

The Liturgy of Ash Wednesday

Enclosed with this service you will find a packet of Blessed Ash - which you will need to mix with a little water - made from last year's Palm Crosses. This service will be on St John's Facebook Page and is given here for your personal use at home.

May I wish you a Holy and reflective Lent.

The Greeting

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with us

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. Holy God, holy and strong, holy and immortal, have mercy upon us.

The Collect

Let us pray for grace to keep Lent faithfully.

Almighty and everlasting God,
you hate nothing that you have made
and forgive the sins of all those who are penitent:
create and make in us new and contrite hearts
that we, worthily lamenting our sins
and acknowledging our wretchedness,
may receive from you, the God of all mercy,
perfect remission and forgiveness;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Reading *Isaiah 58: 1-12*

Gospel Reading *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 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. Our self-indulgent appetites
and ways, and our exploitation of other people. 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.
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.
For all false judgements, for uncharitable thoughts towards our neighbours
and for our prejudice and contempt towards those who differ from us.
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.

The Imposition of Ashes

Dear friends in Christ, you are invited to receive these ashes
as a sign of the spirit of penitence with which we shall keep this season of Lent.

God our Father, you create us from the dust of the earth:
grant that these ashes may be for us a sign of our penitence
and a symbol of our mortality; for it is by your grace alone
that we receive eternal life in Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

*Taking your ashes you are now invited to make the sign of the cross on your forehead
saying:*

I remember that I am but dust, and to dust I shall return.
May I turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ.

God our Father, the strength of all who put their trust in you,
mercifully accept our prayers; and because, in our weakness,
we can do nothing good without you,
grant us the help of your grace,
that in keeping your commandments
we may please you, both in will and deed;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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.

The peace of the Lord be always with you

*We think of our Christian family at St John's and share the peace with them in our
minds.*