



Liturgy Cycle A

Ash Wednesday

Introduction

Today we begin the Holy season of Lent. The Church ushers us into this most solemn and holy season, "this acceptable time and the day of salvation", by marking our foreheads with ashes in the form of the cross. "Remember man that you are dust and into dust you will return", says the priest to us. In fact this is the only occasion when the Liturgy addresses the Christian as 'man' as the one who has come from the earth. The Church tells us to remember our original state; we are creatures of dust, of pain and sin. We are made of weak flesh destined to death.

So, today as we begin Lent marked with the sign of the cross, Let us ask ourselves whether we are conscious of our nothingness, of our sinfulness. Lent is a time of penance and renewal. Do we ask for the grace of sorrow for our sins? Are we renewing ourselves through our participation in the sacrifice of Christ?

First Reading (Joel 2:12-18)

From the prophet Joel is a call to repentance, lest a worse thing come upon him. When sinners return to God, Gods attitude towards the sinner changes and in compassion he removes the threatened judgment on humankind.

Second Reading (2 Cor 5:20-6:2)

St. Paul appeals to each one of us to be reconciled to God.

Gospel (Mt 6:1-6, 16-18)

Jesus exhorts us to practice genuine charity, piety, fasting and not to put up an outwardly, external artificial show.

Prayer Of The Faithful

Let us pray that during this Lenten season, we may with a repentant heart come closer to God and change our lives for the better.

R: Lord, grant us a change of heart.



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For the pope and the bishops: that they may sustain the People of God in faith, hope and love

R: Lord, grant us a change of heart.

For all those who exercise authority: that the Lord may watch over them and help them to fulfill their responsibilities worthily and well.

R: Lord, grant us a change of heart.

Let us pray that we may practice deeds of mercy, compassion and understanding not only in our families but also in our communities.

R: Lord, grant us a change of heart.

Let us pray that this lent season may bring about a spiritual renewal not only among Christians only but also our separated brothers and sisters.

R: Lord, grant us a change of heart.

Let Us Pray

Heavenly Father, your door is always open to us; your light is always on for us; your hand is always stretched out towards us. Help us to remember this if we should go astray in life. Help us to return to you confident that you will welcome us, for Jesus your Son told us so. We make all our prayers through the same Christ our Lord. Amen

Communion Reflection

**Lord, you have marked us with ashes,
Put the sign of the cross on our foreheads,
Now, let your light fall on us, our family, our Church.
Make us see that we are nothing but dust and ashes.
May your penetrating rays lay bare our sinfulness and rebellion.
Lord, left to ourselves we are children of death and judgement.
Sin and death have put forth innumerable roots in us.
We are bound, fettered.
We are prisoners of our little selves, of our lust and greed.
Renew in us ever more actively our baptismal death to sin,
Turn our dust into the glory of resurrection.
Thus make us witness to the hope and glory of our faith,
In love, to our brothers and sisters around us, Amen.**

Materials Required

Ashes, (last year palms burnt), Holy Water, Basin, Soap, Jug of Water, Towel.