

Ash Wednesday

Liturgy of the Word w/ Distribution of Ashes

Preparation before the Liturgy begins:

- The presider's text is in a binder and at his/her place.
- The Lectionary is at the ambo and marked accordingly.
- The intercessory prayers are also at the ambo for the lector.
- The candles near the ambo are lit.
- Ashes and holy water (if they will be blessed by a deacon at this liturgy) are prepared at an appropriate place in the sanctuary.
- The presider is vested in an alb (and, if a deacon, with a stole.)

Procession

During the singing of the hymn, all stand.

The assistant carries the cross (no candles) to lead the procession.

The presider and assistant process in the usual way, reverencing the altar, going to their chairs.

After the singing concludes, the presider begins:

Greeting **(RECITED)**

Presider: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

The Pauline greeting is omitted if the presider is not a priest or deacon.

Presider: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

All: And with your spirit.

Introductory Comments **(optional)**

If introductory comments are necessary, the presider may use these or similar words:

Presider: We gather today to begin our Lenten journey,
this solemn fast,
this holy season of prayer, sacrifice, and almsgiving.

Collect

Presider: Let us pray for the grace to keep Lent faithfully.

Pause for silent prayer.

Grant, O Lord,
that we may begin with holy fasting
this campaign of Christian service,

so that, as we take up battle against spiritual evils,
we may be armed with weapons of self-restraint.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, forever and ever.

All: Amen.

All are seated, and the Liturgy of the Word takes place in the usual way.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The readings and psalm are taken from the Lectionary for Mass of the day.

A homily may be given.

Blessing of Ashes *(omitted if the presider is not ordained)*

After preaching and a brief period of silence, the assistant brings holy water to the presider near the ashes.

Presider: Dear brothers and sisters,
let us humbly ask God our Father
that he be pleased to bless with the abundance of his grace
these ashes, which we will put on our heads in penitence.

Pause for silent prayer.

O God, who are moved by acts of humility
and respond with forgiveness to works of penance,
lend your merciful ear to our prayers
and in your kindness pour out the grace of your + blessing
on your servants who are marked with these ashes,
that, as they follow the Lenten observances,

they may be worthy to come with minds made pure
to celebrate the Paschal Mystery of your Son.
Through Christ our Lord.

If the blessing was invoked, he sprinkles the ashes with holy water in silence.

If omitted, no sprinkling.

As the music begins, those who will distribute ashes to the assembly then come forward to be signed by the presider. The presider is signed by one of the other ministers.

They go to their stations as the assembly comes forward to receive ashes. The ministers say to each:

Repent, and believe in the Gospel.

OR

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

After all have received ashes, the ministers return the ashes to the appropriate place, and wash their hands.

Intercessions

The intercessions are those prepared for the Mass of the day. The lector reads the intentions at the ambo.

The presider introduces them in these words:

Presider: Let us bring our needs to God who hears and saves us:

The Lord's Prayer

The presider recites the invitation and leads the reciting of the prayer.

Presider: At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching,
we dare to say:

Our Father...

The embolism and doxology are omitted.

Conclusion

A lay presider traces the sign over him/herself while invoking the blessing; a deacon greets and blesses the people in the usual way.

[Deacon: The Lord be with you. All: And with your spirit.]

Presider: May God the Father, with the Son, and the Holy Spirit be
praised and blessed forever and ever.

All Amen.

Presider: Go in peace.

All: Thanks be to God.

The closing hymn then begins, and the ministers process out in the usual way.