

Lent

Lent

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Introduction to the Season

Lent may originally have followed Epiphany, just as Jesus' sojourn in the wilderness followed immediately on his baptism, but it soon became firmly attached to Easter, as the principal occasion for baptism and for the reconciliation of those who had been excluded from the Church's fellowship for apostasy or serious faults. This history explains the characteristic notes of Lent – self-examination, penitence, self-denial, study, and preparation for Easter, to which almsgiving has traditionally been added.

Now is the healing time decreed
for sins of heart and word and deed,
when we in humble fear record
the wrong that we have done the Lord.

(Latin, before 12th century)

As the candidates for baptism were instructed in Christian faith, and as penitents prepared themselves, through fasting and penance, to be readmitted to communion, the whole Christian community was invited to join them in the process of study and repentance, the extension of which over forty days would remind them of the forty days that Jesus spent in the wilderness, being tested by Satan.

Ashes are an ancient sign of penitence; from the middle ages it became the custom to begin Lent by being marked in ash with the sign of the cross. The calculation of the forty days has varied considerably in Christian history. It is now usual in the West to count them continuously to the end of Holy Week (not including Sundays), so beginning Lent on the sixth Wednesday before Easter, Ash Wednesday. Liturgical dress is the simplest possible. Churches are kept bare of flowers and decoration. *Gloria in excelsis* is not used. The Fourth Sunday of Lent (*Laetare* or Refreshment Sunday) was allowed as a day of relief from the rigour of Lent, and the Feast of the Annunciation almost always falls in Lent; these breaks from austerity are the background to the modern observance of Mothering Sunday on the Fourth Sunday of Lent.

As Holy Week approaches, the atmosphere of the season darkens; the readings begin to anticipate the story of Christ's suffering and death, and the reading of the Passion Narrative gave to the Fifth Sunday its name of Passion Sunday. There are many devotional exercises which may be used in Lent and Holy Week outside the set liturgy. The Stations of the Cross, made popular in the West by the Franciscans after they were granted custody of the Christian sites in the Holy Land, are the best known.

Seasonal Material

Invitations to Confession

- A1** The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart God will not despise.
Let us come to the Lord, who is full of compassion,
and acknowledge our transgressions in penitence and faith.
- A2** Compassion and forgiveness belong to the Lord our God,
though we have rebelled against him.
Let us then renounce our wilfulness and ask his mercy
by confessing our sins in penitence and faith.
- A3** Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led
by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted
by the devil. Let us confess our sins remembering before God the
times when we have fallen from temptation into sin.

Kyrie Confessions

B1 Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness
and cleanse me from my sin:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Make me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me:
Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

Cast me not away from your presence
and take not your holy spirit from me:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

B2 Wash away all my iniquity
and cleanse me from my sin:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Against you, you only have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight:
Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

cf Psalm 51

B3 We confess to you our selfishness and lack of love:
fill us with your Spirit.
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

We confess to you our fear and failure in sharing our faith:
fill us with your Spirit.
Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

We confess to you our stubbornness and lack of trust:
fill us with your Spirit.
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Gospel Acclamations

G1 Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.
The Lord is a great God, O that today you would listen to his voice.
Harden not your hearts. *cf Psalm 95.3,8*
Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

G2 Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.
Blessed are those who have endured temptation;
they have stood the test and will receive the crown of life. *James 1.12*
Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

G3 Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.
I am the light of the world, says the Lord,
whoever follows me will have the light of life. *John 8.12*
Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

G4 Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.
Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. *Psalm 119.105*
Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

Intercessions

H/

With confidence and trust let us pray to the Father.

For the one holy catholic and apostolic Church ...

let us pray to the Father.

Lord of compassion,

in your mercy hear us.

For the mission of the Church,

that in faithful witness it may preach the gospel

to the ends of the earth,

let us pray to the Father.

Lord of compassion,

in your mercy hear us.

For those preparing for baptism [and confirmation] ...

and for their teachers and sponsors,

let us pray to the Father.

Lord of compassion,

in your mercy hear us.

For peace in the world ...

that a spirit of respect and reconciliation may grow

among nations and peoples,

let us pray to the Father.

Lord of compassion,

in your mercy hear us.

For the poor, the persecuted, the sick, and all who suffer ...

for refugees, prisoners, and all in danger;

that they may be relieved and protected,

let us pray to the Father.

Lord of compassion,

in your mercy hear us.

