



St. Luke's Church
Maidenhead

Holy Communion on Ash Wednesday





Introduction to the Season of Lent

In the early church Lent soon became firmly attached to Easter, as the principal occasion for baptism and for return to faith. This explains the characteristic notes of Lent – self-examination, penitence, self-denial, study, and preparation for Easter, to which charitable giving has traditionally been added.

Now is the healing time decreed
for sins of heart and word and deed,
when we in humble fear record
the wrong that we have done the Lord.
(*Latin, before 12th century*)

As the candidates for baptism were instructed in Christian faith, and as lapsed Christians prepared themselves, through fasting and penance, to be readmitted to communion, the whole Christian community was invited to join them in the process of study and repentance, the extension of which over forty days would remind them of the forty days that Jesus spent in the wilderness, being tested by Satan.

Ashes are an ancient sign of penitence. From the middle ages it became the custom to begin Lent by being marked in ash with the sign of the cross, as we will do today.

The calculation of the forty days has varied considerably in Christian history. It is now usual in the West to count them continuously to the end of Holy Week (not including Sundays), so beginning Lent on the sixth Wednesday before Easter, Ash Wednesday.

Liturgical dress is the simplest possible. Churches are kept bare of flowers and decoration. *Gloria in excelsis* is not used.

Today we examine ourselves and come before God committed to spend the next six and a half weeks reflecting on our faith and seeking to grow closer to God.

The Liturgy of Ash Wednesday

¶ The Gathering

A hymn may be sung. We stand.

The president says

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

All **Amen.**

The Greeting

The president greets the people

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

All **and also with you.**

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.

We say the Kyrie

Lord, have mercy.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ, have mercy.

All **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord, have mercy

All **Lord, have mercy.**

The Collect

The president introduces a period of silent prayer with the words

Let us pray for grace to keep Lent faithfully.

Silence is kept.

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.
All Amen.

¶ *The Liturgy of the Word*

Readings

At the end of each the reader says

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

A hymn may be sung

Gospel Reading

This acclamation heralds the Gospel reading

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.
The Lord is a great God,
O that today you would listen to his voice.
Harden not your hearts. *cf Psalm 95.3, 8*

**All Praise to you, O Christ,
King of eternal glory.**

When the Gospel is announced the reader says

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to N

All Glory to you, O Lord.

At the end

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

¶ The Liturgy of Penitence

Self-examination and Confession

A minister now leads a corporate examination of conscience,

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

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

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

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

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

From all evil and mischief;
from pride, vanity, and hypocrisy;
from envy, hatred, and malice;
and from all evil intent,
All **good Lord, deliver us.**

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

From sins of body and mind;
from the deceits of the world, the flesh and
the devil,
All **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,
All **good Lord, deliver us.**

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

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

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

By your mighty resurrection;
by your glorious ascension;
and by your sending of the Holy Spirit,
All **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.
All **Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us.**

Silence is kept.

Make our hearts clean, O God;
All **and renew a right spirit within us.**

All **Lord God,
we have sinned against you;
we have done evil in your sight.
We are sorry and repent.
Have mercy on us according to
your love.
Wash away our wrongdoing and
cleanse us from our sin.
Renew a right spirit within us
and restore to us the joy of your
salvation,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

The Imposition of Ashes

The president says

Dear friends in Christ,
I invite you 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.
All **Amen.**

*If you wish to receive the imposition of ashes
please come and kneel at the altar rail.*

At the imposition these words are used

Remember that you are dust, and to dust
you shall return.
Turn away from sin
and be faithful to Christ.

*During the imposition the choir may
sing an anthem*

The president says

The Lord enrich you with his grace,
and nourish you with his blessing;
the Lord defend you in trouble and keep
you from all evil;
the Lord accept your prayers,
and absolve you from your offences,
for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

All **Amen.**

¶ *The Liturgy of the Sacrament*

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.

All The peace of the Lord be always with you
and also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All may exchange a sign of peace.

