



Saint Matthew's Church

Big Lamp ~ Summerhill Street

Newcastle

Text of the Mass for Ash Wednesday (18th February) 2026

As the priest enters the church, the following is sung:

Forty days and forty nights
Thou wast fasting in the wild;
Forty days and forty nights
Tempted, and yet undefiled:

Sunbeams scorching all the day;
Chilly dew-drops nightly shed;
Prowling beasts about the way;
Stones Thy pillow, earth Thy bed.

Shall not we Thy watchings share,
And from earthly joys abstain,
Fasting with unceasing prayer,
Glad with Thee to suffer pain?

And if Satan, vexing sore,
Flesh or spirit should assail,
Thou, his vanquisher before,
Grant we may not faint nor fail.

So shall we have peace divine;
Holier gladness ours shall be;
Round us too shall Angels shine,
Such as ministered to Thee.

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Keep, O keep us, Saviour dear,
Ever constant by Thy side;
That with Thee we may appear
At the eternal Easter tide.

Words: GH Smyttan 1822 - 70 and Francis Pott 1832 - 1909

Music: Aus der Tiefe
MH in Nurnburgishes Gesangbuch 1676

The Lord be with you.
And with thy spirit.

During the Introit, the Altar, the symbol of God's Presence, may be honoured with incense.

Lord, You are merciful to all and hate nothing You have created: You overlook our sins to bring us to repentance; You are the Lord our God. Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me: for my soul confides in You. In the shadow of Your wings will I take refuge: until the storm of destruction has passed by. I will call upon the most high God: the God Who fulfils His purpose for me. He will send from Heaven and save me and rebuke those who would trample upon me: God will send forth His love and His faithfulness Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Lord, You are merciful &c

Let us pray:

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; in and through Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is alive and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, God, throughout all ages world without end.

Amen.

A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Joel.

Yet even now," says the LORD, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments." Return to the LORD, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and repents of evil. Who knows whether he will not turn and repent, and leave a blessing behind him, a cereal offering and a drink offering for the LORD, your God? Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the elders; gather the children, even nursing infants. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her chamber. Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep and say, "Spare thy people, O LORD, and make not thy heritage a reproach, a byword among the nations. Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'" Then the LORD became jealous for his land, and had pity on his people.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Have mercy on me, O God, in your great goodness; ♦ according to the abundance of your compassion blot out my offences.

Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness ♦ and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my faults ♦ and my sin is ever before me.

Against you only have I sinned ♦ and done what is evil in your sight,

Make me a clean heart, O God, ♦ and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from your presence ♦ and take not your holy spirit from me.

Give me again the joy of your salvation ♦ and sustain me with your gracious spirit;

O Lord, open my lips ♦ and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

A Reading from the latter Letter of Saint Paul to the Church in Corinth.

We are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We beseech you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. Working together with him, then, we entreat you not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says, "At the acceptable time I have listened to you, and helped you on the day of salvation." Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel book is carried to the Lectern:

Praise to You, O Christ, King of eternal glory. A pure heart create for me, O God: and give me again the joy of Your help. Praise to You, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

Christ's Presence in the words of the Gospel may be honoured with incense.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

Glory be to Thee, O Lord.

Jesus said to His disciples, "Beware of practicing your piety before men in order to be seen by them; for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. "Thus, when you give alms, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

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"And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. "And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

A homily may follow.

The Sacrifice of God is a broken spirit: a broken and contrite heart He will not despise. Our sin is always before us; let us, therefore, confess our sins in penitence and Faith.

Lord Jesus Christ, You said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." Yet we are preoccupied with money and worldly goods and even try to increase them at the expense of justice. **Kyrie eleison ... Kyrie eleison.**

Lord Jesus Christ, You said: "Blessed are the gentle for they shall inherit the earth." Yet we are ruthless with one another, and our world is full of discord and violence. **Christe eleison ... Christe eleison.**

Lord Jesus Christ, You said: "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." Yet we are impatient under our own burdens and unconcerned about the burdens of others. **Kyrie eleison ... Kyrie eleison.**

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Lord Jesus Christ, You said: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they shall be filled." Yet we do not thirst for You, the fountain of all holiness, and are slow to spread Your influence in our private lives or in society. Christe eleison ... [Christe eleison](#).

Lord Jesus Christ, You said: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy." Yet we are slow to forgive and quick to condemn. Kyrie eleison ... [Kyrie eleison](#).

Lord Jesus Christ, You said: Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God." Yet we are prisoners of our senses and evil desires and dare not raise our eyes to You. Christe eleison ... [Christe eleison](#).

Lord Jesus Christ, You said: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." Yet we fail to make peace in our families, in our country and in the world. Kyrie eleison ... [Kyrie eleison](#).

