

A Short Service for Ash Wednesday for use at Home,



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

Introduction

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. You are invited, 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

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.

Readings

*One or more of the following readings may be used:
Joel 2.1–2, 12–17, Isaiah 58.1–12, Psalm 51.1–18
2 Corinthians 5.20b – 6.10, Matthew 6.1–6, 16–21 John 8.1–11*

Self-examination and Confession

Let us now call to mind our sin and the infinite mercy of God.

God the Father, have mercy on me.

God the Son, have mercy on me.

God the Holy Spirit, have mercy on me.

Trinity of love, have mercy on me.

Most merciful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, I confess that I have sinned in thought, word and deed.

I have not loved you with my whole heart, mind, and strength. I have not loved my neighbours as myself. I have not forgiven others, as I have been forgiven.

Lord, have mercy.

I have been deaf to your call to serve, as Christ served me. I have not been true to the mind of Christ. I have grieved your Holy Spirit.

Lord, have mercy.

I confess to you, Lord ...all my past unfaithfulness: my pride, hypocrisy and impatience of my life.

Lord, have mercy.

My self-indulgent appetite and ways, and my exploitation of other people.

Lord, have mercy.

My anger at my own frustration and my envy of those more fortunate than I am.

Lord, have mercy.

My intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts and my dishonesty in daily life and work.

Lord, have mercy.

My negligence in prayer and worship and my failure to commend the faith that is in me.

Lord, have mercy.

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

Accept my repentance, Lord.

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

Accept my repentance, Lord.

For my waste and pollution of your creation and my lack of concern for those who come after me.

Accept my repentance, Lord.

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

Favourably hear me, for your mercy is great.

Accomplish in me the work of your salvation,

that I may show your glory in the world.

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

Silence is kept.

I have not loved you with my whole heart. I have not loved my neighbours as myself. In your mercy forgive what I have been, help me to amend what I am, and direct what I shall be; that I may do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, my God. Amen.

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.

The Dismissal Gospel

Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbours, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who need no repentance.

Luke 15.4-7

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen.

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