at every Mass. And we, the Church, will proclaim and embrace his words: "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:11)

## Everyone is Invited

Every human being lives with elements of brokenness. Every human soul knows its fragility. In Chicago, we are more aware than ever of the wounds inflicted on our city and its people by violence, gangs, drugs, domestic abuse, child neglect, economic injustice, and a spirit of mistrust among people of different races, cultures, languages, and ways of life. The city begs for the mercy of God and for healing. And the Catholic Church in Chicago wants to be a field hospital where all people can find the medicine of God's mercy.

## Encounter God's Mercy

This focused time to encounter the mercy of God in our lives is inspired by Pope Francis who called the Church in Rome to a "Festival of Forgiveness," an annual Lenten observance to embrace God's mercy. In the Archdiocese of Chicago, we join our Holy Father and local churches throughout the world in their observance of this graced opportunity.

