

ASH WEDNESDAY FAMILY PRAYER SERVICE AT HOME

17 February 2021

*To prepare a table with a crucifix, bible, lighted candle and ashes**

**You may use your old palms or collect any dried leaves to burn for ashes to be prepared before the service. To keep in mind that the ashes prepared from home does not bear any sacramental value. We prepare the ashes to remind ourselves that although we are unable to participate in the actual rituals as handed down by Mother Church, we desire to unite ourselves by an act of faith to begin our Lenten journey.*

The entrance antiphon is said together or a suitable hymn.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON *Wis 11: 24, 25, 27*

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.

All make the Sign of the Cross:

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

LEADER: Bless the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

All: Blessed be God for ever.

L: As we are unable to participate in the Eucharistic Celebration
of Ash Wednesday
let us reflect on the word and pray together
so as to unite ourselves with the faithful throughout the world.

The Penitential Act is omitted. (pause for a moment of silence). The leader continues...

Let us pray: Grant, O Lord, that we may begin with holy fasting
this campaign of Christian service,
so that, as we take up battle against spiritual evils,
we may be armed with weapons of self-restraint.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD *(You may choose to only proclaim the Gospel)*

First reading

Joel 2:12-18 ·

'Now, now – it is the Lord who speaks –
come back to me with all your heart,
fasting, weeping, mourning.'
Let your hearts be broken, not your garments torn,
turn to the Lord your God again,
for he is all tenderness and compassion,
slow to anger, rich in graciousness,

and ready to relent.
Who knows if he will not turn again, will not relent,
will not leave a blessing as he passes,
oblation and libation
for the Lord your God?

Sound the trumpet in Zion!
Order a fast,
proclaim a solemn assembly,
call the people together,
summon the community,
assemble the elders,
gather the children,
even the infants at the breast.
Let the bridegroom leave his bedroom
and the bride her alcove.
Between vestibule and altar let the priests,
the ministers of the Lord, lament.
Let them say,
'Spare your people, Lord!
Do not make your heritage a thing of shame,
a byword for the nations.
Why should it be said among the nations,
"Where is their God?"'

Then the Lord, jealous on behalf of his land,
took pity on his people.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 50:3-6,12-14,17

Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.
In your compassion blot out my offence.
O wash me more and more from my guilt
and cleanse me from my sin.

Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.

My offences truly I know them;
my sin is always before me
Against you, you alone, have I sinned;
what is evil in your sight I have done.

Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.

A pure heart create for me, O God,
put a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from your presence,
nor deprive me of your holy spirit.

Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Give me again the joy of your help;
with a spirit of fervour sustain me,
O Lord, open my lips
and my mouth shall declare your praise.

Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Second reading

2 Corinthians 5:20-6:2

We are ambassadors for Christ; it is as though God were appealing through us, and the appeal that we make in Christ's name is: be reconciled to God. For our sake God made the sinless one into sin, so that in him we might become the goodness of God. As his fellow workers, we beg you once again not to neglect the grace of God that you have received. For he says: At the favourable time, I have listened to you; on the day of salvation I came to your help. Well, now is the favourable time; this is the day of salvation.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Ps50:12,14

Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!
A pure heart create for me, O God,
and give me again the joy of your help.
Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!

Gospel

Matthew 6:1-6,16-18

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Be careful not to parade your good deeds before men to attract their notice; by doing this you will lose all reward from your Father in heaven. So, when you give alms, do not have it trumpeted before you; this is what the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win men's admiration. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you give alms, your left hand must not know what your right is doing; your almsgiving must be secret, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.

'And when you pray, do not imitate the hypocrites: they love to say their prayers standing up in the synagogues and at the street corners for people to see them; I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you pray, go to your private room and, when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in that secret place, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.

'When you fast do not put on a gloomy look as the hypocrites do: they pull long faces to let men know they are fasting. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head

and wash your face, so that no one will know you are fasting except your Father who sees all that is done in secret; and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ

A brief sharing by one member of the family or a brief silence for recollection.

DISTRIBUTION OF ASHES - AN ACT OF FAITH

L: O God, who desire not the death of sinners,
but their conversion,
mercifully hear the prayers of your servants
who with an act of faith
place these ashes upon our heads,
and as we follow the Lenten observances,
we may be worthy to come with minds made pure
to celebrate the Paschal Mystery of your Son.
Through Christ our Lord

A: Amen.

*Then the ashes are placed (sprinkled) on the head with an act of faith while saying:
Repent, and believe in the Gospel. Or*

A pure heart create for me O God, put a steadfast Spirit within me.

(With an act of faith one can impose the ashes on oneself and use the suggested formula. It is also an act of faith when we dip our fingers in holy water and sign ourselves with the sign of the cross.)

After the distribution of ashes to continue with the Prayer of the Faithful.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

After an introduction by the leader, petitions are offered in the following order:

L: Let us pray for the needs of the Church and the world. Lord, Hear Us.
All: Lord, graciously hear us.

For the Church: That those in authority will seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in leading her faithful to a meaningful and spiritual journey during Lent.

For those in public office: That they will uphold their office with dignity and defend to promote justice and peace in the world.

For the sick and marginalized: That they will find comfort and consolation in the Lord.

For All Those Suffering from the COVID-19: That they will abandon all their fears and anxieties, and be comforted knowing that You will provide for their every circumstance.

For ourselves: That we will have the will to change our lives and those around us through corporal and spiritual works of mercy

(These are examples; you may prepare your own petitions)

The Leader concludes the Prayer of the Faithful with an invitation to the Lord's Prayer.

OUR FATHER

At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

We conclude the family service with:

All: Pour out a spirit of compunction on your servants, O God,
that our Lenten fast may be pleasing to you
and be for us a healing remedy.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

L: May the Lord bless us, may he keep us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life.

All: Amen.

L: Let us praise the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

CLOSING HYMN: LORD! WHO THROUGHOUT THESE 40 DAYS *(Or any suitable hymn may be sung.)*

Lord! Who throughout these forty days,
For us didst fast and pray,
Teach us with Thee to mourn our sins,
And close by Thee to stay.

As Thou with Satan didst contend,
And didst the victory win,
Oh, give us strength in Thee to fight,
In Thee to conquer sin.

As Thou didst hunger bear and thirst,
So, teach us, gracious Lord,
To die to self, and chiefly live
By Thy most holy Word.

And through these days of penitence,
And through Thy Passion-tide,
Yea, evermore, in life and death,
Jesu! with us abide.

Abide with us, that so, this life
Of suffering overpast,
An Easter of unending joy
We may attain at last!