



## THE LITURGY OF ASH WEDNESDAY

WEDNESDAY 17 FEBRUARY 2021 AT 6PM

*Tonight's Liturgy marks the beginning of an exciting, rather than gloom-ridden, Lenten journey. The theme of penitence runs throughout the service, but of equal importance is God's promise of forgiveness. Whilst Lent is a moment for significant reflection and searching of the soul, and for embarking on a period of self-discipline, it is a gift that we can use in our relationship with God both individually and also as members of the Body of Christ.*

*The Lay Clerks of the Cathedral Choir sings the Eucharist to the 'Plainsong Mass for Mean' by John Sheppard.*



*For reasons of safeguarding and copyright, sound, video or photographic recording of this service is not permitted*



*Kneel or remain seated as the Choir and Ministers enter in silence to stand at the west end of the choir.*

## PREPARATION

*President* I will go to the altar of God.

*All* **Even to the God of my joy and gladness.**

Give judgement for me, O God, and defend my cause against an ungodly people: deliver me from the deceitful and the wicked.

*All* **For you are the God of my refuge;  
why have you cast me from you,  
and why go I so heavily,  
while the enemy oppresses me?**

O send out your light and your truth, that they may lead me: and bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling.

*All* **That I may go to the altar of God,  
to the God of my joy and gladness;  
and on the lyre I will give thanks to you,  
O God my God.**

Why are you so full of heaviness, O my soul, and why are you so disquieted within me?

*All* **O put your trust in God, for I will yet give him thanks,  
who is the help of my countenance and my God.**

I will go to the altar of God.

*All* **Even to the God of my joy and gladness.**

*All* **Almighty God,  
to whom all hearts are open,  
all desires known,  
and from whom no secrets are hidden:  
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,  
that we may perfectly love you,  
and worthily magnify your holy name;  
through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.**

# THE GATHERING

HYMN

Tune: *Down Ampney*



**Come down, O love divine,  
seek thou this soul of mine,  
and visit it with thine own ardour glowing;  
O comforter, draw near,  
within my heart appear,  
and kindle it, thy holy flame bestowing.**

**O let it freely burn,  
till earthly passions turn  
to dust and ashes in its heat consuming;  
and let thy glorious light  
shine ever on my sight,  
and clothe me round, the while my path illuming.**

**Let holy charity  
mine outward vesture be,  
and lowliness become mine inner clothing:  
true lowliness of heart,  
which takes the humbler part,  
and o'er its own shortcomings weeps with loathing.**

**And so the yearning strong,  
with which the soul will long,  
shall far outpass the power of human telling;  
for none can guess its grace,  
till he become the place  
wherein the Holy Spirit makes his dwelling.**

*Words: Bianco da Siena tr. Richard Littledale*

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

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

*The President introduces the season of Lent and invites the people to observe it faithfully.*

*President* Brothers and sisters in Christ: since early days Christians have observed with great devotion the time of our Lord's passion and resurrection and prepared for this by a season of penitence and fasting.

By carefully keeping these days, Christians 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 Church, to the observance of 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 choir sings Kyrie Eleison.*

## THE COLLECT

*The President says 'Let us pray for grace to keep Lent faithfully'.*

*The congregation stands in silent prayer, and the President says the Collect:*

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, worthily lamenting our sins  
and acknowledging our wretchedness,  
may receive from you, the God of all mercy,  
perfect remission and forgiveness;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

*All* **Amen.**

## THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

*Sit*

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

We are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says, 'At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you.' See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labours, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honour and dishonour, in ill repute and good repute.

We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

*At the end*

*Reader* For the word of the Lord

*All* **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 51. 1-17

# THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The choir sings the following, and the congregation responds:



Praise to you O Christ, King of e - ter - nal Glo - ry.

The choir sings: 'The Lord is a great God! O that today you would listen to his voice. Harden not your hearts.' All sing again 'Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory.'

