

The Imposition of Ashes at Home

This form is intended for individual use or by members of a single household at home. It might be used as part of, or in conjunction with, a live-streamed act of worship. Advice on the imposition of ashes in church is available in the [Lent, Holy Week, and Easter](#) COVID-19 guidance.

All may join in praying

Holy God,
All **our lives are laid open before you:
rescue us from the chaos of sin
and through the death of your Son
bring us healing and make us whole
in Jesus Christ our Lord.**

One of the following passages of Scripture may be read.

Jesus said to his disciples, 'Beware of practising your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

'So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell 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 done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

'And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever 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 whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

‘Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Matthew 6. 1-6, 16-21

(or)

Early in the morning Jesus came again to the temple. All the people came to him and he sat down and began to teach them. The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery; and making her stand before all of them, they said to him, ‘Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?’ They said this to test him, so that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, ‘Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.’ And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders; and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus straightened up and said to her, ‘Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?’ She said, ‘No one, sir.’ And Jesus said, ‘Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.’

John 8. 1-11

A leader may say

Let us receive these ashes
as a sign of the spirit of penitence
with which we shall keep this season of Lent.

God our Father,
you create us from the dust of the earth:
grant that these ashes may be for us
a sign of our penitence
and a symbol of our mortality;
for it is by your grace alone
that we receive eternal life
in Jesus Christ our Saviour.

All **Amen.**

Ashes are imposed on the forehead of each person, including the leader. Members of a household may impose ashes on one another.

At the imposition the person administering the ashes may say

Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.
Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ.

or the ashes may be imposed without the use of words.

Prayers may be offered.

At the end the leader or another person may say

God our Father,
the strength of all who put their trust in you,
mercifully accept our prayers;
and because, in our weakness,
we can do nothing good without you,
grant us the help of your grace,
that in keeping your commandments
we may please you, both in will and deed;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

Helpful advice

- The ash used on Ash Wednesday is often made from palm crosses distributed in previous years, but any suitable material may be used. The ash should be prepared through burning outside if possible, or in a very well ventilated place.
- Before use the ash may be mixed with a little oil or water.
- Ash is often imposed on the forehead in the form of a cross.