**Note: Please leave this on the ambo, thanks.**

**ASH WEDNESDAY.**

**Introduction**

Good Morning / Evening and welcome to the parish of Mary Immaculate Quakers Hill – Schofields.

Ash Wednesday opens the season of Lent, which prepares for the celebration of the Paschal Mystery—the passion, death, and resurrection of

Jesus. The beginning of Lent is marked by the giving of ashes to signify our mourning or contrition for our sins. This sign of penance, however, should

be accompanied by inner conversion, by “metanoia” or change of mind and hear.

Our Mass with be celebrate today by

Please stand and join in singing the Entrance Hymn.

#### ASH WEDNESDAY - Year A

#### MASS READINGS

#### FIRST READING (Jl 2:12-18)

*A reading from the prophet Joel*

‘Now, now – it is the Lord who speaks –

come back to me with all your heart,

fasting, weeping, mourning.’

Let your hearts be broken, not your garments torn,

turn to the Lord your God again,

for he is all tenderness and compassion,

slow to anger, rich in graciousness,

and ready to relent.

Who knows if he will not turn again, will not relent,

will not leave a blessing as he passes,

oblation and libation

for the Lord your God?

Sound the trumpet in Zion!

Order a fast,

proclaim a solemn assembly,

call the people together,

summon the community,

assemble the elders,

gather the children,

even the infants at the breast.

Let the bridegroom leave his bedroom

and the bride her alcove.

Between vestibule and altar let the priests,

the ministers of the Lord, lament.

Let them say,

‘Spare your people, Lord!

Do not make your heritage a thing of shame,

a byword for the nations.

Why should it be said among the nations,

“Where is their God?”’

Then the Lord, jealous on behalf of his land,

took pity on his people.

*The Word of the Lord.*

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 50:3-6. 12-14. 17. R. v.3)**

***(R) Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.***

#### 1. Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.

#### In your compassion blot out my offence.

#### O wash me more and more from my guilt

#### and cleanse me from my sin. (R.)

#### 2. My offences truly I know them;

#### my sin is always before me.

#### Against you, you alone, have I sinned:

#### what is evil in your sight I have done. (R.)

#### 3. A pure heart create for me, O God,

#### put a steadfast spirit within me.

#### Do not cast me away from your presence,

#### nor deprive me of your holy spirit. (R.)

#### 4. Give me again the joy of your help;

#### with a spirit of fervour sustain me.

#### O Lord, open my lips

#### and my mouth shall declare your praise. (R.)

#### SECOND READING  (2 Cor 5:20-6:2)

*A reading from the second letter of St Paul to the Corinthians*

We are ambassadors for Christ; it is as though God were appealing through us, and the appeal that we make in Christ’s name is: be reconciled to God. For our sake God made the sinless one into sin, so that in him we might become the goodness of God. As his fellow workers, we beg you once again not to neglect the grace of God that you have received. For he says: At the favourable time, I have listened to you; on the day of salvation I came to your help. Well, now is the favourable time; this is the day of salvation.

*The Word of the Lord.*

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

If today you hear his voice,

harden not your hearts.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

#### GOSPEL (Mt 6:1-6. 16-18)

#### A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

#### Jesus said to his disciples:

#### ‘Be careful not to parade your good deeds before men to attract their notice; by doing this you will lose all reward from your Father in heaven. So when you give alms, do not have it trumpeted before you; this is what the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win men’s admiration. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you give alms, your left hand must not know what your right is doing; your almsgiving must be secret, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.

#### ‘And when you pray, do not imitate the hypocrites: they love to say their prayers standing up in the synagogues and at the street corners for people to see them. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you pray, go to your private room and, when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in that secret place, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.

#### ‘When you fast do not put on a gloomy look as the hypocrites do: they pull long faces to let men know they are fasting. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that no one will know you are fasting except your Father who sees all that is done in secret; and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.’

#### The Gospel of the Lord.

**ASH WEDNESDAY - YEAR A**

**GENERAL INTERCESSION**

**Priest: Let us pray to our heavenly Father that as we start our Lenten journey, we may open our hearts to his kingdom, stay close with him in prayer, and be active in works of charity.**

**Reader:** That we may welcome Lent as an acceptable time of salvation through our works of fasting, prayer, and sharing,

*We Pray:*

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** That the Word of God may inspire us to have a change of heart and mind, to turn away from sin, and to choose to do good,

*We Pray:*

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** That the mark of ashes on our forehead may remind us of our human frailty and inspire us to spend the gift of our life for the building of God’s kingdom,

*We Pray:*

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** That those who are imprisoned by fear and despair may find strength in the Holy Spirit who consoles and defends those who are weak and weary.

*We Pray:*

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** That those who have died. In particular those mentioned in our parish bulletin. May God’s merciful love shine on them and their loved ones left behind.

 *We Pray:*

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** **Together we now pray our Parish Community prayer for**

 **Ash Wednesday.**

**All:** Gracious God, today begins a period of inner reflection and examination. The days stretch before us and invite us inward to that silent, holy space that holds your Spirit.

This special time beckons us to see our lives through Christ's eyes and the truth and reality of your love incarnate. Give us the grace to enter the space of these days with anticipation of our meeting.

 And, when we open our souls to your presence, let your loving

 kindness flow over us and seep into the pockets of our hearts.

 We ask this for the sake of your love.

**Priest: Almighty Father, hear our petitions. May this season of repentance bring us your forgiveness and lead us to the joy of Christ’s victory over sin and death. Through Christ our Lord.**

**All: Amen.**