## THE GOSPEL READING: Matthew 6.1-6, 16-21

At the beginning

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

Deacon Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

Choir



Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

At the end

Deacon This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Choir



Praise to you, O Christ.

All sing again 'Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory.'

Sit

THE HOMILY     *The Dean*

## THE LITURGY OF PENANCE

### LITANY

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

*Kneel*

*Cantor*     God the Father,  
*All sing*     **have mercy on us.**     (*On one note, with the choir*)

*Cantor*     God the Son,  
*All sing*     **have mercy on us.**

*Cantor*     God the Holy Spirit,  
*All sing*     **have mercy on us.**

*Cantor*     Holy, blessed and glorious Trinity,  
*All sing*     **have mercy on us.**

*Cantor*     From all evil and mischief;  
from pride, vanity and hypocrisy;  
from envy, hatred and malice;  
and from all evil intent,

*All sing*       
Good     Lord,     de - liv -     er us.

*Cantor*     From sloth, worldliness and love of money;  
from hardness of heart  
and contempt for your word and your laws,  
*All*     **Good Lord, deliver us.**

*Cantor*     From the sins of body and mind;  
from the deceits of the world, the flesh, and the devil,  
*All*     **Good Lord, deliver us.**

*Cantor*     In all times of sorrow; in all times of joy;  
in the hour of death,  
and at the day of judgement,

*All*     **Good Lord, deliver us.**

*Cantor*     By the mystery of your holy incarnation;

*All* by your birth, childhood and obedience;  
by your baptism, fasting, and temptation,  
**Good Lord, deliver us.**

*Cantor* By your ministry in word and work;  
by your mighty acts of power;  
and by your preaching of the kingdom,  
*All* **Good Lord, deliver us.**

*Cantor* By your agony and trial; by your cross and passion;  
and by your precious death and burial,  
*All* **Good Lord, deliver us.**

*Cantor* By your mighty resurrection;  
by your glorious ascension;  
and by your sending of the Holy Spirit,  
*All* **Good Lord, deliver us.**

*Cantor* Give us true repentance;  
forgive us our sins of negligence and ignorance  
and our deliberate sins;  
and grant us the grace of your Holy Spirit  
to amend our lives according to your holy word.

*Choir* **Holy God,  
Holy and strong,  
Holy and immortal,  
Have mercy on us.**

SILENCE

## CONFESSION

*President* Make our hearts clean, O God:  
*All* **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 from darkness  
to walk as children of light.  
Amen.**

## THE BLESSING OF THE ASHES

*President* Dear friends in Christ, as a sign of the spirit of penitence with which we shall keep this season of Lent, it is customary to receive on your head in ash the sign of the cross, the symbol of our salvation.

*President* God our Father,  
you create us from the dust of the earth:  
grant that these ashes may be for us †  
a sign of our penitence and a symbol of our mortality;  
for it is by your grace alone  
that we receive eternal life  
in Jesus Christ our Saviour.  
*All* **Amen.**

## THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES

*The President says*

Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.  
Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ.

*During the imposition of ashes the choir sings 'Ne irascaris, Domine by William Byrd.*

Ne irascaris, Domine, satis  
et ne ultra memineris iniquitatis nostrae.  
Ecce, respice, populus tuus omnes nos.

Be not angry, O Lord, still,  
neither remember our iniquity for ever.  
Behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all thy people.

*Words: Isaiah 64: 9*

## THE ABSOLUTION

*President* The Lord enrich you with his grace,  
and nourish you with his blessing;  
the Lord defend you in trouble and keep you from all evil;  
the Lord accept your prayers,  
and absolve you from your offences,  
for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

*All* **Amen.**

## THE LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT

*Stand*

### THE PEACE

*President* Since we are justified by faith,  
we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who has given us access to his grace.

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

*As the altar is prepared with bread and wine, the choir sings Civitas sancti tui by  
William Byrd*

Civitas sancti tui facta est deserta.  
Sion deserta facta est, Jerusalem desolata est.

