

**SERVICE FOR ASH WEDNESDAY**  
**THE BEGINNING OF LENT**  
**with Holy Communion Two**

**The Gathering of God's People**

The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit: a broken and contrite heart you will not despise.

*Psalm 51: 17*

**Lord, have mercy.**

*In these or other suitable words, the presiding minister explains the meaning of Lent and invite the people to observe it faithfully*

Brothers and sisters in Christ: since early days Christians have observed with great devotion the time of our Lord's passion and resurrection. It became the custom of the Church to prepare for this by a season of penitence and fasting.

At first this season of Lent was observed by those who were preparing for baptism at Easter and by those who were to be restored to the Church's fellowship from which they had been separated through sin. In course of time the Church came to recognize that, by a careful keeping of these days, all Christians might take to heart the call to repentance and the assurance of forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel, and so grow in faith and in devotion to our Lord.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Lord to observe a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy word.

**THE COLLECT**

*Silence may be kept.*

*Then the priest says*

Let us pray for grace to keep Lent faithfully.

**Almighty and everlasting God**

**you hate nothing that you have made**

**and forgive the sins of all those who are penitent.**

**Create and make in us new and contrite hearts,**

that we may be truly sorry for our sins  
and obtain from you, the God of all mercy,  
perfect remission and forgiveness;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Proclaiming and Receiving the Word

#### THE FIRST READING

*Joel 2: 1-2,12-17 or Isaiah 58: 1-12*

*At the end the reader may say*

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

#### THE PSALM

*Psalm 51: 1-18*

- 1 Have mercy on me, O God, in | your great | goodness; ■  
according to the abundance of your compassion |  
blot out | my of|fences.
2. Wash me thoroughly | from my | wickedness ■  
and | cleanse me | from my | sin.
- 3 For I ac|knowledge my | faults ■  
and my | sin is | ever be|fore me.
- 4 Against you only | have I | sinned ■  
and done what is | evil | in your | sight,
- 5† So that you are justified | in your | sentence ■  
and | righteous | in your | judgment.
- 6 I have been wicked even | from my | birth, ■  
a sinner | when my | mother con|ceived me.
7. Behold, you desire truth | deep with|in me ■  
and shall make me understand wisdom  
| in the | depths of my | heart.
- 8 Purge me with hyssop and I | shall be | clean; ■  
wash me and I | shall be | whiter than | snow.
- 9 Make me hear of | joy and | gladness, ■  
that the bones you have | broken | may re|joice.
10. Turn your | face from my | sins ■  
and | blot out | all my mis|deeds.
- 11 Make me a clean | heart, O | God, ■

- and re|new a right | spirit with|in me.
12. Cast me not a|way from your | presence ■  
and take not your | holy | spirit | from me.
- 13 Give me again the joy of | your sal|vation ■  
and sustain me | with your | gracious | spirit;
- 14†Then shall I teach your | ways • to the | wicked ■  
and sinners | shall re|turn to | you.
- 15 Deliver me from my guilt, O God,  
the God of | my sal|vation, ■  
and my | tongue shall | sing of your | righteousness.
16. O Lord, | open my | lips ■  
and my | mouth shall pro|claim your | praise.
- 17 For you desire no sacrifice, | else • I would | give it; ■  
you take no de|light in | burnt | offerings.
- 18 The sacrifice of God is a | broken | spirit; ■  
a broken and contrite heart, O God, | you will | not des|pise.

**THE SECOND READING**  
*2 Corinthians 5: 20b - 6:10*

*At the end the reader may say*

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**CANTICLE**  
*Saviour of the World*  
*or a hymn may be sung*

- 1 Jesus, Saviour of the world,  
come to us | in your | mercy: ■  
we look to | you to | save and | help us.
- 2 By your cross and your life laid down  
you set your | people | free: ■  
we look to | you to | save and | help us.
- 3 When they were ready to perish you | saved • your dis|ciples: ■  
we look to | you to | come to • our | help.
- 4 In the greatness of your mercy, loose us | from our | chains, ■  
forgive the | sins of | all your | people.

- 5† Make yourself known as our Saviour and | mighty • De|liverer; ■  
save and | help us • that | we may | praise you.
- 6 Come now and dwell with us | Lord Christ | Jesus:■  
hear our | prayer • and be | with us | always.
- 7 And when you | come in • your | glory:■  
make us to be one with you  
and to share the life of your | kingdom. | A|men.

*Stand*

THE GOSPEL  
*Matthew 6: 1-6 and 16-21*

*When the Gospel is announced the reader says*

Hear the Gospel of our Saviour Christ according to Saint Matthew  
chapter 6 beginning at verse 1

**Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

*and concludes with*

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

THE SERMON

## **The Liturgy of Penitence**

*The presiding minister says*

Let us now call to mind our sin and the infinite mercy of God.