For those whom we have injured or offended,

let us pray to the Father.

Lord of compassion,

in your mercy hear us.

For grace to amend our lives and to further the reign of God,

let us pray to the Father.

Lord of compassion,

in your mercy hear us.

In communion with all those who have walked in the way of holiness ...

let us pray to the Father.

Lord of compassion,

in your mercy hear us.

God our Father,
in your love and goodness
you have taught us to come close to you in penitence
with prayer, fasting and generosity;
accept our Lenten discipline,
and when we fall by our weakness,
raise us up by your unfailing mercy;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

H2

We pray to the Lord for courage to give up other things
and to give ourselves to him this Lent.

Give your Church the courage
to give up her preoccupation with herself
and to give more time to your mission in the world.
[We pray for ...]

May the blood and water flowing from the side of Jesus
bring forgiveness to your people
and help us to face the cost of proclaiming salvation.
Lord, meet us in the silence,
give us strength and hear our prayer.

Give your world the courage
to give up war, bitterness and hatred,
and to seek peace.
[We pray for ...]

May the shoulders of the risen Jesus,
once scourged by soldiers,
bear the burden of political and military conflict in our world.
Lord, meet us in the silence,
give us strength and hear our prayer.

Give us the courage to give up quarrels, strife and jealousy
in our families, neighbourhoods and communities.
[We pray for ...]

May the presence of the risen Jesus,
his body once broken and now made whole,
bring peace and direction as we live with one another.
Lord, meet us in the silence,
give us strength and hear our prayer.

Give us the courage
to give up our selfishness as we live for others,
and to give time, care and comfort to the sick.
[We pray for ...]

May the wounded hands of Jesus bring his healing touch,
and the light of his presence fill their rooms.

Lord, meet us in the silence,

give us strength and hear our prayer.

Give us the courage to give up our fear of death
and to rejoice with those who have died in faith.

[Especially we hold ... in our minds.]

May the feet of the risen Lord Jesus, once nailed to the cross,
walk alongside the dying and bereaved in their agony,
and walk with us and all your Church
through death to the gate of glory.

Lord, meet us in the silence,

**give us strength and hear our prayer,
here and in eternity. Amen.**

Introduction to the Peace

J/

Since we are justified by faith,
we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
who has given us access to his grace.

Romans 5.1,2

Prayers at the Preparation of the Table

K/

God of wisdom,
may the light of your eternal Word,
our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,
lead us in holiness and guide us to glory;
we ask this in his name.

Amen.

K2

God of mercy and compassion,
your Word calls us home to faith and love.
accept all we offer you this day;
in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

Amen.

K3

God of our journey,
as we walk with you on your path of obedience,
sustain us on our way and lead us to your glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Prefaces

- L1** And now we give you thanks
because you give us the spirit of discipline,
that we may triumph over evil and grow in grace,
as we prepare to celebrate the paschal mystery
with mind and heart renewed.
- L2** And now we give you thanks
because he was tempted in every way as we are, yet did not sin.
By his grace we are able to triumph over every evil,
and to live no longer for ourselves alone,
but for him who died for us and rose again.
- L3** And now we give you thanks
because each year you give us this joyful season
when we prepare to celebrate the paschal mystery
with mind and heart renewed.
You give us a spirit of loving reverence for you
and of willing service to our neighbour.
As we recall the saving acts that give new life in Christ,
you bring the image of your Son to perfection within our hearts.

Extended Preface

- M1** 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*:

Blessings

P1 Christ give you grace to grow in holiness,
to deny yourselves, take up your cross, and follow him;
and the blessing ...

P2 God,
who from the death of sin raised you to new life in Christ,
keep you from falling and set you in the presence of his glory;
and the blessing ...

P3 May God the Father,
who does not despise the broken spirit,
give to you a contrite heart.

Amen.

May Christ,
who bore our sins in his body on the tree,
heal you by his wounds.

Amen.

May the Holy Spirit,
who leads us into all truth,
speak to you words of pardon and peace.

Amen.

And the blessing ...

Acclamations

R1 This is love, not that we loved God,
but that he loved us and sent his Son.
He is the sacrifice for our sins,
that we might live through him.
If God loves us so much
we ought to love one another.
If we love one another
God lives in us. *cf 1 John 4.10-12*

R2 To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul;
O my God, in you I trust.
You are the God of my salvation;
To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.
In you I hope all the day long.
O my God, in you I trust.
Remember, Lord, your compassion and love,
for they are from everlasting.
To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul;
O my God, in you I trust.