The holy cities are a wilderness.  
Zion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation.

*Words: Isaiah 46. 10*

### PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

*President* Merciful Father,  
turn us from sin to faithfulness,  
from disobedience to love,  
and prepare us to celebrate  
the death and resurrection of Christ our Saviour  
who is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

*All* **Amen.**

### THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

*President* The Lord be with you.

*All* **And also with you.**

*President* Lift up your hearts.

*All* **We lift them to the Lord.**

*President* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

*President* It is indeed right and good  
to give you thanks and praise,  
almighty God and everlasting Father,  
through Jesus Christ your Son.

For in these forty days  
you lead us into the desert of repentance  
that through a pilgrimage of prayer and discipline  
we may grow in grace  
and learn to be your people once again.  
Through fasting, prayer and acts of service  
you bring us back to your generous heart.  
Through study of your holy word  
you open our eyes to your presence in the world  
and free our hands to welcome others  
into the radiant splendour of your love.  
As we prepare to celebrate the Easter feast  
with joyful hearts and minds  
we bless you for your mercy  
and join with saints and angels  
for ever praising you and singing:

*The choir sings Sanctus and Benedictus.*

All glory be to you, our heavenly Father,  
who, in your tender mercy,  
gave your only Son our Saviour Jesus Christ  
to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption;

who made there by his one oblation of himself once offered  
a full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation  
and satisfaction 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.

Hear us, merciful Father, we humbly pray,  
and grant that, by the power of your Holy Spirit,  
we receiving these gifts of your creation,  
this bread and this wine,  
according to your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution,

in remembrance of his death and passion,  
may be partakers of his most blessed body and blood;

who, in the same night that he was betrayed,  
took bread and gave 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.

In the same way, after supper  
he took the cup and gave you thanks;  
he gave it to them, saying:  
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, as often as you drink it,  
in remembrance of me.

*Deacon*  
*All*

Great is the mystery of faith.  
**Christ has died:**  
**Christ is risen:**  
**Christ will come again.**

Therefore, Lord and heavenly Father,  
in remembrance of the precious death and passion,  
the mighty resurrection and glorious ascension  
of your dear Son Jesus Christ,  
we offer you through him  
this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

Grant that by his merits and death,  
and through faith in his blood,  
we and all your Church may receive forgiveness of our sins  
and all other benefits of his passion.  
Although we are unworthy, through our manifold sins,  
to offer you any sacrifice,  
yet we pray that you will accept this  
the duty and service that we owe.



## THE POST COMMUNION PRAYERS

*President* Lord our God,  
grant us 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.

*All* **Amen.**

*All* **God of our pilgrimage  
you have fed us with the bread of heaven.  
Refresh and sustain us  
as we go forward on our journey  
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.**

*Stand*  
HYMN

*Tune: Cwm Rhondda*



*All* **Guide me, O thou great Redeemer,  
pilgrim though this barren land;  
I am weak, but thou art mighty;  
hold me with thy powerful hand;  
Bread of heaven,  
feed me till I want no more.**

Open now the crystal fountain,  
whence the healing stream doth flow;  
let the fire and cloudy pillar  
lead me all my journey through;  
strong Deliverer,  
be thou still my Strength and Shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,  
bid my anxious fears subside;  
death of death and hell's destruction,  
land me safe on Canaan's side;  
songs of praises,  
I will ever give to thee.

Words: William Williams

## THE DISMISSAL

### THE SOLEMN BLESSING

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

May God the Father,  
who does not despise the broken spirit,  
give to you a contrite heart.  
*All* **Amen.**

May Christ,  
who bore our sins in his body on the tree,  
heal you by his wounds.  
*All* **Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit,  
who leads us into all truth,  
speak to you words of pardon and peace.  
*All* **Amen.**

And the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.  
*All* **Amen.**

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

## ORGAN VOLUNTARY

*Prelude in B minor BWV 544 – J.S. Bach*

*If you would like to give online, you can do so [here](#)*