

Ash Wednesday Home Prayer Liturgy



**DERRY DIOCESAN
CATECHETICAL
CENTRE**

Scared Space:

Create a prayerful environment in your home, perhaps through a Sacred Space. This might include a Bible, a candle perhaps some quiet music, etc. Before you begin, divide out the reading parts of this prayer. Begin by gathering the members of your household and inviting them to settle in and remind them that God is present in their midst.

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

LEADER: Praised be the God of grace, mercy, and peace. Blessed by God for ever.

All Blessed by God for ever.

LEADER: Today, Ash Wednesday, many Christians receive a cross of ashes on their foreheads. We remember that we are not perfect. We sometimes hurt others. We act in a selfish way. We sin. Today we have an opportunity to tell God and each other that we are sorry. We promise to try during Lent to become better people. The cross reminds us of this.

Let us reflect on God's word.

GOSPEL : Matthew 6: 1-6: 16-18 (*adapted from Good News Bible*)

Jesus said, ' Make certain you do not perform your religious duties in public so that people will see what you do.

When you **help** a needy person,
do it in such a way that
even your closest friend
will not know about it.

When you **pray**, do not draw attention to yourself.
When you pray, go to your room,
close the door, and pray to your Father, who is unseen.
And your Father, who sees what you do in private, will reward you.

And when you **fast**, do not put on a sad face like the hypocrites.
When you go without food, wash your face
and comb your hair, so that others cannot know that you are fasting-
only your Father, who is unseen, will know.

Teaching: Charity, Prayer and Fasting: Reflective prayers: (based on Mt 6:1-6: 16-18)

Reader: Be sincere in everything we do and say
All: *Lord, may we be open and honest in our words and intentions*
Reader: Reach out to others with generosity of spirit
All: *Lord, may we always give from the heart, without seeking reward*
Reader: Nurture a sincere relationship with God.
All: *Lord, may we pray daily, trusting in the goodness of God.*
Reader: Remember those who have little or nothing
All: *Lord, may our Lenten sacrifices reflect our care for others*
Reader: Blessed are those who follow the ways of the Lord
All: *Lord, may we know you are the Way the Truth and the Life.*
Leader: Remember the words 'And the Father who sees what you do in private, will reward you.'
All: *Lord, may we truly prepare our hearts for this Lenten season*

Leader: Although this Ash Wednesday we do not have ashes with us, we are reminded that we belong to God. Let us take a moment to make the sign of the cross on our own head to remind us that we are Children of God and that we will try during this Lent to Care for ourselves and others, to place our Hope in Jesus and Pray more often each day. All trace the sign of the cross on one another's foreheads. Quiet music could be played during this.



Intercessions:

Leader: For Pope Francis, Bishop Donal Mc Keown, the priests, deacons, religious and all the people of God, we pray to the Lord. **All:** Lord, hear our prayer.
Leader: For our family, for our friends, for our neighbours, we pray to the Lord.
All: Lord, hear our prayer.
Leader: For those without homes, for those who are sick, for those without jobs we pray to the Lord. **All:** Lord, hear our prayer.
Leader: for the lonely, for those who are anxious, for those who have been bereaved.
All: Lord, hear our prayer.
Leader: For our own intentions. Take a few seconds to reflect **All:** Lord, hear our prayer.
Leader: Lord, you called us forth from the earth; you called us into the family of God, in the waters of baptism. Be with us as we begin our journey through the 40 days of Lent to the joy of Easter and the resurrection. May our charity help those in need, may our prayer strengthen us and benefit others, and may our fasting remind us of the sacrifice you made for us on the cross at Calvary.

We do all this in the name of Jesus as united in prayer we say the prayer Jesus taught us.

All: Our Father...

Concluding prayer:

Lord, we place our trust in you.

We ask forgiveness for the wrongs we do,

We promise to live in the light.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. **All: Amen**

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