

# Ash Wednesday

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 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.

Let us pray for grace to keep Lent faithfully.

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 from scripture*

*A reflection*

*An act of penitence*

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

God the Father  
**have mercy upon us.**

God the Son  
**have mercy upon us.**

God the Holy Spirit  
**have mercy upon us.**

Holy, blessed and glorious Trinity  
**have mercy upon us.**

From all evil and mischief; from pride, vanity and hypocrisy; from envy, hatred and malice; and from all evil intent

**good Lord, deliver us.**

From sloth, worldliness and love of money; from hardness of heart and contempt for your word and your laws,  
**good Lord, deliver us.**

From sins of body and mind; from the deceits of the world, the flesh and the devil

**good Lord, deliver us.**

In all times of sorrow; in all times of joy; in the hour of death, and at the day of judgement

**good Lord, deliver us.**

By the mystery of your holy incarnation; by your birth, childhood and obedience; by your baptism, fasting and temptation  
**good Lord, deliver us.**

By your ministry in word and work; by your mighty acts of power; and by your preaching of the kingdom  
**good Lord, deliver us.**

By your agony and trial; by your cross and passion; and by your precious death and burial  
**good Lord, deliver us.**

By your mighty resurrection; by your glorious ascension; and by your sending of the Holy Spirit  
**good Lord, deliver us.**

Give us true repentance; forgive us our sins of negligence and ignorance and our deliberate sins; and grant us the grace of your Holy Spirit to amend our lives according to your holy word.

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

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

*Turn away from sin  
and be faithful to Christ.*

**As we have received ashes as a sign of our penitence, so we receive this soil as a symbol of our mortality.**

The peace of the Lord  
be always with you.  
**And also with you.**

*Prayers at the Table*

The Lord be with you  
**And also with you.**

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 mind, 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.**

Father, on the night before he died, Jesus shared a meal with his friends. He took the bread, and thanked you. He broke it, and gave it to them, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this to remember me.

After the meal, Jesus took the cup of wine. He thanked you, and gave it to them, saying: Drink this, all of you. This is my blood, the new promise of God's unfailing love. Do this to remember me.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus:

**Dying you destroyed our death,  
rising you restored our life:  
Lord Jesus, come in glory**

Father, as we bring this bread and wine, and remember his death and resurrection, send your Holy Spirit, that we who share these gifts may be fed by Christ's body and his blood. Pour your Spirit on us that we may love one another, work for the healing of the earth, and share the good news of Jesus, as we wait for his coming in glory. For honour and praise belong to you, Father, with Jesus your Son, and the Holy Spirit: one God, for ever and ever.

**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.

*We receive communion*

*Blessing and farewell*

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
**In the name of Christ. Amen.**