



and in your kindness pour out the grace of your ✠ blessing  
on your servants who are marked with these ashes,  
that, as they follow the Lenten observances,  
they may be worthy to come with minds made pure  
to celebrate the Paschal Mystery of your Son.  
Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

Or:

O God, who desire not the death of sinners,  
but their conversion,  
mercifully hear our prayers  
and in your kindness be pleased to bless ✠ these ashes,  
which we intend to receive upon our heads,  
that we, who acknowledge we are but ashes  
and shall return to dust,  
may, through a steadfast observance of Lent,  
gain pardon for sins and newness of life  
after the likeness of your Risen Son.  
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

R. Amen.

He sprinkles the ashes with holy water, without saying anything.

Then the Priest places ashes on the head of all those present who come to him, and says to each one:

Repent, and believe in the Gospel.

Or:

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

Meanwhile, the following are sung:

### Antiphon 1

Let us change our garments to sackcloth and ashes,  
let us fast and weep before the Lord,  
that our God, rich in mercy, might forgive us our sins.

### Antiphon 2

Cf. Jl 2: 17; Est 4: 17

Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord,  
stand between the porch and the altar and weep and cry out:  
Spare, O Lord, spare your people;  
do not close the mouths of those who sing your praise, O Lord.

### Antiphon 3

Ps 51 (50): 3

Blot out my transgressions, O Lord.

(Have mercy on me, O God).

### **Responsory**

**Cf. Bar 3: 2; Ps 79 (78): 9**

**R.** Let us correct our faults which we have committed in ignorance, let us not be taken unawares by the day of our death, looking in vain for leisure to repent. \* Hear us, O Lord, and show us your mercy, for we have sinned against you.

**V.** Help us, O God our Saviour; for the sake of your name, O Lord, set us free. \* Hear us, O Lord . . .

**After the distribution of ashes, the Priest washes his hands and proceeds to the Universal Prayer, and continues the Mass in the usual way.**

**The Creed is not said.**

## **The Liturgy of the Eucharist**

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

As we solemnly offer  
the annual sacrifice for the beginning of Lent,  
we entreat you, O Lord,  
that, through works of penance and charity,  
we may turn away from harmful pleasures  
and, cleansed from our sins, may become worthy  
to celebrate devoutly the Passion of your Son.  
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

### **Communion Antiphon**

**Cf. Ps 1: 2-3**

He who ponders the law of the Lord day and night  
will yield fruit in due season.

### **Prayer after Communion**

May the Sacrament 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.

### **Prayer over the People**

**For the dismissal, the Priest stands facing the people and, extending his hands over them, says this prayer:**

Pour out a spirit of compunction, O God,  
on those who bow before your majesty,  
and by your mercy may they merit the rewards you promise  
to those who do penance.  
Through Christ our Lord.

## SUGGESTED MODIFICATIONS TO REFLECT 150<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

### INTRODUCTION

As we come to Ash Wednesday, we gather, with Christians across the world, to mark the beginning of the season of Lent. God calls us to repentance, to be conscious of our sinfulness and to ask for healing and forgiveness.

This year we acknowledge 150 years of history of the Diocese of Ballarat, so we might reflect on those years in particular, recognising our failures over that time to be the people God called us to be. Individually and collectively we need God's mercy and forgiveness.

In stillness, we come into the presence of the God who is always forgiving, always merciful, always compassionate, always loving. We pause for a few moments of silence.

*After a brief silence, the Priest prays the Collect.*

### BLESSING AND DISTRIBUTION OF ASHES

Brothers and sisters, let us humbly ask our God to bless these ashes, which we will put on our heads in penitence.

As God's people of the Diocese of Ballarat, we acknowledge that we have sinned in what we have done and in what we have failed to do. We ask forgiveness for our failings over the 150 years since the foundation of the Diocese. In this anniversary year we ask for pardon. We pray for a few moments in silence.

*After a brief prayer in silence, and, with hands extended, he continues:*

O God, you are moved by acts of humility and respond with forgiveness to works of penance. Lend your merciful ear to our prayers and in your kindness pour out the grace of your blessing on your servants who are marked with these ashes. Through Christ our Lord.

*R. Amen.*

*He sprinkles the ashes with holy water, without saying anything. Then he places ashes on the head of all those present who come to him, and says to each one:*

*Repent, and believe in the Gospel.*

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

**Priest:** As we begin this season of Lent, let us pray for ourselves and for all the people of this diocese that we may acknowledge our sinfulness, repent and return to God, seeking forgiveness.

**Reader:** We pray that, as individuals and as your people in the Diocese of Ballarat, we may hear your call to return to you, ask for mercy and forgiveness and resolve to be the people you have called us to be. God of mercy, hear us.

**All:** God of mercy, forgive us and hear our prayer.

**Reader:** We pray for our First Peoples, for respect for their culture and values. We pray for healing of injuries they have suffered and for justice and reconciliation. God of mercy, hear us.

**All:** God of mercy, forgive us and hear our prayer.

**Reader:** We pray for children and young people who have suffered abuse. We ask forgiveness for our failure to speak up when we knew things were wrong. We pray for healing for victims, for repentance for wrongdoers, and for humility for those in authority. God of mercy, hear us.

**All:** God of mercy, forgive us and hear our prayer.

**Reader:** We pray that we will become more welcoming and inclusive, more participative and listening. We ask forgiveness for our sins of discrimination and exclusion. We pray that we will be a church capable of sheltering all and embracing all of humanity. God of mercy, hear us.

**All:** God of mercy, forgive us and hear our prayer.

**Reader:** We pray for care for all creation. We ask forgiveness for our sins of exploitation of our common home, for our greed, our carelessness, and our lack of fellowship with all living things. We pray that we might act now for the good of our world today and for future generations. God of mercy, hear us.

**All:** God of mercy, forgive us and hear our prayer.

**Reader:** We pray for justice for all. We ask forgiveness for our sins against justice. We ask for inspiration and courage to work together to build a world where the weak are protected and none go hungry or poor, where wealth is shared by all, and where different races and cultures live in harmony and mutual respect. God of mercy, hear us.

**All:** God of mercy, forgive us and hear our prayer.

**Priest:** God of mercy, as we recognise our historic sinfulness, we pray for strength and humility to turn to you. May we use this time of Lent to grow in truth and harmony in the peace of Christ. We make our prayer in his name.

**All:** Amen.

*Remainder of Mass as usual.*