Short Passages of Scripture

S1 The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. *Psalms 51.18*

S2 The Lord is full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and of great kindness. *Psalms 103.8*

S3 For thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel:
In returning and rest you shall be saved;
in quietness and in trust shall be your strength. *Isaiah 30.15*

S4 He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan;
and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. *Mark 1.13*

S5 Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to
escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the
Son of Man. *Luke 21.36*

The Liturgy of Ash Wednesday

Structure

- ¶ The Gathering
 - The Greeting
 - Introduction
 - The Collect

- ¶ The Liturgy of the Word
 - Readings
 - Gospel Reading
 - Sermon

- ¶ The Liturgy of Penitence
 - Self-examination and Confession
 - Imposition of Ashes
 - Absolution

- ¶ The Liturgy of the Sacrament
 - The Peace
 - Preparation of the Table
 - Taking of the Bread and Wine
 - The Eucharistic Prayer
 - The Lord's Prayer
 - Breaking of the Bread
 - Giving of Communion
 - Prayer after Communion

- ¶ The Dismissal
 - Responsory
 - The Dismissal Gospel
 - The Blessing
 - The Dismissal

The Liturgy of Ash Wednesday

Notes

1 Liturgical Colour for Lent

The traditional colour is violet; if possible, this should be different from the imperial purple used for Advent. Lenten Array, which is unbleached linen, may also be used. Hangings and flowers should be removed, though dry arrangements may be appropriate.

2 When to use the Rite

This service is intended for use on Ash Wednesday, but where necessary it may be used up to the first Sunday in Lent.

3 Silence

The silence during the Liturgy of Penitence is an integral part of the rite and should not be omitted or reduced to a mere pause.

4 Confession and Absolution

Other authorized forms of confession and absolution may replace the forms used in this service.

5 Ash

The ash used for the Imposition of Ashes may be made from the burnt palm crosses of the previous year. Members of the congregation may be asked to return the palm crosses to church on the Sunday before Lent and the palm crosses could be burned as part of the activities of Shrove Tuesday. If necessary, other provision may be made.

6 Imposition of Ashes

The president may be assisted by others with the imposition of ashes, especially in larger congregations. The ashes may be imposed with the words provided or in silence, or brief personal prayer may be offered.

7 Dismissal Gospel

The Responsory and the reading of a Dismissal Gospel are optional.

The Liturgy of Ash Wednesday

¶ *The Gathering*

At the entry of the ministers a hymn may be sung.

The president may say

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

All **Amen.**

The Greeting

The president greets the people

Grace, mercy and peace
from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ
be with you

All **and also with you.**

Introduction

The president explains the meaning of Lent and invites the people to observe it faithfully

Brothers and sisters in Christ, since early days Christians have observed with great devotion the time of our Lord's passion and resurrection and prepared for this by a season of penitence and fasting.

By carefully keeping these days, Christians take to heart the call to repentance and the assurance of forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel, and so grow in faith and in devotion to our Lord.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy word.

The Trisagion or another suitable penitential song may be used

All **Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us.**

The Collect

The president introduces a period of silent prayer with the words

Let us pray for grace to keep Lent faithfully.

Silence is kept.

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;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

(or)

Holy God,
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.

All **Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Word

Readings

Either one or two readings from Scripture precede the Gospel reading.

At the end of each the reader may say

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

The psalm or canticle follows the first reading; other hymns and songs may be used between the readings.

Gospel Reading

This acclamation may herald the Gospel reading

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

The Lord is a great God, O that today you would listen to his voice.

Harden not your hearts.

cf Psalm 95.3, 8

All Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

When the Gospel is announced the reader says

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

All Glory to you, O Lord.

At the end

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Self-examination and Confession

A minister now leads a corporate examination of conscience, using one of these forms or another suitable form

Either Let us now call to mind our sin and the infinite mercy of God.

God the Father,
All have mercy on us.

God the Son,
All have mercy on us.

God the Holy Spirit,
All have mercy on us.

Trinity of love,
All have mercy on us.

**All Most merciful God,
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess that we have sinned
in thought, word and deed.**

We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and strength.
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
We have not forgiven others, as we have been forgiven.

All Lord, have mercy.

