

## The head of the Fast

Called Ash Wednesday by the people

THE SERVICE OF PENITENTS  
At St. Anastasia's

¶ If there be any of the faithful who have gravely sinned, & are imposed a public penance, they shall gather at the church early in the morning & confess their sins to the Priest. And he shall pray over them & counsel them to do penance during the whole of Lent & return on the Thursday of the Supper to be reconciled to the Church.

THE SERVICE OF ASHES  
At St. Anastasia's

**Sixth Hour:** After the Sixth Hour, a sermon may given by the Priest if he wish. Then:

BLESSING OF ASHES

**Preparations:** Silver dishes with ashes are placed upon the altar. The ashes are obtained by burning a garland hung on the churchyard Cross on Palm Sunday of the preceding year.

¶ **Vestments:** The Priest vests in a red silk cope with all the other priestly vesture except the chasuble. Deacon, Subdeacon, & other ministers wear albs with amices. All the clergy are in bare feet.

¶ **Procession:** First walks (1) a Server holding a sackcloth banner with a simple St. George cross, then (2) other Servers, then (3) the Priest, flanked by Deacon on his rt. & Subdeacon on his l.

¶ **Route:** They go from the vestry to the step of the altar, where they kneel—the choir & people also kneeling, the Banner-bearer standing near the left horn of the altar.

SEVEN PSALMS

¶ These psalms are chanted antiphonally, in the simplest tone (rather than the usual melodic tones).

¶ Psalm 6:

O Lord, rebuke me not in Thine anger nor chasten me in Thy wrath.

Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak heal me, O Lord, for my bones are troubled.

And my soul is troubled greatly but Thou, O Lord, how long? Turn to me again, O Lord, deliver my soul save me for Thy mercy's sake.

For in death there is none that is mindful of Thee and in hades who will confess Thee?

I toiled in my groaning every night I will wash my bed; with tears will I water my couch.

Through wrath is mine eye become troubled I have grown old among all mine enemies.

Depart from me, all ye that work vanity for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping.

The Lord hath heard my supplication the Lord hath received

my prayer.

Let all mine enemies be greatly put to shame and be troubled let them be turned back, and speedily be greatly put to shame.

Glory be... As it was...

¶ Psalm 31

Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered.

Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not sin and in whose mouth there is no guile.

Because I kept silence, my bones are waxed old through my crying all the day long.

For day and night Thy hand was heavy upon me I was reduced to misery whilst the thorn stuck fast in me.

Mine iniquity have I acknowledged, and my sin have I not hid. I said: I will confess mine iniquities before the Lord against myself and Thou forgavest the ungodliness of my heart.

For this shall every one that is holy pray unto Thee in a seasonable time.

Moreover, in a flood of many waters shall they not come nigh unto him.

Thou art my refuge from the affliction which surroundeth me O my Rejoicing, deliver me from them which have encircled me.

I will instruct thee and teach thee in this way which thou shalt go I will fix Mine eyes upon thee.

Be ye not as the horse or as the mule which have no understanding.

Whose jaws thou must hold with bit and bridle lest they come nigh unto thee.

Many are the scourges of the sinner but mercy shall encircle him that hopeth in the Lord.

Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous and glory, all ye that are upright of heart.

Glory be... As it was...

¶ Psalm 37

O Lord, rebuke me not in Thine anger nor chasten me in Thy wrath.

For Thine arrows are fastened in me and Thou hast laid Thy hand heavily upon me.

There is no healing in my flesh in the face of Thy wrath and there is no peace in my bones in the face of my sins.

For mine iniquities are risen higher than my head as a heavy burden have they pressed heavily upon me.

My bruises are become noisome and corrupt in the face of my folly.

I have been wretched and utterly bowed down until the end all the day long I went with downcast face.

For my loins are filled with mockings and there is no healing in my flesh.

I am afflicted and humbled exceedingly I have roared from the groaning of my heart.