THE COMMANDMENTS

Hear these commandments which God has given to his people, and  
take them to heart:

I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD: YOU SHALL HAVE NO OTHER GODS BUT ME.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul,  
and with all your mind and with all your strength. *Matthew 22: 37*

YOU SHALL NOT MAKE FOR YOURSELF ANY IDOL.

God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and in  
truth. *John 4: 24*

YOU SHALL NOT DISHONOUR THE NAME OF THE LORD YOUR GOD.

You shall worship him with reverence and awe. *Hebrews 12: 28*

REMEMBER THE LORD'S DAY, AND KEEP IT HOLY.

Christ is risen from the dead: set your mind on things that are above,  
not on things that are on the earth. *Colossians 3: 1,2*

**Lord, have mercy on us,  
and write these your laws in our hearts.**

HONOUR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER.

Live as servants of God, honour all people, love your brothers and sisters  
in Christ. *1 Peter 2: 16*

YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER.

Be reconciled to your brother and sister: overcome evil with good.  
*Matthew 5: 24, Romans 12: 21*

YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.

Know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. *1 Corinthians 6: 19*

YOU SHALL NOT STEAL.

Be honest in all that you do and care for those in need. *Ephesians 4: 28*

YOU SHALL NOT BE A FALSE WITNESS.

Let everyone speak the truth. *Ephesians 4: 25*

YOU SHALL NOT COVET ANYTHING WHICH BELONGS TO YOUR NEIGHBOUR.

Remember the words of the Lord Jesus: It is more blessed to give than  
to receive. Love your neighbour as yourself, for love is the fulfilling of  
the law. *Acts 20: 35, Romans 13: 9,10*

**Lord, have mercy on us,  
and write all these your laws in our hearts.**

1

God the Father, creator of heaven and earth,  
**have mercy on us.**

God the Son, Redeemer of the world,  
**have mercy on us.**

God the Holy Spirit, giver of life,  
**have mercy on us..**

Holy, blessed and glorious Trinity, three Persons in one God,  
**have mercy on us.**

2

Save us, good Lord, from all sin and wickedness, from pride, hypocrisy  
and conceit, from envy, hatred and malice, and all uncharitableness,  
**save us, good Lord.**

From sins of thought, word and deed, from the lusts of the flesh, from  
the deceits of the world and the snares of the devil,  
**save us, good Lord.**

From fire, storm and flood, from disease, pestilence and want, from war  
and murder, and from dying unprepared,  
**save us, good Lord.**

From all false doctrine, from hardness of heart, from contempt of your  
word and commandment, and from the evil of schism.  
**save us, good Lord.**

In times of sorrow and in times of joy, in the hour of death, and in the  
day of judgment,  
**save us, good Lord.**

3

Save us, Lord Christ, by the mystery of your holy incarnation, by your  
birth, childhood and obedience, by your baptism, fasting and tempta-  
tion,  
**save us, Lord Christ.**

By your ministry in word and work, by your mighty acts of power, and  
by your preaching of the kingdom,  
**save us, Lord Christ.**

By your agony and trial, by your cross and passion, and by your precious death and burial,  
**save us, Lord Christ.**

By your mighty resurrection, by your glorious ascension, and by your sending of the Holy Spirit,  
**save us, Lord Christ.**

**Section 4 of the Litany may be omitted. If required it is to be found in The Litany Two pages 176-178**

Saviour of the world, forgive our sins, known and unknown, things done, and left undone; grant us the grace of your Holy Spirit that we may amend our lives according to your holy word, and share with all your people the joys of your eternal kingdom.

Jesus, Lamb of God,  
**have mercy on us.**

Jesus, bearer of our sins,  
**have mercy on us.**

Jesus, Redeemer of the world,  
**give us your peace.**

*Silence is kept for a time, after which is said*

Make our hearts clean, O God,  
**and renew a right spirit within us.**

**Father eternal, giver of light and grace,  
we have sinned against you and against our neighbour,  
in what we have thought, in what we have said and done,  
through ignorance, through weakness,  
through our own deliberate fault.**

**We have wounded your love, and marred your image in us.**

**We are sorry and ashamed, and repent of all our sins.**

**For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, who died for us,  
forgive us all that is past;**

**and lead us out from darkness to walk as children of light. Amen.**

*This prayer is said:*

God our Father,  
the strength of all who put their trust in you,  
mercifully accept our prayers;  
and because, in our weakness,  
we can do nothing good without you,  
grant us the help of your grace,  
that in keeping your commandments  
we may please you, both in will and deed;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*or*

*The priest pronounces the Absolution.*

Almighty God,  
who forgives all who truly repent,  
have mercy upon you  
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,  
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness  
and keep you in life eternal;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*This prayer may be said in place of the Prayer of Humble Access.*