We have been deaf to your call to serve, as Christ served us.
We have not been true to the mind of Christ.
We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

All Lord, have mercy.

We confess to you, Lord ...

all our past unfaithfulness: the pride, hypocrisy and impatience of our lives.
All Lord, have mercy.

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people.
All Lord, have mercy.

Our anger at our own frustration
and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves.
All Lord, have mercy.

Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts
and our dishonesty in daily life and work.
All Lord, have mercy.

Our negligence in prayer and worship
and our failure to commend the faith that is in us.
All Lord, have mercy.

Accept our repentance, Lord ...

for the wrongs we have done,
for our blindness to human need and suffering,
and our indifference to injustice and cruelty.

All Accept our repentance, Lord.

For all false judgements,
for uncharitable thoughts towards our neighbours
and for our prejudice and contempt towards those who differ from us.

All Accept our repentance, Lord.

For our waste and pollution of your creation
and our lack of concern for those who come after us.

All Accept our repentance, Lord.

Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us.

All Favourably hear us, for your mercy is great.

Accomplish in us the work of your salvation,
that we may show your glory in the world.

All

By the cross and passion of your Son our Lord,
bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.

All

Silence is kept.

**All We have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.**

**In your mercy
forgive what we have been,
help us to amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be;
that we may do justly,
love mercy,
and walk humbly with you, our God.
Amen.**

If the people are to be marked with ash this should follow here; otherwise the service continues with an authorized absolution and the exchange of the Peace.

Or Let us now call to mind our sin and the infinite mercy of God.

God the Father,

All **have mercy upon us.**

God the Son,

All **have mercy upon us.**

God the Holy Spirit,

All **have mercy upon us.**

Holy, blessed and glorious Trinity,

All **have mercy upon us.**

From all evil and mischief;
from pride, vanity, and hypocrisy;
from envy, hatred, and malice;
and from all evil intent,

All **good Lord, deliver us.**

From sloth, worldliness and love of money;
from hardness of heart
and contempt for your word and your laws,

All **good Lord, deliver us.**

From sins of body and mind;
from the deceits of the world, the flesh and the devil,

All **good Lord, deliver us.**

In all times of sorrow;
in all times of joy;
in the hour of death,
and at the day of judgement,

All **good Lord, deliver us.**

By the mystery of your holy incarnation;
by your birth, childhood and obedience;
by your baptism, fasting and temptation,

All **good Lord, deliver us.**

By your ministry in word and work;
by your mighty acts of power;
and by your preaching of the kingdom,

All **good Lord, deliver us.**

By your agony and trial;
by your cross and passion;
and by your precious death and burial,

All **good Lord, deliver us.**

By your mighty resurrection;
by your glorious ascension;
and by your sending of the Holy Spirit,

All **good Lord, deliver us.**

Give us true repentance;
 forgive us our sins of negligence and ignorance
 and our deliberate sins;
 and grant us the grace of your Holy Spirit
 to amend our lives according to your holy word.

All **Holy God,
 holy and strong,
 holy and immortal,
 have mercy upon us.**

Silence is kept.

All Make our hearts clean, O God;
and renew a right spirit within us.

All **Father eternal, giver of light and grace,
 we have sinned against you and against our neighbour,
 in what we have thought,
 in what we have said and done,
 through ignorance, through weakness,
 through our own deliberate fault.
 We have wounded your love,
 and marred your image in us.
 We are sorry and ashamed,
 and repent of all our sins.
 For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
 who died for us,
 forgive us all that is past;
 and lead us out from darkness
 to walk as children of light. Amen.**

If the people are to be marked with ash this should follow here, otherwise the service continues with an authorized absolution and the exchange of the Peace.

The Imposition of Ashes

If the imposition of ashes is to follow, the president says

Dear friends in Christ,
I invite you to 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.**

The president and people receive the imposition of ashes, the president first receiving the imposition from another minister. At the imposition the minister says to each person

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.

During the imposition silence may be kept, or a hymn, anthem or psalm may be sung.

One of these two prayers may be said by the president

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.**

(or)

The Lord enrich *you* with his grace,
and nourish *you* with his blessing;
the Lord defend *you* in trouble and keep *you* from all evil;
the Lord accept *your* prayers,
and absolve *you* from *your* offences,
for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

All **Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

Since we are justified by faith,
we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
who has given us access to his grace.

All The peace of the Lord be always with you
and also with you.