O Lord, before Thee is all my desire and my groaning is not hid from Thee.  
 My heart is troubled, my strength hath failed me and the light of mine eyes, even this is not with me.  
 My friends and my neighbours drew nigh over against me and stood.  
 And my nearest of kin stood afar off and they that sought after my soul used violence.  
 And they that sought evils for me spake vain things and craftinesses all the day long did they meditate.  
 But as for me, like a deaf man I heard them not and was as a speechless man that openeth not his mouth.  
 And I became as a man that heareth not and that hath in his mouth no reproofs.  
 For in Thee have I hoped, O Lord Thou wilt hearken unto me, O Lord my God.  
 For I said: Let never mine enemies rejoice over me yea, when my feet were shaken, those men spake boastful words against me.  
 For I am ready for scourges and my sorrow is continually before me.  
 For I will declare mine iniquity and I will take heed concerning my sin.  
 But mine enemies live and are made stronger than I and they that hated me unjustly are multiplied.  
 They that render me evil for good slandered me because I pursued goodness.  
 Forsake me not, O Lord my God, depart not from me.  
 Be attentive unto my help O Lord of my salvation.  
 Glory be... As it was...

† Psalm 50

**H**ave mercy on me, O God according to Thy great mercy.  
 And according to the multitude of Thy compassions blot out my transgression.  
 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.  
 For I know mine iniquity and my sin is ever before me.  
 Against Thee only have I sinned and done this evil before Thee that Thou mightest be justified in Thy words, and prevail when Thou art judged.  
 For behold, I was conceived in iniquities and in sins did my mother bear me.  
 For behold, Thou hast loved truth the hidden and secret things of Thy wisdom hast Thou made manifest unto me.  
 Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be made clean  
 Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow.  
 Thou shalt make me to hear joy and gladness the bones that be humbled, they shall rejoice.  
 Turn Thy face away from my sins and blot out all mine iniquities.  
 Create in me a clean heart, O God and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from Thy presence and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.  
 Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation and with Thy governing Spirit establish me.  
 I shall teach transgressors Thy ways and the ungodly shall turn back unto Thee.  
 Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation my tongue shall rejoice in Thy righteousness.  
 O Lord, Thou shalt open my lips and my mouth shall declare Thy praise.  
 For if Thou hadst desired sacrifice, I had given it with whole-burnt offerings Thou shalt not be pleased.  
 A sacrifice unto God is a broken spirit a heart that is broken and humbled God will not despise.  
 Do good, O Lord, in Thy good pleasure unto Sion and let the walls of Jerusalem be builded.  
 Then shalt Thou be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with oblation and whole-burnt offerings then shall they offer bullocks upon Thine altar.  
 Glory be... As it was...

† Psalm 101

**O** Lord, hear my prayer and let my cry come unto Thee.  
 Turn not Thy face away from me in the day when I am afflicted, incline Thine ear unto me.  
 In the day when I call upon Thee quickly hearken unto me.  
 For my days are vanished like smoke and my bones consumed like wood for the burning.  
 I am smitten like grass, and withered is my heart for I forgot to eat my bread.  
 By reason of the voice of my groaning my bone hath cleaved unto my flesh.  
 I am become like a pelican of the wilderness I am like an owl in a ruined house.  
 I have watched, and am like a sparrow that sitteth alone upon the house-top.  
 The whole day long mine enemies reproached me and they that praised me made an oath against me.  
 For before the face of Thy wrath and Thine anger I ate ashes like bread.  
 And my drink I mingled with weeping for after uplifting me, Thou hast dashed me down.  
 My days like a shadow have declined and I like grass am withered.  
 But Thou, O Lord, for ever abidest and Thy remembrance is unto generation and generation.  
 Thou shalt rise up and have pity upon Sion for it is time to have compassion on her; yea, the time is come.  
 For Thy servants have taken pleasure in her stones and they shall feel pity for her dust.  
 And the nations shall fear Thy name, O Lord and all the kings of the earth Thy glory.  
 For the Lord shall build up Sion and He shall be seen in His

† By Whom Angels praise Thy majesty, Dominions worship, the Powers tremble. The heavens, and the heavenly Virtues, and the blessed Seraphim, concelebrate in one exultation. With them command our voices also to have entrance, we beseech Thee, humbly confessing Thee and saying: *Holy...*

glory.  
 He hath regarded the prayer of the humble and hath not despised their supplication.  
 Let this be written for another generation and the people that is being created shall praise the Lord.  
 For He hath looked out from His holy height the Lord from heaven hath looked upon the earth,  
 To hear the groaning of them that be in fetters to loose the sons of the slain,  
 To declare in Sion the name of the Lord and His praise in Jerusalem,  
 When the peoples are gathered together and the kings to serve the Lord.  
 He answered Him in the way of his strength The fewness of my days declare unto me.  
 Take me not away at the half of my days in generations and generations are Thy years.  
 In the beginning, O Lord, Thou didst lay the foundation of the earth and the heavens are the works of Thy hands.  
 They shall perish, but Thou abidest and all like a garment shall grow old.  
 And as a vesture shalt Thou fold them, and they shall be changed but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail.  
 The sons of Thy servants shall have their dwelling and their seed for ever shall be guided aright.  
 Glory be... As it was...

