

# Diocese of Cloyne

## *A Prayer Service for Ash Wednesday*



*On Ash Wednesday we begin our Lenten journey of conversion and renewal. You might use this prayer-service with your household gathered around the sacred space in your home. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross and offering the greeting:*

**In the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.  
May the friendship of Christ find a place in our lives, now and always. Amen.**

*Lent is a season of repentance. We humbly acknowledge that we are sinners and ask forgiveness of God and each other:*

**I confess to almighty God  
and to you, my brothers and sisters,  
that I have greatly sinned,  
in my thoughts and in my words,  
in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,  
through my fault, through my fault,  
through my most grievous fault;  
therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,  
all the Angels and Saints,  
and you, my brothers and sisters,  
to pray for me to the Lord our God.**

*Then one reader leads the Opening Prayer.*

*Let us pray:*

Lord as we begin these forty days of Lent.  
Grant us a change of heart  
that we might turn away from sin  
and be faithful to the Gospel.  
By your grace,  
make our lives more deeply rooted in prayer,  
self-sacrifice and a willingness to share.  
Let us walk with you this Lent  
and seek to be your presence in the world.  
This we ask through Christ our Lord. Amen.



*Take a moment to read the Word of God and reflect on its meaning*

*A Reading from the prophet Joel. (2:12-16)*

Now, now – it is the Lord who speaks –  
Come back to me with all your heart,  
Turn to the Lord your God again  
For God is all tenderness and compassion,  
Slow to anger, rich in graciousness,  
And ready to relent.



*A Reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke. (6:36-38)*

Jesus said to the disciples, “Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give, will be the measure you get back.”

*Think about your Lenten commitments. Choose small, reasonable, daily actions, that will, in themselves, remind you that these forty days are a season of grace. Christian tradition invites us to consider these three practices.*

**Prayer:** How will I make more time for prayer, meditation and reflection?

**Fasting:** What will I deny myself, to show solidarity with those who are sick or are deprived?

**Almsgiving:** What personal time, talents or wealth will I share with others?

*You might note your commitments on a piece of paper, or share them with your family.*

#### **Intercessions:**

- Lord, in your love, watch over us in this season of Lent and help us to walk with you in sincerity of heart.
- Lord, guide all nations in the ways of peace. May our leaders work for the common good and for justice among all the peoples.
- Lord, bless our efforts to fast, to pray and to be more generous to those in need. May your grace support us all the days of our lives as follow your Son.
- We thank you, Lord, for the beauty of Spring. May this Lent be a time when we answer the call to holiness and new life.
- Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all who have died. May they rest in your eternal embrace.

*Now say together the Lord's Prayer:*

Our Father, who art in heaven ...

*One reader leads the Closing Prayer:*

Through our observance of Lent, Lord,  
deepen our faith in the mystery of Christ  
and make it a reality in the conduct of our lives.  
Renew us in spirit. Give us the strength to purify our hearts,  
to control our desires and so to serve you in freedom.  
We make our prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.  
May the Lord bless us, keep us from all evil and bring us to  
everlasting life. Amen  
Let us bless the Lord. *All:* Thanks be to God!