Preparation of the Table Taking of the Bread and Wine

*A hymn may be sung
the gifts of the people are gathered and
presented
The table is prepared and bread and wine
are placed upon it.*

The president says

Risen Lord and Saviour,
present among us
with the wealth of your love.
Cleanse us from sin and give us the faith
to offer our praise and grow in your
grace.

All **Amen.**

We remain standing

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord is here.

All **His Spirit is with us.**

Lift up your hearts.

All **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All **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 minds
we bless you for your mercy
and join with saints and angels
for ever praising you and *singing*:

All **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.**

Lord, you are holy indeed, the source
of all holiness;
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit,
and according to your holy will,
these gifts of bread and wine
may be to us the body and blood of our Lord
Jesus Christ;

who, in the same night that he was betrayed,
took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat; this is my body
which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper
he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying:

Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the
forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me.

Jesus Christ is Lord:
All **Lord, by your cross and resurrection
you have set us free.
You are the Saviour of the world.**

And so, Father, calling to mind his death on
the cross,
his perfect sacrifice made once for the sins
of the whole world;
rejoicing in his mighty resurrection and
glorious ascension,
and looking for his coming in glory,
we celebrate this memorial
of our redemption.
As we offer you this our sacrifice of praise
and thanksgiving,
we bring before you this bread and this cup
and we thank you for counting us worthy
to stand in your presence and serve you.

Send the Holy Spirit on your people
and gather into one in your kingdom
all who share this one bread and one cup,
so that we, in the company of all the saints,
may praise and glorify you for ever,
through Jesus Christ our Lord;
by whom, and with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory be yours,
almighty Father,
for ever and ever. **Amen**

The Lord's Prayer

Lord Jesus, remember us in your kingdom
and teach us to pray.

All **Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

The president breaks the consecrated bread.

Every time we eat this bread
and drink this cup

All **we proclaim the Lord's death
until he comes.**

*The Agnus Dei may be sung by the choir
as the bread is broken.*

Giving of Communion

The president says

Jesus is the Lamb of God
who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those
who are called to his supper.

All **Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word,
and I shall be healed.**

All **Most merciful Lord,
your love compels us to come in.
Our hands were unclean,
our hearts were unprepared;
we were not fit
even to eat the crumbs from under
your table.
But you, Lord,
are the God of our salvation,
and share your bread with sinners.
So cleanse and feed us
with the precious body and blood of
your Son,
that he may live in us and we in him;
and that we, with the whole company
of Christ,
may sit and eat in your kingdom.
Amen.**

The president and people receive communion.

*Communicant members of all churches are
welcome to receive communion.*

*If you do not wish to receive communion you are
very welcome to come to altar rail for a blessing.
Please bring this booklet with you to indicate
this.*

These words of distribution are used

The body of Christ, broken for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

and the communicant replies

Amen

During the distribution a hymn may be sung

Prayer after Communion

Silence is kept.

Almighty God,
you have given your only Son to be for us
both a sacrifice for sin
and also an example of godly life.
Give us grace
that we may always most thankfully receive
these his inestimable gifts,
and also daily endeavour
to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

All **God of our pilgrimage,
you have fed us with the bread of heaven.
Refresh and sustain us
as we go forward on our journey,
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

¶ *The Dismissal*

A hymn may be sung.

Responsory

All This is love, not that we loved God,
but that he loved us and sent his Son.
He is the sacrifice for our sins,
All **that we might live through him.**
If God loves us so much
All **we ought to love one another.**
If we love one another
All **God lives in us.** *cf 1 John 4.12*

May God the Father,
who does not despise the broken spirit,
give you a contrite heart.
All **Amen.**

May Christ,
who bore our sins in his body on the tree,
heal you by his wounds.
All **Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit,
who leads us into all truth,
speak to you words of pardon and peace.
All **Amen.**

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
All **Amen.**

Go in the peace of Christ.
All **Thanks be to God.**

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