

Confession "Made Easy"

Pope Francis has wished to place the sacrament of Confession at the center of the Jubilee of Mercy. Many people in the parish of Our Lady Queen of Peace in Dublin, Ireland, have found this simple and clear graphic guide helpful for going to the sacrament of God's mercy.

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Pope Francis *encouraged the Prelate of Opus Dei* to continue

insisting on the importance of the sacrament of confession.

In the parish of Our Lady Queen of Peace in Dublin, entrusted by the diocese to the Prelature of Opus Dei, the pastor Fr. Fergus O'Connor has provided a simple and clear graphic guide for the steps involved in going to confession. On the back are some questions to help each person make a good examination of conscience. Many people have responded positively to this initiative and have used it to go to confession.

Below Fr. Fergus answers some questions about how this idea came about.

**Why did you provide this guide?
Where did the idea come from?**

In June 2012 an International Eucharistic Congress was held in Ireland, at a site very close to our parish. We took advantage of this

event to make some improvements to the church, including the installation of four new confessionals.

We wanted to make them be both pleasant and sound proof, so that hard of hearing people could speak with the priest in a loud voice. One day another priest of Opus Dei suggested drawing up a diagram with the steps for making a good confession. It seemed a great idea to me.

Why is there a need to explain this sacrament?

Many people today have forgotten or never learned how to go to confession. This diagram helps them overcome their fear of the unknown and shows how easy it is to get down on your knees and ask God for forgiveness.

Who has benefitted most from this?

It has been especially useful for young people, those between 15 and 35. Unfortunately, after receiving Confirmation many of them have forgotten about the possibility of going frequently to receive our Lord's merciful embrace. Seeing this guide has been a good spur for them.

So the experience has been positive?

Very much so. Thanks be to God, at Our Lady Queen of Peace many people now go to confession. I think there are several factors for this steady increase each year in the number of confessions. First of all, simply being available. There is always a priest in the confessional 20 minutes before Mass, and he stays there until Mass is over. On Saturdays, a priest is available for several hours.

By word of mouth, people now know it's easy to go to confession here, and

that the priest is happy to accommodate them. Also many people have been encouraged on seeing other faithful leave the confessional with a smile on their face.

And of course, when the Holy Spirit is urging a soul to return to God and receive forgiveness for one's sins, so as to once again have the joy of being close to Christ, seeing this simple and clear guide is a great help.

Along with these guides, on the parish web page we have **other resources** for helping people seek reconciliation with God. Some people have found us simply by googling "Confessions Dublin." They are led to our web page with texts from Pope Francis and Benedict XVI about this sacrament. They are also offered an examination of conscience with specific questions to help them prepare interiorly.

You have several different sets of questions for making an examination of conscience. Why is this the case?

One “size” doesn't fit everyone. We have one for adults, for adolescents and for children.

These questions help people, whether young or old, to consider various points where they may have offended God and caused harm to other people or to themselves.

But the most important thing is contrition: sorrow stemming from love that opens us, in the Church, to God's tender and merciful forgiveness.

High quality copies of the guides for confession can be downloaded ***here***

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