

## Ash Wednesday Service #2

### Preparation:

- Bowls with ashes for each class and sackcloth strips (from the parish) on tables
- Intercessions written and children prepared to read them
- Reading from Daniel prepared by a student
- Bible and purple cloth on lecturn
- Music chosen (words and music practised with students beforehand)

### Commentator:

(A Student) Today is Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent. During the forty days of Lent, we think about Jesus who lived and died for us. Lent helps us to get ready to celebrate Jesus' resurrection at Easter, the most important time for Christians.

We receive ashes today -- ashes that are gray and do not have any warmth or life. These ashes remind us that sometimes we do not live like followers of Jesus and that we must change. That's why the Church gives us Lent -- to work on changing the gray, lifeless side of ourselves.

### *Song:*

God Has Made Us A Family, C. Landry

### Prayer:

(Priest) Loving God, you sent Jesus to save us from our sins. Have mercy on your children today and help us as we begin this time of Lent. Forgive our sins and help us to be like Jesus. We pray in his name. Amen.

Scripture: Daniel 9:3-6

### Homily Suggestions:

Ashes are all that's left after a campfire  
When life is gone; there is no more energy, light or life  
There is an ash side to all of us: tired, lazy, selfish -- that God wants to change.

God wants to bring us to life in Jesus who is risen from the dead. (Introduce sackcloth strips to be placed on the crosses in the classroom and foyer)  
Sackcloth and ashes are the reversal of the white cloth and oil of chrism given to us at Baptism; they remind us of what we are and become without the creative Spirit which was given to us at Baptism and deepened at Confirmation.

Blessing of Ashes for School:

Blessed are you, Lord our god, creator of the universe and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: in obedience to his command and his example, we begin this time of change and of prayer. Bless + these ashes as a sign that we are ready to live a new life in Jesus Christ. Keep us faithful to You and to our observance of Lent. We pray in the name of Jesus our risen Lord. Amen.

Distribution of ashes and sackcloth strips to student/teacher for each class:

The priest imposes ashes on the heads of those designated to do so in the class with these words: Turn away from your sins and believe the Good News of Jesus Christ. After receiving the ashes this person picks up (or is given) the sackcloth strip for the class. (There could be quiet instrumental music during this action.)

Intercessions:

The priest invites all to join in prayer for the church and for the world. The petitions could include the needs of children, leaders of the church and of the world, the school community, for sinners and for peace in the world.

The Lord's Prayer:

Blessing:

Closing Song: - Children of the Light

During song classes leave with teacher who has bowl of ashes and sackcloth strip. In the classroom each student receives the ashes with the words, Turn away from sin and believe the Good News of Jesus Christ. Students gather around the class prayer centre as the sackcloth strip is draped around the cross.