Lord Jesus Christ, You said: "Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of justice, for the kingdom of God is theirs." Yet we prefer to practice injustice rather than suffer for the sake of right; we discriminate against our neighbours and oppress and persecute them. Christe eleison ... [Christe eleison](#).

The blessing of ashes follows:

Every year at the time of the Christian Passover, we celebrate our Redemption through the Death and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Lent is the time to prepare for this celebration and renew our life in the Paschal Mystery. We begin this holy season by remembering our need for repentance and for the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We begin our journey to Easter with the sign of ashes, an ancient sign, speaking of the frailty and uncertainty of human life; and marking the penitence of the community as a whole.

Let us pray that God will bless these ashes as a sign of our penitence as we begin this holy season of Lent:

Almighty and everlasting God, Who desires not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live, You bestowed Your healing and loving-kindness upon the people of Nineveh as they repented in dust and ashes. We beseech Your compassion on the frailty of our mortal nature and of Your goodness to bless these ashes now to be set upon our heads as a token of our humility and for the remission of our sins. Grant that we, acknowledging ourselves to be but dust and ashes, may, of Your mercy, find pardon of our offences and the reward You promise for those who are penitent. This we ask through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

During the Imposition of Ashes:

Between the vestibule and the altar, let the priests and levites, the ministers of the Lord, weep, saying, "Spare, O Lord, spare Your people; and do not close the mouths who cry to You, O Lord our God. Have mercy on me, O God, in Your great goodness: according to the abundance of Your compassion blot out my offences. Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness: and cleanse me from my sin. (*additional verses may follow before the repetition of the antiphon*). Between the vestibule &c

With confidence and trust in God, remembering that all we have comes from Him and without Him we are nothing, let us lay our thanks and prayers before the Throne of Grace:

Receive us as we come before You with humble and contrite hearts, that our trust might not be in vain. Lord, in Your mercy ... **hear our prayer.**

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In Your goodness, forgive our sins against the unity of Your family; and make us one in heart, one in Spirit. Lord, in Your mercy ... **hear our prayer.**

Turn to us, Lord, and show us Your mercy; blot out our sins that they may be considered no more. Lord, in Your mercy ... **hear our prayer.**

Restore us, Lord, to Your favour and give us joy in Your presence; that with joy we may offer ourselves to You. Lord, in Your mercy ... **hear our prayer.**

Touch our hearts and change our lives; that we may be strengthened in our love for You. Lord, in Your mercy ... **hear our prayer.**

Touch the hearts of those who have abandoned You through sin and scandal, call them back to You and keep them faithful in Your love. Lord, in Your mercy ... **hear our prayer.**

You died for us and rose again - may we share in Your Death and Resurrection. Lord, in Your mercy ... **hear our prayer.**

In union with our Lady, Saint Matthew, Saint Philip, Saint Augustine and all the saints, we ask for grace to put our trust in You and learn always to bow before Your Will for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has given us access to His Grace.

The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

And with thy spirit.

As the bread and wine are brought to the Altar and prepared for the Mass, the following is sung:

I will extol You, O Lord, for You have drawn me up and have not let my foes rejoice over me: O Lord, I cried to You and You healed me.

Here, while the Cherubim within the veil, adore the blest, life-giving Trinity, we in earth's worship echoing their part, hymn the thrice-holy in their company. So let all earthly cares be laid aside, that we may welcome Him Who draweth nigh, the King of Glory entering His courts, girt by the hidden armies of the sky. Miserere, miserere, miserere nobis.

Praise to the Holiest in the height,
And in the depth be praise,
In all His words most wonderful,
Most sure in all His ways.

O loving Wisdom of our God!
When all was sin and shame,
A second Adam to the fight
And to the rescue came.

O wisest love! That flesh and blood,
Which did in Adam fail,
Should strive afresh against the foe,
Should strive and should prevail;

And that a higher gift than grace
Should flesh and blood refine,
God's presence and His very self,
And essence all-divine.

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O generous love! That He Who smote
In man for man the foe,
The double agony in Man
For man should undergo.

And in the garden secretly,
And on the Cross on high,
Should teach His brethren, and inspire
To suffer and to die.

Praise to the Holiest in the height,
And in the depth be praise,
In all His words most wonderful,
Most sure in all His ways.

Words: John Henry Newman 1801 - 90
Music: Gernotius
JB Dykes 1823 - 76

The preparation of the Altar continues; incense may be used to honour the place where Christ will become present. At the end:

Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, the power and the glory and the victory
and the majesty. All that is in Heaven and earth is Thine:
All things come of Thee, O Lord, and of Thine own do we give Thee.