These words may be added

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All may exchange a sign of peace.

Preparation of the Table Taking of the Bread and Wine

A hymn may be sung.

The gifts of the people may be gathered and presented.

The table is prepared and bread and wine are placed upon it.

At the preparation of the table one of these prayers may be said

Merciful Father,
turn us from sin to faithfulness
and from disobedience to love,
and prepare us to celebrate
the death and resurrection of Christ our Saviour
who is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

(or)

Risen Lord and Saviour,
present among us with the wealth of your love.
Cleanse us from sin and give us the faith
to offer our praise and grow in your grace.

All **Amen.**

The president takes the bread and wine.

The Eucharistic Prayer

The president uses one of the authorized Eucharistic Prayers.

One of the following Proper Prefaces may be used where appropriate.

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*:

(or)

And now we give you thanks
because you give us the spirit of discipline,
that we may triumph over evil and grow in grace,
as we prepare to celebrate the paschal mystery
with mind and heart renewed.

The Lord's Prayer

Lord Jesus, remember us in your kingdom
and teach us to pray.

The Lord's Prayer is said.

Breaking of the Bread

The president breaks the consecrated bread.

Every time we eat this bread
and drink this cup
**All we proclaim the Lord's death
until he comes.**

The Agnus Dei may be used as the bread is broken.

Giving of Communion

The president says

Draw near with faith.
 Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
 which he gave for you,
 and his blood which he shed for you.
 Eat and drink
 in remembrance that he died for you,
 and feed on him in your hearts
 by faith with thanksgiving.

(or)

Jesus is the Lamb of God
 who takes away the sin of the world.
 Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

All **Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
 but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

The Prayer of Humble Access may be used.

During the distribution hymns and anthems may be sung. The Common Worship provision is followed for consecration of additional bread and wine and for disposing of what remains (Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England, page 182).

Prayer after Communion

Silence is kept.

This Post Communion or other suitable prayer is said

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;
 through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

All may say

All **God of our pilgrimage,
 you have fed us with the bread of heaven.
 Refresh and sustain us
 as we go forward on our journey,
 in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

The Dismissal

A hymn may be sung.

Responsory

This responsory may be used

This is love, not that we loved God,
All but that he loved us and sent his Son.

He is the sacrifice for our sins,
All that we might live through him.

If God loves us so much
All we ought to love one another.

If we love one another

All God lives in us.

cf 1 John 4.12

The Dismissal Gospel

This Dismissal Gospel may be used

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

All Glory to you, O Lord.

Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbours, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who need no repentance.

Luke 15.4-7

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

The Blessing

Either of these blessings may be used

May God the Father,
who does not despise the broken spirit,
give to you a contrite heart.

All **Amen.**

May Christ,
who bore our sins in his body on the tree,
heal you by his wounds.

All **Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit,
who leads us into all truth,
speak to you words of pardon and peace.

All **Amen.**

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

(or)

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness,
to deny yourselves, 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.

All **Amen.**

The Dismissal

A minister dismisses the people.

These words may be used

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

(or)

Go in the peace of Christ.

All **Thanks be to God.**

The ministers and people depart.

The Way of the Cross

A Brief History

The Stations of the Cross have formed part of Christian devotion at Passiontide for many centuries because they enable us to engage actively with the path of suffering walked by Jesus. They originated when early Christians visited Jerusalem and wanted to follow literally in the footsteps of Jesus, tracing the path from Pilate's house to Calvary. They would pause for prayer and devotion at various points. Eventually those pilgrims brought the practice back to their home countries and ever since then Christians of differing traditions have used this form of devotion.

In the late fourteenth century the Franciscans were given the responsibility for the holy places of Jerusalem and they erected tableaux to aid the devotion of the visitors. These kinds of images are now commonplace inside churches, and occasionally outside them.

The number of stations has varied immensely through the centuries from as few as five to as many as thirty-six, but the now traditional number of fourteen was established by Clement XII in 1731 – nine scriptural stations and a further five based on popular devotion. However, owing to the increasing ecumenical popularity of this devotion there have been attempts to create a wholly scriptural set on which to focus.

The selection of stations presented here all have their root in the biblical story of Jesus rather than drawing on legend or popular, yet unscriptural, stories. This development makes the Stations of the Cross more accessible to all traditions within the Christian Church.

