

PRAYER SERVICE FOR ASH WEDNESDAY

YOU WILL NEED:

A purple cloth as a base for your Lenten Sacred Space.

The following items will be placed on the purple cloth during the prayer service:

- Candle,
- Bible,
- Trócaire Box,
- Lenten Promises Template (*Final page of this document, one for everyone present*)
- Ashes for distribution
- 5 Children to place the items in the Prayer Space
- 6 Children to read

OPENING SONG: You might like to play some of the Jubilee of Mercy Song which is available at <http://www.kandle.ie/mercy-resources/>

LEADER: Today is Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent. The forty days of Lent give us time to get ready for Easter. These days give us the time to think about how we can spend more time with God in prayer, to fast from something that keeps us from being the kind of person Jesus would like us to be and give to those who are in need. During our prayer today we will be marked with a Sign of the Cross made with ashes. The mark on our forehead is a sign that we are taking Lent seriously, that we are ready to live as Jesus asks us to.

So let us pray:

Loving God, may this Lenten season bring us
the blessing of forgiveness and the gift of your light.
We make our prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen

CREATION OF LENTEN PRAYER SPACE

CHILD 1: We place a candle in our Lenten Prayer Space. Jesus is the light of the world. May we share that light with everyone we meet on our Lenten journey!

CHILD 2: We place the Bible in our Lenten Prayer Space. The Bible is God's word for us. May we share God's word with everyone we meet on our Lenten Journey!

CHILD 3: We place the Trócaire Box in our Lenten Prayer Space. In Lent we are called to give alms to help those who are in need. May we find ways on our Lenten journey to help Amos and Daisy and the people in their Kenyan village have a better life.

CHILD 4: We place our Lenten Promises in our Lenten Prayer Space. May we consider carefully how we can pray, fast and give alms during Lent this year.

CHILD 5: We place the ashes made from last year's holy palm in our Lenten Prayer Space. May we wear our ashes proudly as a sign that we want to live like Jesus during our Lenten journey.

READER:

MATTHEW 6:1-6, 16-18

Jesus said to his disciples:

'When you do good deeds, don't try to show off. If you do you won't get a reward from your Father in heaven.

When you give to the poor, don't blow a loud horn. That is what show-offs do in the meeting places and on the street corners, because they are always looking for praise. I can assure you that they already have their reward.

When you give to the poor don't let anyone know about it. Then your gift will be given in secret. Your Father knows what is done in secret, and he will reward you.

When you pray, don't be like the show-offs who love to stand up and pray in the meeting places and on the street corners. They do this just to look good. I can assure you they already have their reward.

When you pray, go into a room alone and close the door. Pray to your Father in private. He knows what is done in private and he will reward you.

When you go without eating, don't try to look gloomy as those show-offs do when they go without eating. I can assure you, they already have their reward. Instead comb your hair and wash your face. Then others won't know that you are going without eating. But your Father sees what is done in private and he will reward you.'

DISTRIBUTION OF ASHES

LEADER: As a sign that you are ready to follow Jesus more closely this Lent come forward and be marked with the sign of the cross.

'Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel' is said as the ashes are distributed to each person.

LEADER: As we begin our Lenten fast let us pray to God, our Father in the words that Jesus gave us

Our Father.....

LENTEN PROMISES

Distribute a copy of the Lenten Promise to all those present and invite them to spend some quiet time filling them in during the day. *Teachers and other staff members might be encouraged to do this also. The promises can be brought home or placed in the Classroom Prayer Space*

CLOSING PRAYER: Loving God, we wear these ashes today as a sign of our love for you and of our commitment to give more time to you this Lent. Give us the strength to be your witnesses in our world throughout this Lenten time. Help us to be faithful to the Gospel and to always live as you want us to. **Amen**

MY LENTEN PROMISE 2016

During Lent I will try to live as Jesus asks by...

PRAYING

FASTING

GIVING ALMS

SIGNED: _____