

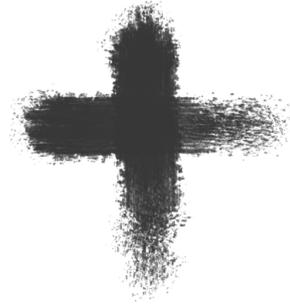
## Ash Wednesday Devotions

The first Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection. It became the custom to prepare for them with ashes, a sign of our mortality, and with a season we call Lent: of self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word.

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth: Grant that these ashes may be to us a sign of our mortality and penitence, that we may remember that it is only by your gracious gift that we are given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

**Scriptures:** Joel 2:1-12, 12-17; Isaiah 58:1-12; Psalms 51 and 103; 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21



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