

Ash Wednesday

On this day the liturgy begins as follows:

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us pray.

The community prays in silence; then follows the Collect of the Day.

Almighty and everlasting God,
 you despise nothing you have made
 and forgive the sins of all who are penitent.
 Create and make in us new and contrite hearts,
 that we, worthily lamenting our sins
 and acknowledging our brokenness,
 may obtain of you, the God of all mercy,
 perfect remission and forgiveness;
 through Jesus Christ our Lord,
 who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
 one God, for ever and ever.

Readings *Silence for reflection is observed after each reading.*

Joel 2.1–2, 12–17; 2 Corinthians 5.20b–6.10; Matthew 6.1–6, 16–21

The celebrant then addresses the congregation by saying,

Dear friends in Christ,
 every year at the time of the Christian Passover
 we celebrate our redemption
 through the death and resurrection
 of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 Lent is a time to prepare for this celebration
 and to renew our life in the paschal mystery.
 We begin this holy season
 by remembering our need for repentance,
 and for the mercy and forgiveness
 proclaimed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We begin our journey to Easter with the sign of ashes,
 an ancient sign,
 speaking of the frailty and uncertainty of human life,
 and marking the penitence of the community as a whole.

The celebrant continues,

I invite you therefore, in the name of the Lord,
to observe a holy Lent
by self-examination, penitence, prayer,
fasting, and almsgiving,
and by reading and meditating on the word of God.
Let us kneel before our Creator and Redeemer.

Silence is then kept for reflection.

Psalm 51.1–18 is said. The people repeat the refrain.

***Refrain* Create in me a clean heart, O God.**

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your
loving kindness; *
in your great compassion blot out my offences.
Wash me through and through from my wickedness *
and cleanse me from my sin.

***Refrain* Create in me a clean heart, O God.**

For I know my transgressions, *
and my sin is ever before me.
Against you only have I sinned *
and done what is evil in your sight.

***Refrain* Create in me a clean heart, O God.**

And so you are justified when you speak *
and upright in your judgement.
Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth, *
a sinner from my mother's womb.

***Refrain* Create in me a clean heart, O God.**

For behold, you look for truth deep within me, *
and will make me understand wisdom secretly.
Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure; *
wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.

***Refrain* Create in me a clean heart, O God.**

Make me hear of joy and gladness, *
that the body you have broken may rejoice.
Hide your face from my sins *
and blot out all my iniquities.

***Refrain* Create in me a clean heart, O God.**

Create in me a clean heart, O God, *
 and renew a right spirit within me.
 Cast me not away from your presence *
 and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

Refrain Create in me a clean heart, O God.

Give me the joy of your saving help again *
 and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.
 I shall teach your ways to the wicked, *
 and sinners shall return to you.

Refrain Create in me a clean heart, O God.

Deliver me from death, O God, *
 and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness,
 O God of my salvation.
 Open my lips, O Lord, *
 and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Refrain Create in me a clean heart, O God.

Had you desired it, I would have offered sacrifice, *
 but you take no delight in burnt-offerings.
 The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; *
 a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Refrain Create in me a clean heart, O God.

Litany of Penitence

The celebrant and people say together,

**Most holy and merciful Father,
 we confess to you, to one another,
 and to the whole communion of saints
 in heaven and on earth,
 that we have sinned by our own fault
 in thought, word, and deed;
 by what we have done,
 and by what we have left undone.**

The celebrant continues,

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.

Have mercy on us, Lord.

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.

Have mercy on us, Lord.

We confess to you, Lord, all our past unfaithfulness: the pride,
hypocrisy, and impatience of our lives,

We confess to you, Lord.

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

We confess to you, Lord.

Our anger at our own frustration, and our envy of those more
fortunate than ourselves,

We confess to you, Lord.

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

We confess to you, Lord.

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

We confess to you, Lord.

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 toward our
neighbours, and for our prejudice and contempt toward 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;

Hear us, Lord, for your mercy is great.

If ashes are to be imposed, the celebrant may say the following prayer.

Almighty God,
from the dust of the earth you have created us.
May these ashes be for us a sign
of our mortality and penitence,
and a reminder that only by your gracious gift
are we given eternal life;
through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

Those who desire to receive ashes may apply ashes (or water or simply make the sign of the cross) to their forehead with the following words.

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

After all who desire ashes have received them, the celebrant leads the congregation in the conclusion of the confession, all kneeling.

Accomplish in us, O God,
the work of your salvation,
People **That we may show forth your glory
in the world.**

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

The priest facing the people, says,

Almighty God have mercy on you,
forgive you all your sins
through our Lord Jesus Christ,
strengthen you in all goodness,
and by the power of the Holy Spirit
keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

The Peace

Celebrant The Peace of the Lord be with you.
People And also with you.

Dismissal

Celebrant Go now in peace to love and serve the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.