**Most merciful Lord,**  
**your love compels us to come in.**  
**Our hands were unclean,**  
**our hearts were unprepared;**  
**we were not fit even to eat the crumbs from under your table.**  
**But you, Lord, are the God of our salvation,**  
**and share your bread with sinners.**  
**So cleanse and feed us with the precious body and blood of your**  
**Son,**  
**that he may live in us and we in him;**  
**and that we, with the whole company of Christ,**  
**may sit and eat in your kingdom. Amen.**



## THE PEACE

Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

*Romans 5: 12*

The peace of the Lord be always with you  
**and also with you.**

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

## Celebrating at the Lord's Table

### AT THE PREPARATION OF THE TABLE

*The bread and wine shall be placed on the table for the communion if this has not already been done, and one of the following may be said:*

Merciful Father,  
turn us from sin to faithfulness  
and from disobedience to love,  
and prepare us to celebrate  
the death and resurrection of Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

Risen Lord and saviour,  
present among us with the wealth of your love.  
Cleans us from sin and give us the faith  
to offer our praise and grow in your grace. **Amen.**  
who is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

### THE TAKING OF THE BREAD AND WINE

*Stand*

*The bishop or priest who presides takes the bread and wine and may say*

Christ our passover has been sacrificed for us  
**therefore let us celebrate the feast.**

Prayer 1

The Lord is here.

**His Spirit is with us.**

*or*

The Lord be with you

**and also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Father, almighty and everliving God,

at all times and in all places

it is right to give you thanks and praise:

Through Jesus Christ our Lord,

who was in every way tempted as we are, yet did not sin;

by whose grace we are able to overcome all our temptations:

And so with all your people,

with angels and archangels,

and with all the company of heaven,

we proclaim your great and glorious name,

for ever praising you and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,**

**God of power and might,**

**heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

Blessed are you, Father,

the creator and sustainer of all things;

you made us in your own image,

male and female you created us;

even when we turned away from you,

you never ceased to care for us,

but in your love and mercy you freed us from the slavery of sin,  
giving your only begotten Son to become man  
and suffer death on the cross to redeem us:  
he made there the one complete and all-sufficient sacrifice  
for the sins of the whole world:  
he instituted,  
and in his holy Gospel commanded us to continue,  
a perpetual memory of his precious death  
until he comes again.

On the night that he was betrayed he took bread;  
and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it,  
and gave it to his disciples, saying, Take, eat,  
this is my body which is given for you.  
Do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper he took the cup;  
and when he had given thanks to you,  
he gave it to them, saying, Drink this, all of you,  
for this is my blood of the new covenant  
which is shed for you and for many  
for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it,  
in remembrance of me.

Therefore, Father, with this bread and this cup  
we do as Christ your Son commanded:  
**we remember his passion and death,**  
**we celebrate his resurrection and ascension,**  
**and we look for the coming of his kingdom.**

Accept through him, our great high priest,  
this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving;  
and as we eat and drink these holy gifts,  
grant by the power of the life-giving Spirit  
that we may be made one in your holy Church  
and partakers of the body and blood of your Son,  
that he may dwell in us and we in him:

Through the same Jesus Christ our Lord,  
by whom, and with whom, and in whom,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
**all honour and glory are yours, Almighty Father,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

## Prayer 2

The Lord is here.  
**His Spirit is with us.**

*or*

The Lord be with you  
**and also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.  
**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

All glory and honour, thanks and praise  
be given to you at all times and in all places,  
Lord, holy Father, true and living God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

For he is your eternal Word  
through whom you have created all things from the beginning  
and formed us in your own image.

In your great love you gave him  
to be made man for us and to share our common life.

He was tempted in every way as we are,  
yet he did not sin;  
and he gives us strength to control our desires,  
and to walk in his way of love.

In obedience to your will  
your Son our Saviour offered himself as a perfect sacrifice,  
and died on the cross for our redemption.

Through him you have freed us from the slavery of sin  
and reconciled us to yourself, our God and Father.

He is our great high priest  
whom you raised from death  
and exalted to your right hand on high  
where he ever lives to intercede for us.

Through him you have sent upon us  
your holy and life-giving Spirit  
and made us a royal priesthood  
called to serve you for ever.

Therefore with angels and archangels  
and with all the company of heaven  
we proclaim your great and glorious name,  
for ever praising you and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

Merciful Father, we thank you  
for these gifts of your creation, this bread and this wine,  
and we pray that we who eat and drink them  
in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
in obedience to our Saviour Christ  
in remembrance of his death and passion  
may be partakers of his body and his blood,  
who on the night he was betrayed took bread;  
and when he had given you thanks  
he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying,  
Take, eat. This is my body which is given for you;  
Do this in remembrance of me.

