

I CONFESS

Lord have mercy



Origins of this prayer

- ◆ A general confession of sin
- ◆ Preparatory prayer used by the priest just before Mass
- ◆ 12th Century – used by everyone at the beginning of Mass



Preparing ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries

- ◆ When we come into the awesome presence of God we become aware of who we are
- ◆ Sinners in need of God's mercy
- ◆ In the 'I confess' we publicly acknowledge this fact



Owning up

- ◆ In the 'I confess' we admit our own personal responsibility
- ◆ We remind ourselves of the many ways that we sin
- ◆ Thoughts that lead to
- ◆ Words that lead to
- ◆ Deeds
- ◆ What we have done
- ◆ We have failed to do

Closer to the Latin

- ◆ through my fault
- ◆ through my fault
- ◆ through my most grievous fault
- ◆ *mea culpa*
- ◆ *mea culpa*
- ◆ *mea maxima culpa*

This is a ritualised poetic way to emphasise our awareness of sinfulness

It expresses the sincerity of our contrition

Modern blame culture

- ◆ When I say 'I confess' I take responsibility
- ◆ Our modern culture looks for others to blame....
- ◆ Think of examples of this
- ◆ In owning up we realise and acknowledge that we need to change
- ◆ This is the basis of conversion of heart or *metanoia*



Hardness of heart

- ◆ When we refuse to look at ourselves
- ◆ When we do not own up
- ◆ When we think we have done no wrong
- ◆ This is called hardness of heart
- ◆ The opposite of hardness of heart
- ◆ Is humility
- ◆ A word which comes from the same root as *humus* –earthed
- ◆ Humility is about standing in the truth of who I am

A request for prayer

- ◆ It is out of the awareness of our need that we ask
- ◆ God
- ◆ Mary
- ◆ The Angels and Saints

To pray for us to
the Lord our God



Our sin affects
everybody

Words of absolution

- ◆ May almighty God have mercy on us
- ◆ forgive us our sins
- ◆ and bring us to everlasting life.
- ◆ *The priest says these words for all of us and himself*
- ◆ *These words impart the forgiveness of God*
- ◆ *Just as when we pray any act of sorrow*

Origins of 'Lord have mercy'

- ◆ Began as a litany fifteen hundred years ago
- ◆ Everyone would be invited to pray for an intention
- ◆ This could be quite long
- ◆ Developed into
 - ◆ 3 Kyrie eleisons
 - ◆ 3 Christe eleisons
 - ◆ 3 Kyrie eleisons
 - ◆ addressed to the Trinity

Reflection

- ◆ How does this prayer link into your pattern of daily prayer?
- ◆ Why is this a prayer to be used regularly in the season of Lent?
- ◆ How will you feel as you say the new phrases of the revised text?