The recent rediscovery of the unity of the death and resurrection of Jesus has also led to the inclusion of a fifteenth station – the Resurrection. Though this may be superseded by the emergence of the Stations of the Resurrection as part of popular devotion, it is strongly suggested that this station be included, especially if the stations are used outside Lent and Passiontide.

Here, we offer liturgical resources only for scriptural stations, because those churches which have non-scriptural tableaux in place will probably have the resources already. Many churches will no doubt continue to use the fourteen 'traditional' stations because they are determined by the tableaux that are hung in the churches. For the information of those who may wish to use the 'traditional' stations they are listed on page 256.

The stations may be used as a focus for personal prayer or as part of a liturgical celebration. In this latter context they have been used either as a whole service in themselves, or a few of the stations have been used in the context of a larger liturgical celebration.

Notes

1 Images

As well as the traditional tableaux around the walls of (or even outside) churches, there are a number of publishers who produce images that can easily be displayed when the Stations are used. There are also ways of representing the stations symbolically: for example, the Agony in the Garden could be represented by a goblet or chalice with wine in it, the betrayal and arrest by a pair of handcuffs etc. At the beginning of the service a large cross could be prominent, or brought in, from which the Gathering and the Conclusion could be led.

2 Movement

Movement is at the heart of this kind of worship. If possible, people should be encouraged to leave their places, move around the building and gather at each station. However, where it is necessary for the congregation to stay in their seats they could be encouraged to turn and face each of the stations.

3 Structuring the Service

The structure of the main part of the service is self-explanatory. The Gathering and the Conclusion should always be included. It is not necessary that all the stations be used in one act of worship; a few of them might be used over a number of weeks. It is recommended, however, that the order presented here should be maintained.

4 Response

At the end there is the opportunity to insert an appropriate response. This could be penitence, praise, intercession or some action that is appropriate to the stations selected.

5 Music

Hymns or songs may be added at suitable points. It is traditional to use a verse from the hymn *Stabat Mater* to conclude each station. If this is used it could replace the *Trisagion*.

6 Holy Communion

If the stations are to form part of a service of Holy Communion they form the Liturgy of the Word, and the Liturgy of the Sacrament begins with the Peace. Care should be taken to conform with the requirements of *A Service of the Word with a Celebration of Holy Communion (Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England, page 25)*.

The Way of the Cross

The Gathering

The ministers enter in silence.

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

All **Amen.**

Jesus told his disciples, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.' *Matthew 16.24,25*

Once we were far off, but now in union with Christ Jesus we have been brought near through the shedding of Christ's blood, for he is our peace. *Ephesians 2.13,14*

An appropriate greeting may be given.

A minister may introduce the service and then says

Let us pray.

A brief moment of silence follows.

Almighty and everlasting God,
who in your tender love towards the human race
sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ
to take upon him our flesh
and to suffer death upon the cross:
grant that we may follow the example of his patience and humility,
and also be made partakers of his resurrection;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

All **Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us.**

† *First Station:*
Jesus in agony in the Garden of Gethsemane

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
All **because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Reading

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark.

They went to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, 'Sit here while I pray.' He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated. And he said to them, 'I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake.' And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. He said, 'Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want.'

Mark 14.32-36

Reflection / Meditation

Reflection or meditation may follow.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you entered the garden of fear
 and faced the agony of your impending death:
 be with those who share that agony
 and face death unwillingly this day.
 You shared our fear and knew the weakness of our humanity:
 give strength and hope to the dispirited and despairing.
 To you, Jesus, who sweated blood,
 be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
 now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

All **Holy God,
 holy and strong,
 holy and immortal,
 have mercy upon us.**

Second Station: *Jesus betrayed by Judas and arrested*

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
All **because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Reading

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark.

Immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; and with him there was a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, 'The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard.' So when he came, he went up to him at once and said, 'Rabbi!' and kissed him. Then they laid hands on him and arrested him.

Mark 14.43-46

Reflection / Meditation

Reflection or meditation may follow.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you were betrayed by the kiss of a friend:
be with those who are betrayed and slandered and falsely accused.
You knew the experience of having your love
thrown back in your face for mere silver:
be with families which are torn apart by mistrust or temptation.
To you, Jesus, who offered your face to your betrayer,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

All **Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us.**

¶ *Third Station:* *Jesus condemned by the Sanhedrin*

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,

All **because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Reading

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark.

Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death; but they found none. For many gave false testimony against him, and their testimony did not agree. Some stood up and gave false testimony against him, saying, 'We heard him say, "I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands".' But even on this point their testimony did not agree. Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, 'Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?' But he was silent and did not answer. Again the high priest asked him, 'Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?' Jesus said, 'I am; and "you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power", and "coming with the clouds of heaven".' Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, 'Why do we still need witnesses? You have heard his blasphemy! What is your decision?' All of them condemned him as deserving death.

Mark 14.55-64

Reflection / Meditation

Reflection or meditation may follow.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you were the victim of religious bigotry:
be with those who are persecuted by small-minded authority.
You faced the condemnation of fearful hearts:
deepen the understanding of those who shut themselves off from the
experience and wisdom of others.
To you, Jesus, unjustly judged victim,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

All **Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us.**

Fourth Station: *Peter denies Jesus*

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
All **because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Reading

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark.

At that moment the cock crowed for the second time. Then Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him, 'Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.'

And he broke down and wept.

Mark 14.72

Reflection / Meditation

Reflection or meditation may follow.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, as Peter betrayed you,
you experienced the double agony of love rejected and friendship denied:
be with those who know no friends and are rejected by society.
You understood the fear within Peter:
help us to understand the anxieties of those who fear for their future.
To you, Jesus, who gazed with sadness at your lost friend,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

All **Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us.**

¶ Fifth Station: Jesus judged by Pilate

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
All **because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Reading

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark.

Pilate asked them, 'Why, what evil has he done?' But they shouted all the more, 'Crucify him!' So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified. *Mark 15.14,15*

Reflection / Meditation

Reflection or meditation may follow.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you were condemned to death for political expediency:
be with those who are imprisoned for the convenience of the powerful.
You were the victim of unbridled injustice:
change the minds and motivations of oppressors and exploiters to your
way of peace.

To you, Jesus, innocent though condemned,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

All **Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us.**

Sixth Station: *Jesus scourged and crowned with thorns*

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
All **because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Reading

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark.

And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him. And they began saluting him, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him.

Mark 15.17-19

Reflection / Meditation

Reflection or meditation may follow.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you faced the torment of barbaric punishment and mocking tongue:
be with those who cry out in physical agony and emotional distress.
You endured unbearable abuse:
be with those who face torture and mockery in our world today.
To you, Jesus, the King crowned with thorns,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

All **Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us.**

† *Seventh Station:* *Jesus carries the cross*

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
All **because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Reading

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark.

After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him. *Mark 15.20*

Reflection / Meditation

Reflection or meditation may follow.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you carried the cross through the rough streets of Jerusalem:
be with those who are loaded with burdens beyond their strength.
You bore the weight of our sins when you carried the cross:
help us to realize the extent and the cost of your love for us.
To you, Jesus, bearing a cross not your own,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

All **Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us.**

Eighth Station: *Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry the cross*

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
All **because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Reading

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark.

They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross;
it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus. *Mark 15.21*

Reflection / Meditation

Reflection or meditation may follow.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you were worn down by fatigue:
be with those from whom life drains all energy.
You needed the help of a passing stranger:
give us the humility to receive aid from others.
To you, Jesus, weighed down with exhaustion and in need of help,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

All **Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us.**

¶ Ninth Station: *Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem*

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
All **because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Reading

A reading from the Gospel according to Luke.

A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For the days are surely coming when they will say, "Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed." Then they will begin to say to the mountains, "Fall on us"; and to the hills, "Cover us." For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?'

Luke 23.27-31

Reflection / Meditation

Reflection or meditation may follow.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, the women of Jerusalem wept for you:
move us to tears at the plight of the broken in our world.
You embraced the pain of Jerusalem, the 'city of peace':
bless Jerusalem this day and lead it to the path of profound peace.
To you, Jesus, the King of peace who wept for the city of peace,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

All **Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us.**

Tenth Station: Jesus is crucified

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
All **because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Reading

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark.

And they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take. *Mark 15.24*

Reflection / Meditation

Reflection or meditation may follow.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you bled in pain as the nails were driven into your flesh:
transform through the mystery of your love the pain of those who suffer.
To you, Jesus, our crucified Lord,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

All **Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us.**

¶ *Eleventh Station:*
Jesus promises the kingdom to the penitent thief

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
All **because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Reading

A reading from the Gospel according to Luke.

One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, 'Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!' But the other rebuked him, saying, 'Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.' Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' He replied, 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.'

