

Prayer of Pope Francis for the Jubilee Year of Mercy

Lord Jesus Christ, you have taught us to be merciful like the heavenly Father, and have told us that whoever sees you sees Him. Show us your face and we will be saved. Your loving gaze freed Zacchaeus and Matthew from being enslaved by money; the adulteress and Magdalene from seeking happiness only in created things; made Peter weep after his betrayal, and assured Paradise to the repentant thief.

Let us hear, as if addressed to each one of us, the words that you spoke to the Samaritan woman: "If you knew the gift of God!" You are the visible face of the invisible Father, of the God who manifests his power above all by forgiveness and mercy: let the Church be your visible face in the world, its Lord risen and glorified. You willed that your ministers would also be clothed in weakness in order that they may feel compassion for those in ignorance and error: let everyone who approaches them feel sought after, loved, and forgiven by God.

Send your Spirit and consecrate every one of us with its anointing, so that the Jubilee of Mercy may be a year of grace from the Lord, and your Church, with renewed enthusiasm, may bring good news to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives and the oppressed, and restore sight to the blind.

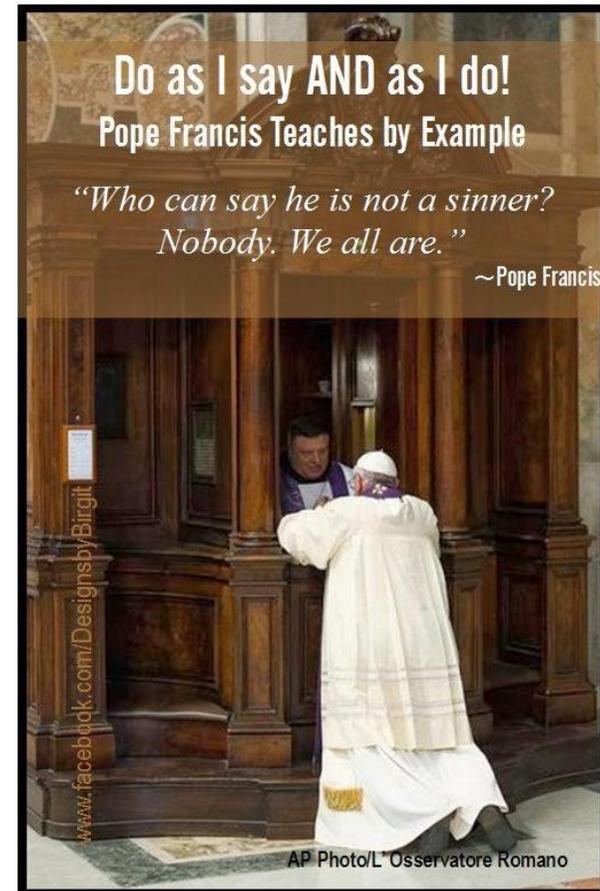
We ask this of you, Lord Jesus, through the intercession of Mary, Mother of Mercy; you who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.



Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Hymn
Period of Prayer and Personal Reflection
Benediction
The Divine Praises
Reposition & Final Hymn

The Sacrament of Confession: Reconciling Ourselves with Our Merciful Father

A Day Conference at St Columba's, Culloden
Saturday 27 February 2016



**Talk 1: What is the Sacrament of Confession,
and why is it so important?**

“God’s mercy is very real and we are all called to experience it firsthand. When I was seventeen years old, it happened one day that, as I was about to go out with friends, I decided to stop into a church first. I met a priest there who inspired great confidence, and I felt the desire to open my heart in Confession. That meeting changed my life! I discovered that when we open our hearts with humility and transparency, we can contemplate God’s mercy in a very concrete way. I felt certain that, in the person of that priest, God was already waiting for me even before I took the step of entering that church. We keep looking for God, but God is there before us, always looking for us, and he finds us first. Maybe one of you feels something weighing on your heart. You are thinking: I did this, I did that.... Do not be afraid! God is waiting for you! God is a Father and he is always waiting for us! It is so wonderful to feel the merciful embrace of the Father in the sacrament of Reconciliation, to discover that the confessional is a place of mercy, and to allow ourselves to be touched by the merciful love of the Lord who always forgives us!”

(Pope Francis, Message for World Youth Day 2016, 15 August 2015)

What is a Sacrament?

Different names:

- Sacrament of Confession (emphasis on the act itself)
- Sacrament of Penance (making amends)
- Sacrament of Reconciliation (healing the rift – restoration of relationship)

Why do we need the Sacrament of Reconciliation?

What is Sin? – Venial and Mortal Sins

History of the Sacrament

“Why do I need to confess my sins to a priest?”

Select Bibliography

- Benedict Baur, *Frequent Confession: Its Place in the Spiritual Life* (Scepter, 1999)
- Paul Farren, *Freedom and Forgiveness: A Fresh Look at the Sacrament of Reconciliation* (Brewster, Massachusetts: Paraclete Press, 2014)
- Vinny Flynn, *7 Secrets of Confession* (Stockbridge, Massachusetts: MercySong, 2013)
- Scott Hahn, *Lord, Have Mercy: The Healing Power of Confession* (New York and London: Doubleday, 2003)
- Robert Morneau, *Reconciliation* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2007)
- Pope Francis, *The Name of God is Mercy* (London: Bluebird, 2016)
- Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia - On Reconciliation and Penance* (1984)
- Pope John Paul II, *Dives in Misericordia – Rich in Mercy* (1980)