

The Liturgy of Ash Wednesday

¶ *The Gathering*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The Greeting

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you
and also with you.

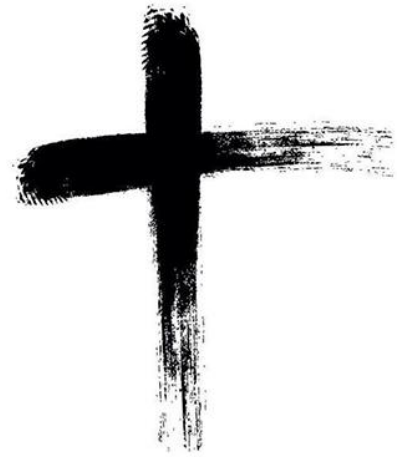
Hymn

Great God, your love has called us here,
as we, by love, for love were made.
Your living likeness still we bear,
though marred, dishonoured, disobeyed.
 We come, with all our heart and mind
 your call to hear, your love to find.

We come with self-inflicted pains
of broken trust and chosen wrong,
half-free, half-bound by inner chains,
by social forces swept along,
 by powers and systems close confined,
 yet seeking hope for humankind.

Great God, in Christ you call our name
and then receive us as your own,
not through some merit, right or claim,
but by your gracious love alone.
 We strain to glimpse your mercy seat
 and find you kneeling at our feet.

Great God, in Christ you set us free
your life to live, your joy to share.
Give us your Spirit's liberty
to turn from guilt and dull despair
 and offer all that faith can do
 while love is making all things new.



Introduction

Brothers and sisters in Christ, since early days Christians have observed with great devotion the time of our Lord's passion and resurrection and prepared for this by a season of penitence and fasting.

By carefully keeping these days, Christians take to heart the call to repentance and the assurance of forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel, and so grow in faith and in devotion to our Lord.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy word.

The Collect

Let us pray for grace to keep Lent faithfully.

Silence is kept.

Holy God,
our lives are laid open before you:
rescue us from the chaos of sin
and through the death of your Son
bring us healing and make us whole
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

¶ *The Liturgy of the Word*

A reading from the prophet Isaiah (58:1-12)

Shout out, do not hold back!

Lift up your voice like a trumpet!
Announce to my people their rebellion,
to the house of Jacob their sins.

Yet day after day they seek me
and delight to know my ways,
as if they were a nation that practised righteousness
and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;
they ask of me righteous judgements,
they delight to draw near to God.
'Why do we fast, but you do not see?

Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?
 Look, you serve your own interest on your fast-day,
 and oppress all your workers.
 Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight
 and to strike with a wicked fist.
 Such fasting as you do today
 will not make your voice heard on high.
 Is such the fast that I choose,
 a day to humble oneself?
 Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush,
 and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?
 Will you call this a fast,
 a day acceptable to the LORD?

Is not this the fast that I choose:
 to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke,
 to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?
 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
 and bring the homeless poor into your house;
 when you see the naked, to cover them,
 and not to hide yourself from your own kin?
 Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
 and your healing shall spring up quickly;
 your vindicator shall go before you,
 the glory of the LORD shall be your rearguard.
 Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;
 you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

If you remove the yoke from among you,
 the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,
 if you offer your food to the hungry
 and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
 then your light shall rise in the darkness
 and your gloom be like the noonday.
 The LORD will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in
 parched places, and make your bones strong;
 and you shall be like a watered garden,
 like a spring of water, whose waters never fail.
 Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
 you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
 you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
 the restorer of streets to live in.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn *Where love and charity are, there is God.*

Ubi caritas et amor
 Ubi caritas
 Deus ibi est

Gospel Reading

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.
 The Lord is a great God, O that today you would listen to his
 voice. Harden not your hearts. *cf Psalm 95.3, 8*

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John
Glory to you, O Lord. (8:1-11)

Jesus went to the mount of Olives. Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him and he sat down and began to teach them. The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery; and making her stand before all of them, they said to him, 'Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?' They said this to test him, so that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, 'Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.' And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders; and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus straightened up and said to her, 'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?' She said, 'No one, sir.' And Jesus said, 'Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Address

¶ *The Liturgy of Penitence*

Let us now call to mind our sin and the infinite mercy of God.
 God the Father,
have mercy on us.

God the Son,
have mercy on us.

God the Holy Spirit,
have mercy on us.

Trinity of love,
have mercy on us.
Most merciful God,
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess that we have sinned
in thought, word and deed.

We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and strength.

We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.

We have not forgiven others, as we have been forgiven.

Lord, have mercy.

We have been deaf to your call to serve, as Christ served us.

We have not been true to the mind of Christ.

We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

Lord, have mercy.

We confess to you, Lord ...

all our past unfaithfulness: the pride, hypocrisy and impatience of our lives.

Lord, have mercy.

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people.

Lord, have mercy.

Our anger at our own frustration

and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves.

Lord, have mercy.

Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts
and our dishonesty in daily life and work.

Lord, have mercy.

Our negligence in prayer and worship
and our failure to commend the faith that is in us.

Lord, have mercy.

