

Ash Wednesday: a call to the life of conversion

An adapted form of the BAS rite (pp 281 - 286) for use when one or more of the baptized is making an intentional lenten journey of return to the way of Christ. For the full text of the rite with introduction and commentary, click on 'Calling to the Life of Conversion' in Making Disciples.

<https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/Making-Disciples.pdf>

Continued on the next page . . .

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Ash Wednesday

a call to the life of conversion

On this day the liturgy begins as follows:

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Let us pray.

The community prays in silence; then follows the Collect of the Day.

Almighty and everlasting God,
you despise 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 brokenness,
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.

Readings (*see BAS page 281*)

A sermon may be preached.

After the sermon the presider addresses the congregation, saying,

Dear friends in Christ,
every year at the time of the Christian Passover
we celebrate our redemption
through the death and resurrection
of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Lent is a time to prepare for this celebration:
a time for those preparing for baptism
to weigh the cost of discipleship,
and for all the baptized to renew our life
in the paschal mystery.
It is also a time for those
who are turning again to the way of Christ
to prepare by self-examination and penitence
for a new commitment to the covenant
they once entered at their baptism.
We begin this holy season
by remembering our need for repentance,
and for the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed
in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Presentation

Those turning again to the way of Christ may then be presented individually.

Sponsor **I present N who wishes to follow
the path of penitence,
and turn again to the way of Christ.**

Presider For some time now you have been confirming your
baptismal commitment. Are you ready to answer
again the call of Christ?

Answer **I am.**

*Here the person being presented may be invited to tell how the Spirit has led him/her
to this moment.*

As each one is presented, the presider asks of the sponsor,

**Do you, as sponsor, believe that the time has come for
this person to join us in this time of discipline, in
submission to the Spirit of Christ?**

Sponsor **I do, as God is my witness.**

The presider may then ask the sponsors and the congregation,

Brothers and sisters, will you accompany *these* our
friends through the coming days of spiritual
preparation?

Sponsor **We will.**

The presider then continues,

I invite you therefore, in the name of the Lord, to
observe a holy Lent by self-examination, penitence,
prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, and by reading and
meditating on the word of God. Let us kneel before
our Creator and Redeemer.

Silence is then kept for reflection.

Psalm 51.1–18 is sung or said (see BAS page 282).

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Litany of Penitence

The presider and people say together,

**Most holy and merciful Father,
we confess to you, 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 presider continues,

We have not loved you with our whole heart,
and mind, and strength.
We have not loved our neighbours 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 judgements,
for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbours,
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;
Hear us, Lord, for your mercy is great.

The presider says the following prayer.

Almighty God,
from the dust of the earth you have created us.
May these ashes be for us
a sign of our mortality and penitence,
and a reminder that only by your gracious gift
do we have eternal life;
through Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

The presider may say,

I invite *N and N*
who *are* turning again to the way of Christ
to receive this sign of ashes.
By the power of the Holy Spirit,
may God grant you to be for us
a living sign of that conversion
to which the Lord now calls us all.

Ashes are applied to the forehead of each, with the following words.

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

Then one of those turning again to the way of Christ may say,

I invite all who in this season of Lent
are turning again to the way of Christ
to receive this sign of ashes.

All those who desire to receive ashes come forward, and those who are turning again to the way of Christ may assist in applying the ashes to the forehead of each person, using the same words.

After all who desire ashes have received them, the presider leads the congregation in the conclusion of the confession, all kneeling.

Accomplish in us, O God,
the work of your salvation,

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

Presider By the cross and passion of your Son, our Lord,

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

The bishop, if present, or the priest stands and, facing the people, says,

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

The Peace is exchanged. When the eucharist follows, the service continues with the offertory.