



Ash

Wednesday

GREETING

Presider: Let us begin our prayer service this Ash Wednesday as we normally begin with the sign of our faith.

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

All: Amen

Presider: The Grace and peace of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

All: And with your spirit.

PENITENTIAL RITE

Presider: Coming together as God's children, we recognize our sins in God's merciful presence.

Let us now pray together the “Act of Contrition”, which can be found on the insert of our “Gather Hymnals on page #2 and in our “Sunday Word” books on page #3.

All: I confess to almighty God,
and to you my brothers and sisters
that I have greatly sinned,
in my thoughts, and in my words,
in what I have done
and in what I have failed to do,
(striking breast saying)
through my fault, through my fault,
through my most grievous fault;

therefore I ask blessed Mary, ever-Virgin,
all the Angels and Saints,
and you, my brothers and sisters,
To pray for me to the Lord, our God.

Presider: May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins, and bring us
to everlasting life.

All: Amen

OPEN PRAYER

**Presider: God our Father,
 as we begin this holy season of Lent,
 help us to see that your merciful love
 is with us always,
 even when we wander far from you.
 We ask you to change our hearts,
 that we might become better followers
 of your Son Jesus.**

**With the help of your grace,
may our prayers and sacrifices
over the next forty days lead us
to welcome Him in each other,
in the poor, sick and lonely
so that together, we can greet Him
as one family at Easter.
We make this prayer to you in Jesus' name.
Amen.**

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Presider: Let us be attentive to God's Word.

Please be seated.

First Reading: Joel 2:12-18

Even now, says the LORD,
return to me with your whole heart,
with fasting, and weeping, and mourning;
Rend your hearts, not your garments,
and return to the LORD, your God.
For gracious and merciful is he,
slow to anger, rich in kindness,
and relenting in punishment.
Perhaps he will again relent
and leave behind him a blessing,
Offerings and libations
for the LORD, your God.

Blow the trumpet in Zion!
proclaim a fast,
call an assembly;
Gather the people,
notify the congregation;
Assemble the elders,
gather the children
and the infants at the breast;
Let the bridegroom quit his room
and the bride her chamber.
Between the porch and the altar
let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep,
And say, "Spare, O LORD, your people,
and make not your heritage a reproach,
with the nations ruling over them!
Why should they say among the peoples,
'Where is their God?'"

Then the LORD was stirred to concern for his land
and took pity on his people

Responsorial Psalm: 51: 3-4, 5-6ab, 12-13, 14 and 17

Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness;
in the greatness of your compassion wipe out my offense.
Thoroughly wash me from my guilt
and of my sin cleanse me.

Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

For I acknowledge my offense,
and my sin is before me always:
“Against you only have I sinned,
and done what is evil in your sight.”

Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

A clean heart create for me, O God,
and a steadfast spirit renew within me.
Cast me not out from your presence,
and your Holy Spirit take not from me.

Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Give me back the joy of your salvation,
and a willing spirit sustain in me.
O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise

Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

**Second Reading: Paul’s Second Letter to the
Corinthians 5:20-6:2**

Brothers and sisters:
We are ambassadors for Christ,
as if God were appealing through us.
We implore you on behalf of Christ,
be reconciled to God.
For our sake he made him to be sin who did not know sin,
so that we might become the righteousness of God in him.
Working together, then,
we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain.
For he says:

*In an acceptable time I heard you,
and on the day of salvation I helped you.*

Behold, now is a very acceptable time;
behold, now is the day of salvation

Gospel Reading: Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-18

Jesus said to his disciples:
“Take care not to perform righteous deeds
in order that people may see them;
otherwise, you will have no recompense from your heavenly Father.
When you give alms,
do not blow a trumpet before you,
as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets
to win the praise of others.
Amen, I say to you,
they have received their reward.
But when you give alms,
do not let your left hand know what your right is doing,
so that your almsgiving may be secret.
And your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

“When you pray,
do not be like the hypocrites,
who love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on street corners
so that others may see them.
Amen, I say to you,
they have received their reward.
But when you pray, go to your inner room,
close the door, and pray to your Father in secret.
And your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

“When you fast,
do not look gloomy like the hypocrites.
They neglect their appearance,
so that they may appear to others to be fasting.
Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward.
But when you fast,
anoint your head and wash your face,
so that you may not appear to be fasting,
except to your Father who is hidden.
And your Father who sees what is hidden will repay you.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Homily:

BLESSING AND DISTRIBUTION OF ASHES

Presider: As you come forward to receive your ashes, the minister will say a brief prayer as the ashes are placed on your forehead.

We ask that you respond to that prayer by saying AMEN.

We also ask that you please observe a reverent silence during the imposition of ashes and once you have received your ashes, please return to your pew.

Presider: Dear brothers and sisters let us humbly ask God our Father that he be pleased to bless with the abundance of his grace these ashes, which we will put on our heads in penitence.

(After a brief prayer in silence, with hands extended)

**Presider: O God,
who are moved by acts of humility
and respond with forgiveness
to works of penance,
lend your merciful ear to our prayers
and in your kindness
pour out the grace of your + blessing
on your servants who are marked
with these ashes,
that, as they follow the Lenten observances,
they may be worthy to come
with minds made pure
to celebrate the Paschal Mystery of your Son.
Through Christ our Lord.**

All: Amen

**(Sprinkle ashes with holy water;
Places ashes on those assisting you)**

Presider: Repent, and believe in the Gospel.

OR:

**Remember that you are dust, and to dust you
shall return.**

All: Amen

**(After the distribution of ashes, wash hands
and proceeds to the Universal Prayer.)**

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

Presider: Let us pray that the God who calls us to penance and the renewal of life will hear our prayers.

Lector: Our response is: “Lord, hear our prayer”.

Lector: That all the members of the Church take to heart the Lenten work of penance and renewal of life. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Lector: That people and nations at war open their hearts to reconciliation and peace. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Lector: That those alienated from God, family, or friends turn their hearts toward forgiveness and unity. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Lector: That all who are suffering may experience God's healing and relief. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Lector: That those who have died may know eternal peace with God in heaven. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Presider: God of new life,
you hear the prayers of those who turn to you:
keep us faithful during this Lent
so that at Easter we may fully rejoice
in the renewal of life.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen

LORD'S PRAYER

Presider: Let us pray with confidence to the Father in the words our Savior gave us:

All: 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.
Forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
Amen

DISMISSAL

Presider: The Lord be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

Presider: Bow your heads and pray for God's blessing.

**God our Father,
you formed us from the dust of the earth
and brought us to new life in Christ
through the waters of Baptism.**

**We ask you to change our hearts
as we journey through these
forty days of Lent.**

**Help us to see Jesus in everyone we meet,
and to serve him in all persons,
especially the poor, the sick and the lonely.**

**By your grace,
may our prayers and sacrifices this Lent
help us grow closer to each another
and to you,
as one family in Jesus.**

We make this prayer to you in His name.

All: Amen

**Presider: May the blessing of the Almighty God,
The Father,
The Son, +
And the Holy Spirit
Descend upon you this day
And remain with you
Forever**

All: Amen

Presider: Go in the peace of Christ.

All: Thanks be to God