Luke 23.39-43

Reflection / Meditation

Reflection or meditation may follow.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, even in your deepest agony you listened to the crucified thief:
 hear us as we unburden to you our deepest fears.
 You spoke words of love in your hour of death:
 help us to speak words of life to a dying world.
 To you, Jesus, who offer hope to the hopeless,
 be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
 now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

All **Holy God,
 holy and strong,
 holy and immortal,
 have mercy upon us.**

Twelfth Station: *Jesus on the cross; his mother and his friend*

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
All **because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Reading

A reading from the Gospel according to John.

When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

John 19.26,27

Reflection / Meditation

Reflection or meditation may follow.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, your mother and your dearest friend stayed with you to the bitter end, yet even while racked with pain you ministered to them:
be with all broken families today
and care for those who long for companionship.
You cared for your loved ones even in your death-throes:
give us a love for one another
that is stronger even than the fear of death.
To you, Jesus, loving in the face of death,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

All **Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us.**

¶ Thirteenth Station: *Jesus dies on the cross*

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
All **because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Reading

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark.

At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, 'Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?' which means, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, 'Listen, he is calling for Elijah.' And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, 'Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.' Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.
Mark 15.34-37

Reflection / Meditation

Reflection or meditation may follow.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you died on the cross
and entered the bleakest of all circumstances:
give courage to those who die at the hands of others.
In death you entered into the darkest place of all:
illumine our darkness with your glorious presence.
To you, Jesus, your lifeless body hanging on the tree of shame,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

All **Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us.**

Fourteenth Station: Jesus laid in the tomb

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
All **because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Reading

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark.

Then Joseph bought a linen cloth, and taking down the body, wrapped it in the linen cloth, and laid it in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. *Mark 15.46*

Reflection / Meditation

Reflection or meditation may follow.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, Lord of life, you became as nothing for us:
be with those who feel worthless and as nothing in the world's eyes.
You were laid in a cold, dark tomb and hidden from sight:
be with all who suffer and die in secret,
hidden from the eyes of the world.
To you, Jesus, your rigid body imprisoned in a tomb,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

All **Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us.**

† Fifteenth Station: *Jesus risen from the dead*

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,

All **because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Reading

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark.

When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, 'Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.' So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Mark 16.4-8

Reflection / Meditation

Reflection or meditation may follow.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you were dead but now you are alive:
transform the torments of this world's sin
that we may see your radiant glory.
You were raised from death to life:
may the power of your resurrection live in us,
that we may be channels of your true life beyond measure.
To you, Jesus, who have broken free from the bonds of death,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

All **Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us.**

The Conclusion

A response may be made to the preceding stations. This might take the form of praise, penitence, intercession or some other relevant action, accompanied by silence or singing.

Let us pray for the coming of God's kingdom
in the words our Saviour taught us.

The Lord's Prayer is said.

Most merciful God,
who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ
delivered and saved the world:
grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross
we may triumph in the power of his victory;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

One of the following responsories is used

You are worthy, O Lamb, for you were slain,
and by your blood you ransomed for God
saints from every tribe and language and nation;
you have made them to be a kingdom and priests
serving our God.

**All We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

To him who loves us
and has freed us from our sins by his blood,
and made us a kingdom of priests
to stand and serve before our God;

**All to him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb
be praise and honour, glory and might,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

(or)

**All We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Christ was manifested in the body,
vindicated in the spirit,
seen by angels,
proclaimed among the nations,
believed in throughout the world,
glorified in high heaven.

**All We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

The Lord be with you.

All And also with you.

May God bless us,
that in us may be found love and humility,
obedience and thanksgiving,
discipline, gentleness and peace.

All Amen.

The ministers depart in silence.

The Way of the Cross: the 'Traditional' Stations

I

Pilate condemns Jesus to death

II

Jesus accepts his cross

III

Jesus falls the first time

IV

Jesus meets his mother

V

Simon helps Jesus carry the cross

VI

Veronica offers her veil to Jesus

VII

Jesus falls the second time

VIII

Jesus speaks to the women of Jerusalem

IX

Jesus falls the third time

X

Jesus is stripped of his garments

XI

Jesus is nailed to the cross

XII

Jesus dies on the cross

XIII

Jesus is taken down from the cross

XIV

Jesus is placed in the tomb

A further station depicting the resurrection of Jesus may be added.