

A candle may be lit and silence is kept.

OPENING PRAYER

God of our days and years,
we set this time apart for you.
Form us in the likeness of Christ
so that our lives may glorify you. **Amen.**

INTRODUCTION TO LENT

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.

Therefore, each of us are invited, 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.

PSALM 130

Out of the depths I have called to you, Lord.

Let your ears be open to hear my voice.

My hope is in God's word.

If you recorded all our sins who could come before you?

My hope is in God's word.

There is forgiveness with you:

therefore you shall be feared.

My hope is in God's word.

My soul is longing for the Lord,

more than those who watch for daybreak.

My hope is in God's word.

O Israel, wait for the Lord,

for with the Lord there is mercy.

My hope is in God's word.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

My hope is in God's word.

The Bible readings for Ash Wednesday

Isaiah 58:1-12 *True (and false) Worship and Fasting*

2 Corinthians 5:20b – 6:10 *Be reconciled to God, so that we can hold firm in faith, in the midst of troubles, hardships and distresses*

John 8:1-11 *Jesus teaches about sin and forgiveness*

REFLECTION *(followed by a short time of silence)*

PENITENCE, CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Our Lord Jesus Christ said: The first commandment is this:

'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.'

The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

**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.**

Compassion and forgiveness belong to the Lord our God, though we have rebelled against him. Let us then renounce our wilfulness and ask his mercy by confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

Wash away all my iniquity
and cleanse me from my sin.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Against you, you only have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight.

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

May God who loved the world so much
that he sent his Son to be our Saviour,
forgive *us our* sins and make *us* holy to serve him in the world,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Creed

Let us affirm our faith in Jesus Christ the Son of God.

**Though he was divine,
he did not cling to equality with God,
but made himself nothing.**

**Taking the form of a servant,
he was born in human likeness.**

**He humbled himself and was obedient to death,
even the death of the cross.
Therefore God has raised him on high,
and given him the name above every name:
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
and every voice proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

(cf Philippians 2.6-11)

Prayers *(we can add our own prayers at each section)*

We pray to the Lord for courage to give up other things and to give ourselves to him this Lent. Give your Church the courage to give up her preoccupation with herself and to give more time to your mission in the world.

[We pray for *Bishop James, our Diocese, Deanery & The Binsey Team...*]

May the blood and water flowing from the side of Jesus bring forgiveness to your people and help us to face the cost of proclaiming salvation.

Lord, meet us in the silence,

give us strength and hear our prayer.

Give your world the courage to give up war, bitterness and hatred, and to seek peace. [We pray for *the many places of conflicts and especially for Ukraine...*]

May the shoulders of the risen Jesus, once scourged by soldiers, bear the burden of political and military conflict in our world.

Lord, meet us in the silence,

give us strength and hear our prayer.

Give us the courage to give up quarrels, strife and jealousy in our families, villages and communities. [We pray for *relationships damaged by lockdown...*]

May the presence of the risen Jesus, his body once broken and now made whole, bring peace and direction as we live with one another.

Lord, meet us in the silence,

give us strength and hear our prayer.

Give us the courage to give up our selfishness as we live for others, and to give time, care and comfort to the sick. [We pray for *all those suffering...*]

May the wounded hands of Jesus bring his healing touch, and the light of his presence fill their rooms.

Lord, meet us in the silence,

give us strength and hear our prayer.

Give us the courage to give up our fear of death and to rejoice with those who have died in faith. [Especially we hold *those recently bereaved...* in our minds.]

May the feet of the risen Lord Jesus, once nailed to the cross, walk alongside the dying and bereaved in their agony,

and walk with us and all your Church through death to the gate of glory.

Lord, meet us in the silence,

give us strength and hear our prayer,

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.**

THE Collect for Ash Wednesday

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. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer *(or traditional form, if you prefer)*

**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.**

God of compassion, through your Son Jesus Christ
you have reconciled your people to yourself.
As we follow his example of prayer and fasting,
may we obey you with willing hearts
and serve one another in holy love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Blessing

Christ, give us grace to grow in holiness,
to deny ourselves, to take up our cross and follow him;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be with us and all who we love
and pray for, now and always. **Amen.**