



# Welcome to St Alban's

## Ash Wednesday

*Remember that you are dust  
and to dust you shall return*

*Genesis 3.19*



OPENING HYMN: *George Hunt Smyttan (1822-1870) adapted by Michael Forster © 1999 Kevin Mayhew Ltd*

**1. Forty days and forty nights  
you were fasting in the wild;  
forty days and forty nights,  
tempted still, yet unbeguiled.**

**2. Sunbeams scorching all the day,  
chilly dew-drops nightly shed,  
prowling beasts about your way,  
stones your pillow, earth your bed.**

**3. Let us your endurance share,  
and from earthly greed abstain,  
with you vigilant in prayer,  
with you strong to suffer pain.**

**4. Then if evil on us press,  
flesh or spirit to assail,  
victor in the wilderness,  
help us not to swerve or fail.**

**5. So shall peace divine be ours;  
holy gladness, pure and true:  
come to us angelic powers,  
such as ministered to you.**

**6. Keep, O keep us, Saviour dear,  
ever constant by your side,  
that with you we may appear  
at the eternal Eastertide.**

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

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

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.

**Holy God, holy and strong, holy and immortal, have mercy upon us.**

#### THE COLLECT

Let us pray for grace to keep Lent faithfully.

*Silence is kept.*

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.**

## READINGS FROM SCRIPTURE

Old Testament: Isaiah 58.1-12

New Testament: 2 Corinthians 5.20b-6.10

*After each reading:* This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## THE GOSPEL

*Please stand to greet the Gospel, singing:*

**Hear us, O Lord, have mercy upon us, for we have sinned against thee.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

John 8.1-11

*At the end of the reading:* This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## THE SERMON

### INVITATION TO CONFESSION

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

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.**

## THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Dear friends in Christ, I invite you to receive these ashes as a sign of the spirit of penitence with which we shall keep this season of Lent.

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.



*Please come forward for the imposition of ashes*

## THE ABSOLUTION

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.  
**Amen.**

THE PEACE *Please stand if you are able*

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

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

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

OFFERTORY HYMN: *Bishop Synesius tr. AW Chatfield*

**1 Lord Jesus, think on me  
And purge away my sin;  
From earthborn passions set me free  
And make me pure within.**

**2 Lord Jesus, think on me,  
With care and woe oppressed;  
Let me Thy loving servant be  
And taste Thy promised rest.**

**3 Lord Jesus, think on me  
Amid the battle's strife;  
In all my pain and misery  
Be Thou my Health and Life.**

**4 Lord Jesus, think on me  
Nor let me go astray;  
Through darkness and perplexity  
Point Thou the heavenly way.**

**5 Lord Jesus, think on me  
That, when the flood is past,  
I may th'eternal brightness see  
And share Thy joy at last.**

#### THE PREPARATION OF THE TABLE

Risen Lord and Saviour,  
present among us with the wealth of your love.  
Cleanse us from sin and give us the faith  
to offer our praise and grow in your grace.  
**Amen.**

#### THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

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 thanks and praise.**

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:

**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.**

*New People's Mass, A Gregory Murray ©1975, 1987 McCrimmon*

We praise and bless you, loving Father, through Jesus Christ, our Lord; and as we obey his command, send your Holy Spirit, that broken bread and wine outpoured may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends and, taking bread, he praised you. He broke the bread, gave it to them and said: Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; Do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine. Again he praised you, gave it to them 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, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did, in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross. Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation, we proclaim his death and resurrection until he comes in glory.

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

Lord of all life, help us to work together for that day when your kingdom comes and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth. Look with favour on your people, gather us in your loving arms and bring us with St Alban, the Blessed Virgin Mary and all the saints to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Lord Jesus, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to 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.  
And 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.**

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**Though we are many, we are one body,  
because we all share in one bread.**

*We sing....*

**Just as I am without one plea  
but that thy blood was shed for me,  
and that thou bid'st me come to thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come.**

*Charlotte Elliott (1789-1871)*

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.  
Blessèd 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.**



*All baptised Christians who receive communion in their own churches are welcome to receive communion. Anyone may come up to receive a blessing.*

**COMMUNION HYMN** *David J. Evans ©1986 Kingsway's Thankyou Music.*

**1 Be still, for the presence of the Lord,  
the holy One is here;  
come bow before him now  
with reverence and fear.**

**In him no sin is found,  
we stand on holy ground.  
Be still, for the presence of the Lord,  
the holy One is here.**

**2 Be still, for the glory of the Lord  
is shining all around;  
he burns with holy fire,  
with splendour he is crowned.**

**How awesome is the sight,  
our radiant King of light!  
Be still, for the glory of the Lord  
is shining all around.**

**3 Be still, for the power of the Lord  
is moving in this place;  
he comes to cleanse and heal,  
to minister His grace.**

**No work too hard for him,  
in faith receive from him;  
Be still, for the power of the Lord  
is moving in this place.**

## POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Almighty God,  
you have given your only Son  
to be for us both a sacrifice for sin  
and also an example of godly life.  
Give us grace  
that we may always most thankfully receive  
these his inestimable gifts,  
and also daily endeavour to follow  
the blessed steps of his most holy life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

**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.**

## THE BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness,  
to deny yourselves, take up your cross, and follow him;  
  
and the blessing....

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

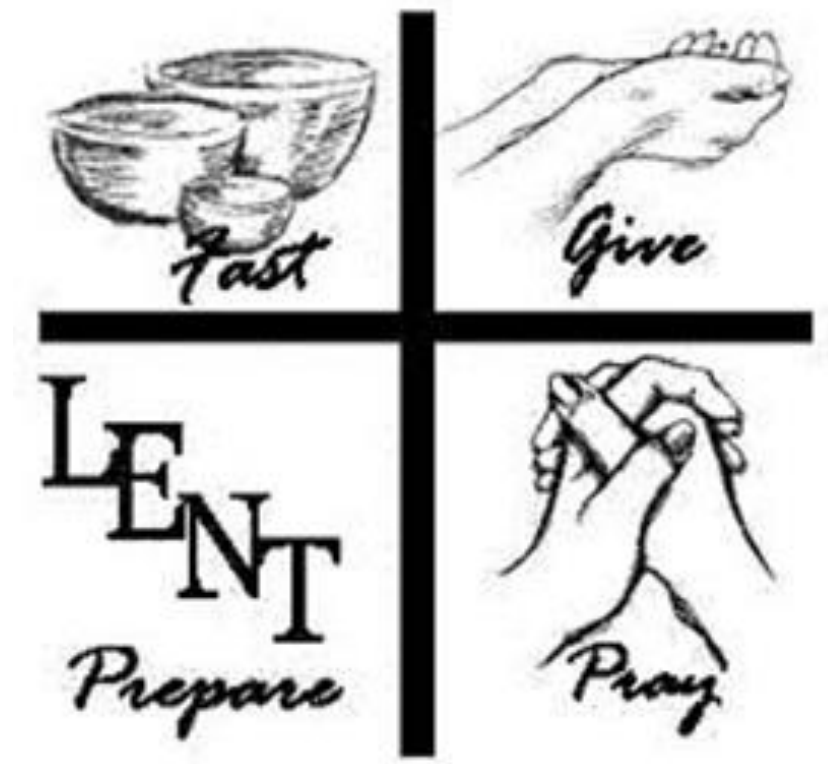
CLOSING HYMN *Bianco da Siena (d. 1434)*

**1 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.**

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

**3 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.**

**4 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.**



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