

The Blofield Benefice

Holy Communion

During



LENT

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.

The Gathering

A hymn is 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

The Lord be with you

All **And also with you.**

A sentence of scripture may be said

The Lord is full of compassion and mercy, slow to anger and of great kindness. *Psalm 51:18*

Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. *John 12.24*

Prayer of Preparation

All **Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,**

**that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Prayers of Penitence

Summary of the Law

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.
You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, with all your mind,
and with all your strength.’

The second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

All Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Invitation to confession *(For Passiontide see page 15)*

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.

**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.**

**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.**

The president says

May the God of love and power
forgive *you* and free *you* from *your* sins,
heal and strengthen *you* by his Spirit,
and raise *you* to new life in Christ our Lord.
Amen.

All

The Collect

The president introduces a period of silent prayer with the words 'Let us pray' or a more specific bidding.

The Collect is said.

All

Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word

Readings

First Reading

At the end the reader may say

All This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

A Psalm may be said

A hymn is sung

When the Gospel is announced the reader says

All Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to N.
Glory to you, O Lord.

At the end of the Gospel the reader says

All This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

The Creed

The president says

Let us declare our faith in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

All **We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is,
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,**

**God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from
heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the
dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and
glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of
sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.
Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

These responses may be used.

All Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

And at the end

All Merciful Father,
**accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
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. cf Romans 5.1,2

Or during Passiontide

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. cf Ephesians 2.13,14

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

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 is sung

*The gifts of the people may be gathered and presented.
The table is prepared and bread and wine are placed upon it.*

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.

Or during Passiontide

Jesus, true vine and bread of life,
ever giving yourself that the world might live,
let us share your death and passion:
make us perfect in your love.

All **Amen.**

The president takes the bread and wine.

The Eucharistic Prayer

The president says

All The Lord be with you
and also with you.

(or)

All The Lord is here.
His Spirit is with us.

All Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

All Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is indeed right,
it is our duty and our joy,
at all times and in all places
to give you thanks and praise,
holy Father, heavenly King,
almighty and eternal God,
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

For he is your living Word;
through him you have created all things from the beginning,
and formed us in your own image.

Through him you have freed us from the slavery of sin,
giving him to be born of a woman and to die upon the cross;
you raised him from the dead
and exalted him to your right hand on high.

Through him you have sent upon us
your holy and life-giving Spirit,
and made us a people for your own possession.

During Lent

(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.)

During Passiontide

(And now we give you thanks
because, for our salvation,
he was obedient even to death on the cross.
The tree of shame was made the tree of glory;
and where life was lost, there life has been restored.)

Therefore with angels and archangels,
and with all the company of heaven,
we proclaim your great and glorious name,
for ever praising you and *saying*:

All **Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Accept our praises, heavenly Father,
through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ,
and as we follow his example and obey his command,
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit
these gifts of bread and wine
may be to us his body and his blood;

who, in the same night that he was betrayed,
took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper
he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying:
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.

Therefore, heavenly Father,
we remember his offering of himself
made once for all upon the cross;
we proclaim his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension;
we look for the coming of your kingdom,
and with this bread and this cup
we make the memorial of Christ your Son our Lord.

Great is the mystery of faith:

All

Christ has died:

Christ is risen:

Christ will come again.

Accept through him, our great high priest,
this our sacrifice of thanks and praise,
and as we eat and drink these holy gifts
in the presence of your divine majesty,
renew us by your Spirit,
inspire us with your love

and unite us in the body of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through him, and with him, and in him,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
with all who stand before you in earth and heaven,
we worship you, Father almighty,
in songs of everlasting praise:

All **Blessing and honour and glory and power
be yours for ever and ever.
Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Believing the promises of God,
As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

All **Our Father, which art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done,
in earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive them that 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.**

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.

Jesus, Lamb of God,
All have mercy on us.

Jesus, bearer of our sins,
All have mercy on us.