Merciful God, turn us from sin to faithfulness, accept our offering and
prepare us to celebrate the Death and Resurrection of Christ our
Saviour, Who is alive and reigns with You, now and for ever.
Amen.

The priest begins the great prayer of thanksgiving:

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spirit.

Lift up your hearts;

We lift them up unto the Lord.

Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

It is meet and right so to do.

It is indeed right and good
to give you thanks and praise,
almighty God and everlasting Father,
through Jesus Christ your Son.

For in these forty days
you lead us into the desert of repentance
that through a pilgrimage of prayer and discipline
we may grow in grace
and learn to be your people once again.

Through fasting, prayer and acts of service
you bring us back to your generous heart.

Through study of your holy word
you open our eyes to your presence in the world
and free our hands to welcome others
into the radiant splendour of your love.

As we prepare to celebrate the Easter feast
with joyful hearts and minds
we bless you for your mercy
and join with saints and angels
for ever praising you and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.
Glory be to Thee, O Lord most high.**

**+ Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his Apostles
and, taking bread, he praised you.
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

The priest holds up the consecrated Host for the people to see.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:
Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

The priest holds up the chalice of consecrated wine for the people to see.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice
made once for all upon the cross.
Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

**Lord, by Your Cross and Resurrection, You have set us free; You are
the Saviour of the world.**

(continued over the page)

Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.
Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with [*N and*] all the saints
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord,
By Whom and with Whom and in Whom,
Amen,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
Amen,
all honour and glory are Yours, almighty Father, for ever and ever.
Amen.

Instructed by saving precepts and taught by divine example, we are bold to say:
Our Father,
Who art in Heaven,
hallowed by Thy Name;
Thy Kingdom come,
Thy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the Kingdom,
the power and the glory for ever and ever. **Amen**.

We break this bread to share in the Body of Christ.
Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us Thy peace.

The priest holds up the consecrated elements and invites people to receive Holy Communion:

+ Behold the Lamb of God; behold Him, Who takes away the sin of the world; happy are they who are called to His Supper.

Lord, I am not worthy to receive You; but only say the Word and my soul will be healed.

Turn to us with mercy, Lord; for we have sinned against You: help us, God our Saviour, rescue us for the honour of Your Name.

Holy Communion follows.

Lord Jesus, think on me,
And purge away my sin;
From earthborn passions set me free,
And make me pure within.

Lord Jesus, think on me
With many a care opprest;
Let me Thy loving servant be,
And taste Thy promised rest.

Lord Jesus, think on me
Amid the battle's strife;
In all my pain and misery
Be Thou my health and life.

(continued over the page)

Lord Jesus, think on me,
Nor let me go astray;
Through darkness and perplexity
Point Thou the heavenly way.

Lord Jesus, think on me
When flows the tempest high;
When on doth rush the enemy
O Saviour, be Thou nigh.

Lord Jesus, think on me,
That, when the flood is past,
I may the eternal brightness see,
And share Thy joy at last.

Words: Greek Synesius of Cyrene 375 - 430
Tr AW Chatfield 1808 - 96
Music Southwell
Adapted from Ps xiv in
The Psalms in English Metre 1579
W Daman 1540 - 91

After Holy Communion:

Those who meditate day and night on the Law of the Lord will yield fruit in due season.

Let us pray:

Almighty God, You have given Your only Son to be for us both a sacrifice for sin and also an example of Godly life: give us grace that we may always most thankfully receive these His inestimable gifts, and also daily endeavour to follow the blessed steps of His most holy Life; the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Notices may follow.

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness, to deny yourselves daily, take up your cross and follow Him; and the + blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

The Mass is ended. Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the Name of Christ. Amen.

Take up thy cross, the Saviour said,
If Thou wouldst my disciple be;
Deny thyself, the world forsake,
And humbly follow after me.

Take up thy cross, let not its weight
Fill thy weak spirit with alarm;
His strength shall bear thy spirit up,
And brace thy heart, and nerve thy arm.

Take up thy cross, nor heed the shame,
Nor let thy foolish pride rebel;
The Lord for thee the Cross endured,
To save thy soul from death and hell.

Take up thy cross then in His strength,
And calmly every danger brave;
‘Twill guide thee to a better home,
And lead to victory o’er the grave.

Take up thy cross, and follow Christ,
Nor think to death to lay it down;
For only He Who bears the Cross
May hope to win the glorious crown.

(continued over the page)

To Thee, great Lord, the One in Three,
All praise for evermore ascend;
O grant us in our home to see
The heavenly life that knows no end.

Words: Charles Everest 1814 - 77

Music Breslau

Melody from As Hymnodus Sacer Leipzig 1625

Arranged by F Mendelssohn 1809 - 47

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