¶ Psalm 129

Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord O Lord, hear my voice.  
 Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.  
 If Thou shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord O Lord, who shall stand?  
 For with Thee there is forgiveness for Thy name's sake have I patiently waited for Thee, O Lord.  
 My soul hath waited patiently for Thy word my soul hath hoped in the Lord.  
 From the morning watch until night from the morning watch let Israel hope in the Lord.  
 For with the Lord there is mercy and with Him is plenteous redemption.  
 And He shall redeem Israel out of all his iniquities.  
 Glory be... As it was...

¶ Psalm 142

Lord, hear my prayer give ear unto my supplication in Thy truth; hearken unto me in Thy righteousness.  
 And enter not into judgment with Thy servant for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified.  
 For the enemy hath persecuted my soul he hath humbled my life down to the earth.  
 He hath sat me in darkness as those that have been long dead and my spirit within me is become despondent; within me

my heart is troubled.  
 I remembered days of old, I meditated on all Thy works I pondered on the creations of Thy hands.  
 I stretched forth my hands unto Thee my soul thirsteth after Thee like a waterless land.  
 Quickly hear me, O Lord my spirit hath fainted away.  
 Turn not Thy face away from me lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.  
 Cause me to hear Thy mercy in the morning for in Thee have I put my hope.  
 Cause me to know O Lord, the way wherein I should walk for unto Thee have I lifted up my soul.  
 Rescue me from mine enemies, O Lord; unto Thee have I fled for refuge teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God.  
 Thy good Spirit shall lead me in the land of uprightness for Thy name's sake, O Lord, shalt Thou quicken me.  
 In Thy righteousness shalt Thou bring my soul out of affliction and in Thy mercy shalt Thou utterly destroy mine enemies.  
 And Thou shalt cut off all them that afflict my soul for I am Thy servant.  
 Glory be... As it was...

♪ ANTIPHON

*Ne reminiscaris*

Remember not, O Lord, our offences, nor those of our fathers, neither take Thou vengeance of our sins.

*Right Choir:* Kyrieleyson.

*Left Choir:* Xristeleyson.

*Both choirs:* Kyrieleyson.

**Our Father...** (*very softly until the versicle below*)

¶ **Priest, Deacon, Subdeacon, & Server holding the book for the Priest, rise. All others remain kneeling. At the south horn of the altar, facing east, the Priest sings aloud:**

✠ **And lead us not into temptation.**  
 ✠ **But deliver us from evil.**  
 ✠ **Save Thy servants and Thy handmaidens.**  
 ✠ **O my God, that hope in Thee.**  
 ✠ **Send them, O Lord, help from Thy sanctuary.**  
 ✠ **And out of Sion defend them.**  
 ✠ **Return, O Lord, how long?**  
 ✠ **And be Thou entreated concerning Thy servants.**  
 ✠ **Help us, O God of our salvation.**  
 ✠ **And for the glory of Thy name, O Lord, deliver us, and be gracious unto our sins for Thy name's sake.**  
 ✠ **O Lord, hear my prayer.**  
 ✠ **And let my cry come unto Thee.**  
 ✠ **The Lord be with you.**  
 ✠ **And with thy spirit.**  
**Let us pray.**

¶ **These Collects are sung in the simple tone for Matins readings.**

COLLECT

*Exaudi Domine*

**H**earken to our prayers, O Lord, and spare the sins of them that confess to Thee: and them whom guilt of conscience doth accuse may the forgiveness of Thy compassion absolve. Through Christ our Lord. *Rx*. Amen.

Let us pray.

COLLECT

*Adsit quesumus*

**I**nspire Thy servants, we beseech Thee, O Lord, with Thy saving grace: that their hearts being melted by plenteousness of tears may be so softened and subdued that the working of Thine anger may be turned away by a fitting satisfaction. Through Christ our Lord. *Rx*. Amen.

