

Currently Fr. Dinh is serving as director of the Assumptionist shrine of St. Anne in Sturbridge, Massachusetts (USA). A native of Vietnam, Fr. Dinh was ordained in 2011. Fr. Marc Leroy is currently the pastor of the National Basilica of Sacred Heart of Koekelberg in Brussels (Belgium), designated a Year of Mercy basilica.

The “Missionaries of Mercy” are priests from various parts of the world, recommended by their own bishops and religious superiors, who are to be “living signs of the Father’s readiness to welcome those in search of his pardon” (Misericordiae vultus).

At the invitation of local bishops, the missionaries will be sent to dioceses around the world to preach, lead spiritual retreats, and hear confessions. The missionaries number a little over 1000, with some 100 priests being assigned to the United States.

They received from the Holy Father the authority to pardon “even those sins reserved to the Holy See” (Bull of Indiction, n. 18). These sins include: violation or profanation of the Holy Eucharist; absolution of an accomplice in a sin against the sixth commandment; unauthorized ordination of a bishop, which penalty is incurred by both the ordaining bishop and by the bishop who is ordained; direct violation by a confessor of the seal of confession; and physical violence on the Roman Pontiff.

Citing the letter Pope Francis addressed to him in early September, outlining several points he wished to focus on in Year of Mercy, Archbishop Rino Fisichella, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization, reiterated that the Pope will extend to all priests, for the Jubilee Year, “the discretion to absolve of the sin of abortion those who have procured it and who, with contrite heart, seek forgiveness for it.”

Finally, he underscored that the Missionaries of Mercy “are appointed exclusively by the Holy Father, and that the faculty of forgiving reserved sins will be given to each one of them personally.”

“No bishop in his own diocese may appoint these Missionaries, nor may he confer faculties that he does not possess. Anyone wishing to invite the Missionaries for a liturgy, a retreat, or a special event can do so by accessing the list that will be made available to bishops,” he said.