

Prayers for Ash Wednesday and throughout Lent

THE TRISAGION *This is used as introduction to prayer*

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

GOSPEL READING *Read and ponder the Gospel story*

John 8.1-11

Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him and he sat down and began to teach them. The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery; and making her stand before all of them, they said to him, 'Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?' They said this to test him, so that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, 'Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.' And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders; and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus straightened up and said to her, 'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?' She said, 'No one, sir.' And Jesus said, 'Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.'

AN EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE *Call to mind your sin, and the infinite mercy of God*

God the Father,
All **have mercy on us.**

God the Son,
All **have mercy on us.**

God the Holy Spirit,
All **have mercy on us.**

Trinity of love,
All **have mercy on us.**

All **Most merciful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we confess that we have sinned in thought, word and deed.**

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

All **Lord, have mercy.**

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.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

We confess to you, Lord ...

all our past unfaithfulness: the pride, hypocrisy and impatience of our lives.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

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

All **Lord, have mercy.**

Our anger at our own frustration

and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts

and our dishonesty in daily life and work.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

Our negligence in prayer and worship

and our failure to commend the faith that is in us.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

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.

All Accept our repentance, Lord.

For all false judgements,
for uncharitable thoughts towards our neighbours
and for our prejudice and contempt towards those who differ from us.

All Accept our repentance, Lord.

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

All Accept our repentance, Lord.

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

All Favourably hear us, for your mercy is great.

Accomplish in us the work of your salvation,

All that we may show your glory in the world.

By the cross and passion of your Son our Lord,

All bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.

Silence is kept.

All We have not loved you with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves. In your mercy forgive what we have been, help us to amend what we are, and direct what we shall be; that we may do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.

Ponder your mortality and frailty, perhaps remembering past Ash Wednesdays when you have received the imposition of ashes.

Then say:

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

Let us turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ.

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy on us/me, forgive us/me all our/my sin, confirm us/me in all goodness, and keep us/me in eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

CONCLUSION

An Ash Wednesday Collect *This can be said every day in Lent*

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.

Or ...

Holy God,
our lives are laid open before you:
rescue us from the chaos of sin
and through the death of your Son
bring us healing and make us whole
in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.