

LITURGY NEWS

from the Cathedral Parish of Ss Michael & John, Bathurst

The Season of Lent

No Gloria, No Alleluia and Purple is the colour of the Season

Three powerful symbols are associated with liturgy in Lent.

Ashes: The use of ashes stems from our Jewish heritage. Ashes here suggest humility and human insignificance, as in the familiar “ashes to ashes, dust to dust”. Today we continue the Jewish understanding of ashes as a symbol of humility, purification and sorrow when we are marked with ashes on the first day of Lent as a sign of our willingness to cleanse our heart through prayer, fasting and self-denial.

Cross. No other sign so clearly symbolises Christianity as the cross. It became a symbol of victory over death and salvation from sin, a sign of both death and of love.

Purple or violet is the prescribed liturgical colour for Lent. It should be a sombre blue-violet in contrast to the lighter purple of Advent. The aim is to visually evoke a mood of simplicity and austerity

The Season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday (17th February 2021) and concludes as the Mass of the Lord's Supper (Holy Thursday 1st April 2021).

The first preface (prayed by the priest after the Holy, Holy) for Lent in the Missal describes Lent as a 'gracious gift' and speaks of the joy of the faithful as they 'await the sacred paschal feasts'. These few words provide a key to the meaning of Lent. Lent looks beyond itself to the celebration of the paschal mystery of Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection. This makes Lent a season of grace inviting us to prepare for immersion in the dying and rising of Jesus Christ.

For those already baptized, Lent is a time for renewing and deepening our Christian commitment through prayers, fasting and acts of charity. For those people preparing to be baptized (generally through the RCIA) Lent is a time of purification and enlightenment.

Every year the first two Sundays of Lent recall Jesus' testing in the wilderness and his transfiguration on the mountain. On the next four Sundays we hear of a call to repentance, the recurring Lenten theme.

Lent is certainly a time marked by seriousness, but it is also a time of joy as we deepen our relationship with God.



This Lent, the **large wooden cross** that we have used as the processional cross will be already on the Sanctuary when Mass begins. At the moment a simple form of the entrance procession is being enacted because of covid concerns.

The Procession will be accompanied by the musicians singing the Entrance Antiphon.

"The purpose of this chant (the **Entrance Antiphon**) is to open the celebration, foster the unity of those who have been gathered, introduce their thoughts to the mystery of the liturgical season or festivity, and accompany the procession of the priest and ministers." GIRM 47

This is the latest edition of *Liturgy News from the Cathedral Parish*. It is hoped that this newsletter helps the reader to understand a little more about the liturgy and communicates any particular preparations.