

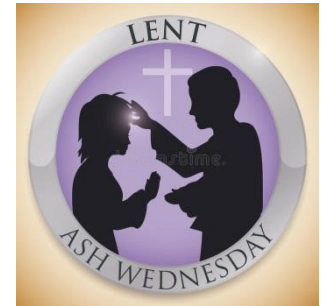


Ash Wednesday Liturgy with Children



Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Season of Lent. During Lent we are asked to try to change, to become better versions of ourselves. We can do this by trying to be more like Jesus.

If you are at home or in school, watch the following YouTube clip to help you to think about what Ash Wednesday means.



An introduction to Ash Wednesday:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=beWSVFNpW0s>

Since Biblical times, ashes have been an outward sign of a person's desire to repent of their sins and return to the Lord. Of course, until fairly recently, ashes would have been in every home as the by-product of their coal or wood fires. In these days of central heating, very few have access to ashes. Under normal circumstances, we would use the ashes from the previous year's palms. This year we need to be more creative as these will not be readily available for numerous reasons.

If you wish to use ashes, perhaps you could use some dried-out earth from your garden, finely ground charcoal- from your barbeque, or you may have access to ashes from someone's fire. Whatever you chose to use, the important thing is that we have the interior desire to **“turn away from sin and believe the Gospel.”**

Have a small dish with the ashes ready, perhaps use a candle, crucifix and a small cloth on a table.



Opening Prayer

God our Father, you guide and direct us on our journey through life.

Be with us as we begin our Lenten journey of faith and love. Help us to grow closer to you during this special holy season. Help us to do your will each day during Lent. We ask this through Christ our Lord.



All: Amen.

First Reading: (Joel 2, 12-14)

A reading from the prophet Joel:

“But even now,” says the Lord, “Repent sincerely and return to me with fasting and weeping and mourning. Let your broken heart show your sorrow; tearing your clothes is not enough. Come back to the Lord your God. He is kind and full of mercy; He is patient and keeps his promise; He is always ready to forgive and not punish.” (pause)

The Word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God.

Gospel: Mark 1: 14-15

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark

Jesus went to Galilee and preached the Good News from God. “The right time has come, he said, and the Kingdom of God is near! Turn away from sin and believe the Good News.”

The Gospel of the Lord

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

DISTRIBUTION OF BLESSED ASHES

Prayer:

May the ashes remind us of God’s invitation to us to repent from sin and to follow him.

The ashes are placed on the crown of the head of each person saying “Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel.”



Once you have sprinkled the ashes on the head of each person, you may wish to use the prayers below.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Lord, we pray that church leaders will show us the way to repentance and reconciliation by their example.

We pray to the Lord.

All: Hear our prayer

Lord, we pray that all God's people will remember their lonely, poor and forgotten brothers and sisters, by sharing their food, money and time with them this Lent and always.

We pray to the Lord.

All: Hear our prayer

Lord, we pray that during this Lent we will try to follow in Jesus' footsteps and grow closer to God.

We pray to the Lord.

All: Hear our prayer

Lord, we pray that our little acts of self-denial will help us to unite with the suffering of others.

We pray to the Lord.

All: Hear our prayer

Lord, we pray that we will grow in concern and care for those in need in our communities.

We pray to the Lord.

All: Hear our prayer

Closing Prayer:

God, source of life, you know our desires and our weakness.

Renew our hearts and our lives that we may live as your people.

Help us to reach out to others and to share your love with all people.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

Let us bless the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

