

## Quotes from Pope Francis

Since his inauguration in March 2013, Pope Francis has offered us many 'one-liners' on forgiveness and confession. We are drawn in by the catch phrase and then led by him into a deeper reflection on the mercy and compassion of God.

1. *'Jesus in the confessional is not a dry cleaner. Confession is an encounter with Jesus, with this Jesus who waits for us, who waits for us just as we are.'*
2. *'Concreteness, honesty, and the genuine ability to be ashamed of one's mistakes are all qualities needed in order to be open to the forgiveness of God, as well as the deep awareness of his love.'*

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3. *'And we must never tire of going to ask for forgiveness. You may feel ashamed to tell your sins, but as our mothers and our grandmothers used to say, it is better to be red once than yellow a thousand times. We blush once but then our sins are forgiven and we go forward.'*

4. *'I think when the Prodigal son returned home, his father didn't say: 'But you, listen, sit down. 'What did you do with the money?'' No he held a party. Then, maybe, when the son wanted to talk, he talked.'*

## Daily Prayer

Christians have prayed for centuries using prayer words or mantras. You might choose one of the following phrases and repeat it over and over again.

1. *O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you*
2. *Lord, you search me and you know me*
3. *I am a sinner whom the Lord has looked upon*
4. *The truth will set you free*

## Absolution

God, the Father of mercies, through the death and the resurrection of his Son has reconciled the world to himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God give you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

(More resources available on [www.litmus.dublindiocese.ie](http://www.litmus.dublindiocese.ie))

## The Light Is ON For You

### Guide for Confessors



As you prepare to be the servant of God's forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation I hope that the quotes from Scripture and Pope Francis, the prayers and guidelines will help you as you meet those seeking healing and mercy. Through this sacrament you are called to exercise 'the ministry of the Good Shepherd who seeks the lost sheep, of the Good Samaritan who binds up wounds, of the Father who awaits the prodigal son and welcomes him on his return, and of the just and impartial judge whose judgment is both just and merciful.'

(Catechism of the Catholic Church - 1465).

## Preparation

Choose one of these scripture quotations and take some time to let these words find a place in your heart.

***'Come back to me with all your heart'***

*(Joel 2:12)*

***'The Lord is kind and full of compassion'***

*(Psalm 145:8)*

***'God, be merciful to me a sinner'***

*(Luke 18:14)*

***'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you'***

*(Luke 15:18)*

***'Your sins are forgiven'***

*(Luke 7:48)*

## Some Thoughts

Read through this examination of conscience to help focus on *'what you have done'* and *'what you have failed to do'* since your last confession.

I have neglected my relationship with God in prayer

I have made a God of my ambition and my pride

I have spent too little quality time with family and friends

I have spoken unkindly or untruthfully about others

I have been jealous of the gifts of friends and neighbours

I have been unfaithful in honouring my solemn commitments to others

I have passed my neighbours by in their time of need

I have failed to speak up for justice and truth

## More Thoughts

I have been dishonest in my dealings with others

I have held on to grudges and refused apologies

I have not said sorry to those who I know I have hurt

I have encouraged others to be stubborn and heartless

I have been impatient with those who have disabilities

I have been thoughtless in my use of limited resources

I have been careless when using the road

I have taken what does not belong to me

I have been excessive in eating food and drinking alcohol

I have failed to deal with my addictions to alcohol, gambling and the internet

## Guide to Confession for Penitents

- The priest will make the sign of the cross with you, offer you words of welcome and share a short piece of Scripture.
- Then you might like to begin your confession with these words – 'Bless me Father for I have sinned...it has been some time (naming time if possible) since my last confession... these are my sins.
- The priest will offer you words of compassion and encouragement.
- He will propose a penance and invite you to say an act of sorrow or contrition which may be in your own words or following a set prayer.
- The priest will give you absolution and invite you to go in peace.
- Why not spend some quiet time thinking about your experience of confession and of any changes you hope to make in your life .