Let us pray.

COLLECT

*Da quesumus*

**G**rant, we beseech Thee, O Lord our God, unto these Thy servants and handmaidens, that by repentance they may continually work out the conditions of their purification: and that to enable them more effectually to fulfill the same, the grace of Thy visitation may both precede them and follow them.

Through Christ our Lord. *Rx*. Amen.

Let us pray.

COLLECT

*Præveniat*

**L**et Thy merciful kindness, O Lord, we beseech Thee, go before these Thy servants and handmaidens, that all their iniquities may be blotted out by Thy swift forgiveness. Through Christ our Lord. *Rx*. Amen.

Let us pray.

COLLECT

*Adesto Domine*

**B**e favourable, O Lord, to our supplications, and let not the compassion of Thy gracious mercy be far from these Thy servants and handmaidens: heal their wounds and forgive their sins, that being separated from Thee by no iniquities, they may ever cleave unto Thee, their Lord. Through Christ our Lord. *Rx*. Amen.

Let us pray.

COLLECT

*Domine Deus*

**O** Lord our God, Who art not conquered by our transgression, but art pleased by our satisfaction: look upon these Thy servants and

handmaidens, we beseech Thee, who confess they have sinned against Thee grievously. It is Thy part to give absolution of offences, and to grant pardon to sinners: Thou hast said that Thou wouldst rather the repentance than the death of sinners: grant, therefore, O Lord, to these Thy servants and handmaidens, that they may keep unto Thee the vigil of repentance, and, amending their ways, may rejoice that everlasting joys have been imparted to them by Thee. Through Christ our Lord. *Rx*. Amen.

Let us pray.

COLLECT

*Deus cuius*

**O** God, of Whose forgiveness every man is in need, be mindful of Thy servants and handmaidens: and because by the uncertain and earthly frailty of the body they, stripped of virtue, have transgressed in many things, we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst give pardon to them that confess, and spare them that make supplication: that they who are accused by their deserts may be saved through Thy compassion. Through Christ our Lord. *Rx*. Amen.

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## APOSTOLIC ABSOLUTION

† The Priest goes to the holy doors, lifts his right hand over the people, in blessing, & says without music:

**W**e absolve you, brothers and sisters, in the place of Blessed Peter, the chief of the Apostles, to whom was given by the Lord the power of binding and loosing: and insofar as accusation is yours, and remission ours, may almighty God be to you life, health and salvation, and the compassionate Forgiver of all your sins...

† Here all shall trace a cross upon the ground, bend to kiss it, & rise to their feet; the Priest continues:

... Who liveth and reigneth with God the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God through all the ages of ages. *Rx*. Amen.

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† By Whom Angels praise Thy majesty, Dominions worship, the Powers tremble. The heavens, and the heavenly Virtues, and the blessed Seraphim, concelebrate in one exultation. With them command our voices also to have entrance, we beseech Thee, humbly confessing Thee and saying: *Holy...*

BLESSING OF ASHES

¶ The Priest & ministers go up to the altar, where he blesses ashes, singing, without "Lord be with you" or "Let us pray":

COLLECT

*Omnipotens sempiterna*

**A**lmighty, everlasting God, Who hast mercy upon all, and hatest none of those things which Thou hast made, passing over the sins of men because of their repentance, Who dost also succour them that labour in necessity: vouchsafe to bless and sanctify these ashes, which Thou hast ordered that we, after the manner of the Ninevites, should bear upon our heads, for the sake of humility and of our holy religion, and for the cleansing away of our offences. And grant that by calling upon Thy holy name, all those that have thus borne ashes upon their heads may be thought worthy to receive from Thee pardon of all their sins, and so commence this day the observation of their holy fasts, that on the day of Resurrection they may be found worthy to approach Holy Pascha with minds purified, and to share hereafter in glory everlasting. Through our Lord Jesus Christ Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God through all the ages of ages. *R.* Amen.

¶ He sprinkles holy water over the ashes. Then he sings:

*V.* The Lord be with you. *R.* And with thy spirit.

