

PRAYER SERVICE FOR ASH WEDNESDAY



YOU WILL NEED

A purple cloth/crepe paper as a base for your Lenten Prayer Space.

- 4 Children to place the items in the Prayer Space
- 5 Children to read

The following items will be placed in the Prayer Space during the prayer service:

- Candle,
- Bible,
- Trócaire Box,
- Ashes for distribution

OPENING SONG: *Hosea; Gregory Norbet; available to download from iTunes*

LEADER Today is Ash Wednesday and we begin the forty days of Lent, the time when we get ready to celebrate Jesus' death and resurrection at Easter. During these days of Lent, we are invited to turn back to God with all our hearts, to try to be more of the kind of person that God calls us to be. In our prayer time today we will be marked with a Sign of the Cross made with ashes. The mark on our forehead is a sign to everyone that we meet today that we are taking Lent seriously and that we are trying to be better friends of Jesus.

And so we pray:

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

Amen

CREATION OF THE LENTEN PRAYER SPACE

CHILD 1 We place a candle in our Lenten Prayer Space. We believe that Jesus is the light of the world. May we do our very best to 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 help people who are hungry, who are without shelter or whose lives have been affected by war, natural disaster or famine. May we find ways on our Lenten journey to support Trocaire and the work they are doing in Honduras this year.

CHILD 4: We place the ashes made from last year's holy palm in our Lenten Prayer Space. May we wear our ashes proudly today as a sign that we are taking Lent seriously and that we are trying to be better friends of Jesus.

READER

JOEL 2:12-13

'Now, now – it is the Lord who speaks –
come back to me with all your heart,
fasting, weeping, mourning.'
Let your hearts be broken, not your garments torn,
turn to the Lord your God again,
for he is all tenderness and compassion,
slow to anger, rich in graciousness,
and ready to relent.

DISTRIBUTION OF ASHES

LEADER: As a sign that you are ready to be a better friend of Jesus 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 journey let us pray to God, our Father in the words that Jesus gave us

Our Father.....

LENTEN PROMISES

LEADER: During Lent we are asked to do three things to show that we are trying to be a better friend of Jesus and to help us to get ready for Easter. We are asked to spend more time in prayer so that we can get to know Jesus better. We are asked to fast from something that is keeping us from being the kind of person that Jesus wants us to be and we are asked to help those who are in need. We are all going to try and think of three things that we can do for the next forty days to help us get ready for Easter. You can talk about this in class during the day and then take the Lenten Promise Activity Sheet home to fill in tonight.

A template for the Lenten Promise and accompanying suggestions for classroom discussion is available as a separate download.

CLOSING PRAYER: Loving God, we wear these ashes today as a sign of our love for you and of our promise to give more time to you this Lent. Give us the courage to bring your love to our world during this Lenten time. Help us to be faithful to the Gospel and to always live as you want us to. We make this prayer in your name. **Amen**