

That all who are afflicted or suffering temptation may be strengthened by his grace. Lord, hear us. Lord, graciously hear us.

That all of us may learn to distribute the fruits of self-denial for the good of those in need. Lord, hear us. Lord, graciously hear us.

That those who have died, through the mercy of God, may share in the Resurrection to eternal life. Lord, hear us. Lord, graciously hear us.

Leader: We present all our prayers to the Father using the words our Saviour taught 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, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Concluding Prayer

Leader: Let us pray. May the grace we have received sustain us, O Lord, that our Lenten fast may be pleasing to you and be for us a healing remedy. Through Christ our Lord. All respond: Amen. The leader concludes the rite by signing himself or herself with the Sign of the Cross while saying the following: May almighty God bless us, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. All respond: Amen.

Ash Wednesday

Prayer Service

For use at home



Let today be the
day you give up
who you've been
for you who can
become.

Blessed **Ash Wednesday**

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

All respond: Amen.

Leader: Let us pray. Grant, O Lord, that we may begin with holy fasting this campaign of Christian service, so that, as we take up battle against spiritual evils, we may be armed with weapons of self-restraint. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

All respond: Amen.

Liturgy of the Word First reading Joel 2:12-18 A reading from the prophet Joel 'Now, now – it is the Lord who speaks – come back to me with all your heart, fasting, weeping, mourning.' Let your hearts be broken, not your garments torn, turn to the Lord your God again, for he is all tenderness and compassion, slow to anger, rich in graciousness, and ready to relent. Who knows if he will not turn again, will not relent, will not leave a blessing as he passes, oblation and libation for the Lord your God? Sound the trumpet in Zion! Order a fast, proclaim a solemn assembly, call the people together, summon the community, assemble the elders, gather the children, even the infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his bedroom and the bride her alcove. Between vestibule and altar let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, lament. Let them say, 'Spare your people, Lord! Do not make your heritage a thing of shame, a byword for the nations. Why should it be said among the nations, "Where is their God?"' Then the Lord, jealous on behalf of his land, took pity on his people.
The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm Psalm 50(51):3-6,12-14,17

R. Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness. In your compassion blot out my offence. O wash me more and more from my guilt and cleanse me from my sin. R.

My offences truly I know them; my sin is always before me Against you, you alone, have I sinned; what is evil in your sight I have done. R.

A pure heart create for me, O God, put a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, nor deprive me of your holy spirit. R.

Give me again the joy of your help; with a spirit of fervour sustain me, O Lord, open my lips and my mouth shall declare your praise. R.

Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!
Harden not your hearts today, but listen to the voice of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!

Gospel Matthew 6:1-6,16-18

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Be careful not to parade your good deeds before men to attract their notice; by doing this you will lose all reward from your Father in heaven. So when you give alms, do not have it trumpeted before you; this is what the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win men's admiration. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you give alms, your left hand must not know what your right is doing; your almsgiving must be secret, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you. 'And when you pray, do not imitate the hypocrites: they love to say their prayers standing up in the synagogues and at the street corners for people to see them; I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you pray, go to your private room and, when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in that secret place, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you. 'When you fast do not put on a gloomy look as the hypocrites do: they pull long faces to let men know they are fasting. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that no one will know you are fasting except your Father who sees all that is done in secret; and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

A period of silence may follow the Liturgy of the Word.

Universal Prayer

Leader: We should pour forth prayers at all times, but, above all, in these days of Lent we ought to watch more intently with Christ and direct our petitions more fervently to God.

Reader (or Leader): That in this sacred time the whole Christian people may be more abundantly nourished by every word that comes from the mouth of God. Lord, hear us. Lord, graciously hear us.

That peoples in need may find help and that peace and security may be firmly established everywhere. Lord, hear us. Lord, graciously hear us.

That the world's nations may be delivered from the health pandemic and that our sacrifices at this time may build solidarity with our fellow human beings. Lord, hear us. Lord, graciously hear us.