*Priest: Let us pray.*

COLLECT

*Deus qui non*

**O** God, Who desirest not the death but the repentance of sinners, look down most graciously upon the frailty of our human estate, and be pleased for the sake of Thy mercy to bless these ashes which we have resolved to have placed upon our heads for a manifestation of humility and for laying hold upon forgiveness, that we whom Thou hast warned are ashes, and who acknowledge that to dust we shall return, as the recompense of our evil ways, may mercifully deserve to attain the pardon of all our sins, and the rewards which are promised anew to those who repent. Through our Lord Jesus Christ Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God through all the ages of ages. *R.* Amen.



IMPOSITION OF ASHES

¶ Then he comes through the holy doors & signs a cross in ashes on the people's foreheads, they approaching & kneeling, saying to each:

**R**emember, O man, that dust thou art, and into dust thou shalt return. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. *R.* Amen.

(Gen. 3:19)

¶ During the distribution of ashes these antiphons are sung:

♪ ANTIPHON

*Exaudi nos, tone 7*

**H**earken unto us, O Lord, for Thy mercy is good; according to the multitude of Thy compassions, look upon us, O Lord. (cf Ps. 68:20) | *V.* Save me, O God for the waters are come in unto my soul. (:1) | *V.* Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. | Hearken unto us...

♪ ANTIPHON

*Juxta vestibulum, tone 4*

**B**etween the porch and the altar the Priests, the Lord's ministers, shall weep and shall say, 'Spare, O Lord, spare Thy people, and shut not up the mouths of them that cry aloud to Thee, O Lord.' (Joel 2:17)

♪ ANTIPHON

*Immutemur, tone 2*

**L**et us exchange our raiment for sackcloth and ashes; let us fast and let us weep before the Lord, for He is greatly merciful to forgive our sins, for He is our God.

¶ After giving the ashes, the Priest goes to the choir step (in smaller churches, he simply turns to face the holy doors), & sings:

*V.* The Lord be with you.

*R.* And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

COLLECT

*Deus qui juste*

**O** God, Who art justly angered and dost mercifully pardon, look upon the tears of Thine afflicted people, and graciously turn away the wrath of Thine indignation, which we justly deserve. Through Christ our Lord. *R.* Amen.

Let us pray.

COLLECT

*Concede nobis*

**G**rant us, we beseech Thee, O Lord, to undertake our Christian warfare with holy fastings, in such a manner that we who are about to battle with spiritual evil may be defended by the help of self-restraint. Through our Lord Jesus Christ Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God through all the ages of ages. *R.*

**Amen.**

¶ The Presanctified Mass is then begun, next column, unless there are public penitents to be ejected.

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EJECTION OF PENITENTS

when it is done

**Procession:** A Cross is not carried, but first walks (1) a Banner-bearer carrying the sackcloth banner; (2) two Taper-bearers; (3) a Thurifer; (4) the other clergy & Priest celebrating.

**Route:** They walk through the midst of the choir enclosure as far as the west door of the church (but they remain inside). And there the Priest makes the sign of the Cross over each of the penitents, each of them kissing his hand, & another Priest or one of the clergy leads them out of the church by their right hands.

**Bishop:** The Archdeacon assists him by leading out the penitents.

During the procession & the ejections, the choir sings:

♪ **RESPONSORY**

*Ecce Adam, tone 8*

**B**ehold, Adam is become as one of Us, knowing good and evil. Beware lest perhaps he take of the Tree of life, and live for ever. (Gen 3:22) | √ Cherubim, and a flaming sword, turning every way, to keep the way of the Tree of life: (:24) | Beware... (No Glory be)

\* **RESPONSORY.** *In sudore, tone 7.* 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,' said the Lord to Adam. 'When thou shalt till the earth, | It will not give its fruits, but thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee. (Gen 3:19,17,18) | √ Because thou hast obeyed the voice of thy wife above My voice, cursed is the earth in thy work.' (:17) | 'It will not...' *No Glory be.*

When all the penitents have been ejected, the door of the church is shut, & the procession returns to the altar, the choir singing:

\* **RESPONSORY.** *Emendemus, tone 2.* Let us amend for the better the things wherein we have sinned in ignorance, lest suddenly overtaken by the day of death, we should seek space for repentance, and not be able to find it. | Be attentive, O Lord, and have mercy, for we have sinned against Thee. √ We have sinned with our fathers; we have done iniquity; we have done unrighteousness. (Ps 105:6) | Be attentive...

The Priest's cope is removed & he dons a red chasuble, goes to the altar-step, & begins the confession of the Mass in the usual way.