

**THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF ATLANTA**



**ASH WEDNESDAY AT HOME**

**FOR FAMILY OBSERVATION OF ASH WEDNESDAY**

# ASH WEDNESDAY LITURGY AT HOME

*The priest blesses the ashes in advance.*

*As an opening, you might play this Taizé chant of Kyrie Eleison: [https://youtu.be/dy63\\_J2YMX4](https://youtu.be/dy63_J2YMX4)*

*On this day, the Leader begins the liturgy with the Salutation and the Collect of the Day.*

## Opening Prayer

*Leader:* Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

## Readings

*One reading from the Old Testament (see choice below), followed by the psalm, the Epistle and the Gospel.*

Old Testament	Joel 2:1-2, 12-17, or Isaiah 58:1-12
Psalm	103:8-14
Epistle	2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10
Gospel	Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

*Here, if there is a sermon, it is read. Or use this reflection:*

*Then all stand, and the Leader invites the worshipers to the observance of a holy Lent, saying*

Dear People of God: The first Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church to prepare for them by a season of penitence and fasting. This season of Lent provided a time in which converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism. It was also a time when those who, because of notorious sins, had been separated from the body of the faithful were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to the fellowship of the Church. Thereby, the whole congregation was put in mind of the message of pardon and absolution set forth in the Gospel of our Savior, and of the need which all Christians continually have to renew their repentance and faith.

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. And, to make a right beginning of repentance, and as a mark of our mortal nature, let us now kneel before the Lord, our maker and redeemer.

*Silence is then kept for a time, all kneeling.*

## Imposition of Ashes

*The pre-blessed ashes are then imposed with the following words:*

*"Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."*

*The following Psalm is then said responsively by whole verse.*

### Psalm 51 Miserere mei, Deus

*If you enjoy chanting the Psalm, see here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JZzRuUq0SLg>  
or here (longer at about 14 mins, but beautiful): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3s45XOnYOIw>*

- 1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindness; \*  
in your great compassion blot out my offenses.
- 2 Wash me through and through from my wickedness \*  
and cleanse me from my sin.

- 3 For I know my transgressions, \*  
and my sin is ever before me.
- 4 **Against you only have I sinned \***  
**and done what is evil in your sight.**
- 5 And so you are justified when you speak \*  
and upright in your judgment
- 6 **Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth, \***  
**a sinner from my mother's womb.**
- 7 For behold, you look for truth deep within me, \*  
and will make me understand wisdom secretly.
- 8 **Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure; \***  
**wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.**
- 9 Make me hear of joy and gladness, \*  
that the body you have broken may rejoice.
- 10 **Hide your face from my sins \***  
**and blot out all my iniquities.**
- 11 Create in me a clean heart, O God, \*  
and renew a right spirit within me.
- 12 **Cast me not away from your presence \***  
**and take not your holy Spirit from me.**
- 13 Give me the joy of your saving help again \*  
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.
- 14 **I shall teach your ways to the wicked, \***  
**and sinners shall return to you.**
- 15 Deliver me from death, O God, \*  
and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness, O God of my salvation.
- 16 **Open my lips, O Lord, \***  
**and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.**
- 17 Had you desired it, I would have offered sacrifice; \*  
but you take no delight in burnt-offerings.
- 18 **The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; \***  
**a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.**

## Litany of Penitence

*The Leader and People together, all kneeling*

Most holy and merciful Father: We confess to you and to one another, and to the whole communion of saints in heaven and on earth, that we have sinned by our own fault in thought, word, and deed; by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.

*The Leader continues (others will respond with the bolded words)*

We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others, as we have been forgiven.

***Have mercy on us, Lord.***

We have been deaf to your call to serve, as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

*Have mercy on us, Lord.*

We confess to you, Lord, all our past unfaithfulness: the pride, hypocrisy, and impatience of our lives,

*We confess to you, Lord.*

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people,

*We confess to you, Lord.*

Our anger at our own frustration, and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,

*We confess to you, Lord.*

Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonesty in daily life and work,

*We confess to you, Lord.*

Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,

*We confess to you, Lord.*

Accept our repentance, Lord, for the wrongs we have done: for our blindness to human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,

*Accept our repentance, Lord.*

For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us,

*Accept our repentance, Lord.*

For our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us,

*Accept our repentance, Lord.*

Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us;

*Favorably hear us, for your mercy is great.*

Accomplish in us the work of your salvation,

*That we may show forth your glory in the world.*

By the cross and passion of your Son our Lord,

*Bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.*

*The Leader remains kneeling and offers the following prayer for forgiveness.*

Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. Amen.

*Another song that may be used is "Beautiful Things" by Gungor: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OH7fsHzKk>*

*The service concludes with the exchange of the Peace.*



## THE OFFICE OF CONGREGATIONAL VITALITY

### DIocese of ATLANTA

Canon John Thompson-Quartey, *Canon for Ministry*

Sally Ulrey, *Missioner for Congregational Vitality*