After supper, he took the cup,  
and again giving you thanks  
he gave it to his disciples, saying,  
Drink from this, all of you.

This is my blood of the new covenant  
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

Father, with this bread and this cup,  
we do as our Saviour has commanded:  
we celebrate the redemption he has won for us;  
we proclaim his perfect sacrifice,  
made once for all upon the cross,  
his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension;  
and we look for his coming  
to fulfil all things according to your will.

**Christ has died;**

**Christ is risen;**

**Christ will come again.**

Renew us by your Holy Spirit,  
unite us in the body of your Son,  
and bring us with all your people  
into the joy of your eternal kingdom;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
with whom and in whom,  
by the power of the Holy Spirit,  
we worship you, Father almighty,  
in songs of never-ending praise:

**Blessing and honour and glory and power  
are yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

### Prayer 3

The Lord is here.

**His Spirit is with us.**

*or*

The Lord be with you  
**and also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Father, Lord of all creation,  
we praise you for your goodness and your love.

When we turned away you did not reject us.  
You came to meet us in your Son,  
welcomed us as your children  
and prepared a table where we might feast with you.

In Christ you shared our life  
that we might live in him and he in us.  
**He opened wide his arms upon the cross  
and, with love stronger than death,  
he made the perfect sacrifice for sin.**

Lord Jesus Christ, our redeemer,  
on the night before you died  
you came to table with your friends.  
Taking bread, you gave thanks, broke it  
and gave it to them saying,  
Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you;  
do this in remembrance of me.

**Lord Jesus, we bless you:  
you are the bread of life.**

At the end of supper  
you took the cup of wine, gave thanks, and said,  
Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant,  
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins;  
do this in remembrance of me.

**Lord Jesus, we bless you:  
you are the true vine.**

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ:  
**dying, you destroyed our death,  
rising, you restored our life;  
Lord Jesus, come in glory.**

Holy Spirit, giver of life,  
come upon us now;  
may this bread and wine be to us  
the body and blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

**As we eat and drink these holy gifts  
make us, who know our need of grace,  
one in Christ, our risen Lord.**

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Blessed Trinity:  
with your whole Church throughout the world  
we offer you this sacrifice of thanks and praise  
and lift our voice to join the song of heaven,  
for ever praising you and saying:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord**

**God of power and might.**

**Heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

Thanks be to you, our God, for your gift beyond words.

**Amen. Amen. Amen.**



THE LORD'S PRAYER

As our Saviour Christ has taught us, so we pray

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours  
now and for ever. Amen.**

*or*

As our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are bold to say

**Our Father, who art in heaven.....**

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

*The presiding minister (who may be assisted by the deacon) breaks the consecrated bread in preparation for the Communion.*

The bread which we break  
is a sharing in the body of Christ.

**We being many are one body,  
for we all share in the one bread.**

AGNUS DEI

**Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.  
Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.  
Jesus, Redeemer of the world, grant us peace.**

*or*

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, grant us peace.**

THE COMMUNION

*The presiding minister says*

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ which he gave for you,  
and his blood which he shed for you.

Remember that he died for you,  
and feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

*or*

Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God,  
who has taken away the sin of the world.

Happy are those who are called to his supper.

**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,  
but only say the word and I shall be healed.**

*The presiding minister and people receive communion.*

#### THE GREAT SILENCE

*When all have received communion, the presiding minister, other ministers and people keep silence for reflection.*

### Going Out as God's People

*The following prayer is said after which the service may conclude in silence, the congregation leaving the church quietly*

#### THE POSTCOMMUNION PRAYER

Lord our God,

grant us grace to desire you with our whole heart;

that so desiring, we may seek and find you;

and so finding, may love you;

and so loving, may hate those sins from which you have delivered us;

through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*This prayer, blessing and dismissal may be used if desired:*

**Almighty God,**  
we thank you for feeding us  
with the spiritual food  
of the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.  
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies  
to be a living sacrifice.  
Send us out in the power of your Spirit  
to live and work to your praise and glory. **Amen.**

**BLESSING**

May God the Father,  
who does not despise the broken spirit,  
give to you a contrite heart. **Amen.**  
May Christ,  
who bore our sins in his body on the tree,  
heal you by his wounds. **Amen.**  
May the Holy Spirit,  
who leads us into all truth,  
speak to you words of pardon and peace. **Amen.**  
And the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
be with you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

*or*

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness,  
to deny yourselves,  
and to take up your cross and follow him;  
and the blessing of God Almighty,  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
be with you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord  
in the name of **Christ. Amen.**

*This service may be adapted to meet local custom.*

Copyright acknowledgement :

This working out of the service on pages 338-343 is copyright: © 2004 The Representative Body of the Church of Ireland

Some material included in this service from Times and Seasons is copyright: © The Archbishops' Council 2006