Accept our repentance, Lord ...
for the wrongs we have done,
for our blindness to human need and suffering,
and our indifference to injustice and cruelty.

Accept our repentance, Lord.

For all false judgements,
for uncharitable thoughts towards our neighbours
and for our prejudice and contempt towards those who differ
from us.

Accept our repentance, Lord.

For our waste and pollution of your creation
and our lack of concern for those who come after us.

Accept our repentance, Lord.

Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us.

Favourably hear us, for your mercy is great.

Accomplish in us the work of your salvation,
that we may show your glory in the world.

By the cross and passion of your Son our Lord,
**bring us with all your saints to the joy of his
resurrection.**

Silence is kept.

**We have not loved you with our whole heart.
 We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
 In your mercy
 forgive what we have been,
 help us to amend what we are,
 and direct what we shall be;
 that we may do justly,
 love mercy,
 and walk humbly with you, our God.
 Amen.**

Dear friends in Christ, on this day when we are unable to receive in ashes a sign of the spirit of penitence with which we shall keep this season of Lent, I invite you to sign yourself with the sign of the cross as together we acknowledge before God the ways we have failed to live out our baptismal life and as we commit ourselves anew to walk in the ways of Christ .

We remember that we are dust and that to dust we will return. God our Father,
 you call us to penitence and remind us of our mortality;
 for it is by your grace alone that we receive eternal life.
 Strengthen us to turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ.
Amen.

The Lord enrich you with his grace,
 and nourish you with his blessing;
 the Lord defend you in trouble and keep you from all evil;
 the Lord accept your prayers,
 and absolve you from your offences,
 for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Saviour.
Amen.

¶ *The Liturgy of the Sacrament*

The Peace

Since we are justified by faith,
 we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
 who has given us access to his grace.

Romans 5.1,2

The peace of the Lord be always with you
and also with you.

Preparation of the Table

Hymn

We turn to Christ anew
 who hear his call today,
 his way to walk, his will pursue,
 his word obey.

To serve him as our King
 and of his kingdom learn,
 from sin and every evil thing
 to him we turn.

We trust in Christ to save;
 in him new life begins:
 who by his cross a ransom gave
 from all our sins.

Our spirits' strength and stay
 who when all flesh is dust
 will keep us on that final day,
 in him we trust

We would be true to him
 till earthly journeys end,
 whose love no passing years can dim,
 our changeless friend.

May we who bear his name
 our faith and love renew,
 to follow Christ our single aim,
 and find him true.

Words: Timothy Dudley-Smith (b. 1926)

T. LEONI

Risen Lord and Saviour,
 present among us with the wealth of your love,
 cleanse us from sin and give us the faith
 to offer our praise and grow in your grace.

Amen.

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord is here

His spirit is with us.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is indeed right and good
to give you thanks and praise,
almighty God and everlasting Father,
through Jesus Christ your Son.
For in these forty days
you lead us into the desert of repentance
that through a pilgrimage of prayer and discipline
we may grow in grace
and learn to be your people once again.
Through fasting, prayer and acts of service
you bring us back to your generous heart.
Through study of your holy word
you open our eyes to your presence in the world
and free our hands to welcome others
into the radiant splendour of your love.
As we prepare to celebrate the Easter feast
with joyful hearts and minds
we bless you for your mercy
and join with saints and angels
for ever praising you and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

*We recall the Last Supper,
and acclaim the mystery of our faith.*

*Great is the mystery of faith,
**Christ has died:
Christ is risen:
Christ will come again:***

*The prayer continues and leads into the doxology,
to which we respond, **Amen***

The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us,

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

We break the bread of life,
and that life is the light of the world.
**God here among us, light in the midst of us,
bring us to light and life.**

**Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ,
for all the benefits you have given me, for all the pains
and insults you have borne for me.
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,
I ask you to come spiritually into my heart.
O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother,
may I know you more clearly, love you more dearly,
and follow you more nearly, day by day.
Amen.**



Open to God's loving presence around us and within us we keep silence for our own act of spiritual communion.

**Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your disciples,
'I am with you always'.
Be with me today, as I offer myself to you.
Hear my prayers for others and for myself,
and keep me in your care. Amen.**

Prayer after Communion

Merciful Lord, grant your people grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil, and with pure hearts and minds to follow you, the only God; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

**God of our pilgrimage,
you have fed us with your presence.
Refresh and sustain us
as we go forward on our journey,
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Hymn

O for a heart to praise my God,
a heart from sin set free;
a heart that's sprinkled with the blood
so freely shed for me:

A heart resigned, submissive, meek,
my great Redeemer's throne;
where only Christ is heard to speak,
where Jesus reigns alone:

A humble, lowly, contrite heart,
believing, true, and clean,
which neither life nor death can part
from him that dwells within:

A heart in every thought renewed,
and full of love divine;
perfect and right and pure and good —
a copy, Lord, of thine.

Thy nature, gracious Lord, impart,
come quickly from above;
write thy new name upon my heart,
thy new best name of Love.

¶ *The Dismissal*

Blessing

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness,
to deny yourselves, take up your cross, and follow him;
and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the
Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. Amen