

ASSEMBLY OF THE WORD

**ASH WEDNESDAY -
YEAR A
2023**

INTRODUCTORY RITES

GATHERING

Stand

Leader: Let us commence
our prayer on this
solemn day with the
words of Scripture:

**All: You are merciful to all,
O Lord, and despise
nothing that you have
made. You overlook
people's sins, to bring
them to repentance,
and you spare them,
for you are the
Lord our God.**

Wisdom 11:24-25,27.

GREETING:

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

All: **Amen.**

Leader: Blessed be God,
who bore our sins in his
body on the cross,
that we might die to sin
and live to righteousness.
Bless the Father and the
Son and the Holy Spirit.

All: **Blessed be God forever.**

WELCOME

Leader: Today, we, the Catholic community of gather to hear the Word, and commence the time of repentance and conversion which the Church calls us to through this celebration of Ash Wednesday and the time of Lent.

Leader: We gather in unity with the Church throughout the world, and with our sisters and brothers in neighbouring wider parish communities, who are also gathering in the Lenten spirit.

PENITENTIAL RITE

Leader: As we prepare to listen to the Word of God, we confess that we are sinners and ask the Lord for pardon and strength.

Leader: Lord Jesus, you came
to reconcile us to one
another and to God:
Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: Lord Jesus, you heal the
wounds of sin and division:
Christ, have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: Lord Jesus, you intercede
for us at the throne of grace:
Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: May almighty God have
mercy on us, forgive us our
sins, and bring us to
everlasting life.

All: Amen.

OPENING PRAYER

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING:

Sit

RESPONSORIAL PSALM:

**Response: Be merciful, O Lord,
for we have sinned.**

SECOND READING

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Stand

**All: Praise to you
Lord Jesus Christ,
king of endless glory!
If today you hear his voice,
harden not your hearts.
Praise to you,
Lord Jesus Christ,
King of endless glory!**

GOSPEL:

Leader: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Leader: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

All: Glory to you, O Lord

At the end of the Gospel

Leader: The Gospel of the Lord.

**All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus
Christ.**

SHARED REFLECTION

Sit

BLESSING AND GIVING OF ASHES

Sit

Leader: Dear friends in Christ,
let us implore God our
Father to bless and
sanctify these ashes,
which we place on our
our heads as a sign of
repentance.

Leader: Lord, you do not wish sinners to die but to turn to you and live. In your goodness hear our prayer: Pour out your blessing on these ashes, which we place on our heads to remind us that we are dust and unto dust we shall return.

Leader: Grant that by our faithful observance of Lent we may gain pardon for our sins and newness of life in the image of your risen Son. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

The ashes are now sprinkled with holy water in silence and the Leaders sign each other with the ashes.

Leader: I now invite you to receive these ashes as a sign of your desire for forgiveness and conversion.

The ashes are now received by all.

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

RITE OF THANKSGIVING *Kneel*

Leader: On this day we
acknowledge our need for
repentance and our desire
to live this Lent well.

Leader: We also realise that God is always with us in our daily lives and for this we should always give thanks.

Let us kneel and offer our praise and thanks to God

Leader: Praise to you,
Father of mercies,
for in Christ's death and
resurrection you have set us
free from sin and offered us
the promise of eternal life.
Your people give you glory:

All: **We praise your name,
O God.**

Leader: Praise to you,
Father of compassion,
you lift those who are bowed
down and give strength to
those who suffer.
You sustain us on this
Lenten pilgrimage.
Your people give you glory:

**All: We praise your name,
O God.**

Leader: Praise to you,
Father of love,
you sent your Son into
the world to be our
Saviour and brother.
In him we are reconciled
into your loving embrace.
Your people give you glory:

**All: We praise your name,
O God.**

Leader: Praise to you, Father of all,
in Christ we hear the
Word of truth,
the Gospel of salvation.
Christ's example of
faithful service is the
pattern for Christian life.
Your people give you glory:

All: **We praise your name,
O God.**

Leader: We glorify you,
O God, for the marvels
of your mercy.
To you be glory and
honour, through Christ,
and in the Holy Spirit,
now and forever.

All: Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Leader: Jesus invites us to call on his Father's name:
Filled with trust in Jesus' power, we stand as we conclude our prayer of thanksgiving in his own words:

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Stand

**All: Our Father, who art in
heaven.....For the
kingdom, the power, and
the glory are yours, now
and forever.**

PRAYER FOR PEACE

CONCLUDING RITE

GREETING

Leader: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

BLESSING

Leader: May God,
who is blessed above all,
bless us in all things
through Christ, so that
whatever happens in our
lives will work together for
our good, now and forever.

All: Amen.

Leader: May almighty God bless
us, the Father, and the
Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit,

All: Amen.

DISMISSAL

Leader: Let us go forth in peace,
to spend this time of Lent
worthily that we might love
and serve the Lord always.

All: Thanks be to God.

FINAL HYMN

Acknowledgements:

Material for the Introductory Rites, Opening and Communion Prayers, Profession of Faith and the Praise Prayer have been taken from or adapted from Sunday Celebration of the Word and Hours, Catholic Conference of Canadian Bishops © Concacan Inc., 1995 and LiturgyHelp www.liturgyhelp.com. All rights reserved. This material is used with permission for the purposes of Sunday Assemblies of Word and Communion in the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat, Victoria, Australia only.

Excerpts from the English translation of the Roman Missal © 2010, International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc. (ICEL). All rights reserved.