

Ash Wednesday Iona Meditation



Welcome!

Most of you should have received a small pebble or a prayer card with an ash cross on it, you may want to have it with you as a focus for this service. If you don't have either of these please don't worry, they aren't essential

Gathering

We gather as we can,
Not in the way we would like,
The Holy Spirit joins our hearts,
Bringing us together as a
Spiritual body, as we wait eagerly
For the time when we can meet
Again in person.

Words of Reflection

From dust we came

From dust we came
To dust we will return.

We belong to God

We gather in penitence.
We gather in confidence.

We belong to God

At the beginning of Lent
At every moment of our lives

We belong to God

Marked by a cross

Marked by a cross
cherished and forgiven,
we are travelling home.

Called to be holy,
called to be happy,
we are travelling home.

Across deserts,
over mountains,
We are travelling home.

God in our hearts
God in our lives,
We are travelling home.

Choose this day whom you will serve,
We choose the living God.

The road is narrow that leads to life,
we will walk the way of Christ.

Faith is not us holding on,
faith is not letting go.

We offer more than words, o God,
we offer you our lives.

Bible Reading

Matthew 5 verses 3-11

Reflection

We Respond to the Reading

Together we say

**Happy are you needy ones,
The Kingdom of God is yours.
Happy are you who are hungry,
You will be satisfied.
Happy are you who weep now,
You will be filled with laughter.**

**Rejected, insulted, happy are you,
Be glad and dance with joy.**

Jesus said “take up your cross”

**We follow you, o Christ,
Into the needs of the world,
Into the truth of our lives,
Into the pain of our hearts,
Into the presence of God.**

A Prayer

You may want to hold your cross or prayer card for this prayer. Alternatively picture coming before God, kneeling before Him on your knees and offering yourself to Him afresh as you enter the season of Lent.

A time of turning around.

Truly dust we are, and to dust we will return,

And truly yours we are, and to you we will return.

Help this to be a time of turning around and beginning again.

Through the forty days of Lent, help us to follow you,

And to find you in the discipline of prayer

And the thoughtfulness of care,

In whatever way we deny ourselves,

Or whatever we set ourselves to learn.

Help us to discover you,

In our emptiness and our fulfilment,

In our sadness and in our laughter,

Help us to find you when we ourselves are lost.

Help us to follow you on your journey to Jerusalem.

To the waving palms of the peoples hope,

To their rejection, to the cross and the empty tomb.

Helps us to perceive new growth amid the ashes of the old.

Help us, carrying your cross, to be signs of your kingdom.

Amen.

Time of Open Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Looking towards Lent

Lord Jesus,

desert dweller,
help us now.
at this time of Lent,
to accompany you.

If we have grown soft,
cushioning our lives
with excuses,
expose us to the roughness
of your desert way.

As we walk,
God be our way,
as we learn,
God be our truth,
as we grow
God be our life.

A Blessing

As we face Lent,
may God guide us.
As we look towards Easter,
may God reveal himself to us.
May the father, Son and Spirit
bless us all on our journey to
the cross.

Amen.