Jesus, redeemer of the world,
All grant us peace.

Giving of Communion

The president says the invitation to communion

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.

All We do not presume
to come to this your table, merciful Lord,
trusting in our own righteousness,
but in your manifold and great mercies.
We are not worthy
so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.
But you are the same Lord

whose nature is always to have mercy.
**Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ
and to drink his blood,
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,
and that we may evermore dwell in him and he in us.
Amen.**

The president and people receive communion.

Authorized words of distribution are used and the communicant replies

Amen.

During the distribution a hymn may be sung.

Prayer after Communion

Silence is kept.

All **Almighty God,
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out
in the power of your Spirit
to live and work
to your praise and glory.
Amen.**

The Dismissal

A hymn is sung

Blessing

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.**

Or during Passiontide

Christ crucified draw you to himself,
to find in him a sure ground for faith,
a firm support for hope,
and the assurance of sins forgiven;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

A minister says

Go in the peace of Christ.

All **Thanks be to God.**

The ministers and people depart.

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Alternative Confession during Passiontide

Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess we have failed you as did your first disciples.
We ask for your mercy and your help.

When we take our ease
rather than watch with you:

Lord, forgive us.

Christ have mercy

When we bestow a kiss of peace
yet nurse enmity in our hearts:

Lord, forgive us.

Christ have mercy.

When we strike at those who hurt us
rather than stretch out our hands to bless:

Lord, forgive us.

Christ have mercy.

When we deny that we know you
for fear of the world and its scorn:

Lord, forgive us.

Christ have mercy.

The service continues with the collect on page 3

Alternative Eucharistic Prayer (D)

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

All

Lift up your hearts.

All

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All

It is right to give thanks and praise.

Almighty God, good Father to us all,
your face is turned towards your world.

In love you gave us Jesus your Son
to rescue us from sin and death.

Your Word goes out to call us home
to the city where angels sing your praise.

We join with them in heaven's song:

All

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Father of all, we give you thanks
for every gift that comes from heaven.

To the darkness Jesus came as your light.

With signs of faith and words of hope

he touched untouchables with love and washed the guilty clean.

This is his story.

All

**This is our song:
Hosanna in the highest.**

The crowds came out to see your Son,
yet at the end they turned on him.
On the night he was betrayed
he came to table with his friends
to celebrate the freedom of your people.

This is his story.

All **This is our song:
Hosanna in the highest.**

Jesus blessed you, Father, for the food;
he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and said:
This is my body, given for you all.
Jesus then gave thanks for the wine;
he took the cup, gave it and said:
This is my blood, shed for you all
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this in remembrance of me.

This is our story.

All **This is our song:
Hosanna in the highest.**

Therefore, Father, with this bread and this cup
we celebrate the cross
on which he died to set us free.
Defying death he rose again
and is alive with you to plead for us and all the world.

This is our story.

All **This is our song:
Hosanna in the highest.**

Send your Spirit on us now
that by these gifts we may feed on Christ
with opened eyes and hearts on fire.

May we and all who share this food
offer ourselves to live for you
and be welcomed at your feast in heaven
where all creation worships you,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit:

All

**Blessing and honour and glory and power
be yours for ever and ever.
Amen.**

The service continues with the Lord's Prayer on page 11

1st Reading Ezekiel 37.1-14

The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. He said to me, 'Mortal, can these bones live?' I answered, 'O Lord GOD, you know.' Then he said to me, 'Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the LORD.'

So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, 'Prophecy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.' I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

Then he said to me, 'Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, "Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely." Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place

you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act, says the LORD.'

2nd Reading John. 11. 17-45

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?' She said to him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.'

When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, 'The Teacher is here and is calling for you.' And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to him, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus began to weep. So the Jews said, 'See how he loved him!' But some of them said, 'Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?'

Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, 'Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days.' Jesus said to her, 'Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upwards and said, 'Father, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.' When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out!' The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go.'

Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.