

## FORMULA FOR THE BLESSING OF ASHES DURING MASS ON ASH WEDNESDAY

### **Blessing of Ashes**

*After the Homily, the PRIEST, standing with hands joined, says:*

Dear brothers and sisters,  
let us humbly ask God our Father  
that he be pleased to bless  
with the abundance of his grace these ashes,  
which we will put on our heads in penitence.

*After a brief prayer in silence, and, with hands extended, he continues:*

O God, who are moved by acts of humility  
and respond with forgiveness to works of penance,  
lend your merciful ear to our prayers  
and in your kindness  
pour out the grace of your ✠ blessing  
on your servants who are marked with these ashes,  
that, as they follow the Lenten observances,  
they may be worthy to come with minds made pure  
to celebrate the Paschal Mystery of your Son.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*The ashes are sprinkled with holy water.*

*The formula for the imposition of ashes on the head is:*

Repent, and believe in the Gospel.

**Or:**

Remember that you are dust,  
and to dust you shall return.

AS WE SIGN MEMBERS OF OUR HOUSEHOLD ON ASH WEDNESDAY WITH ASHES WE COULD EXPAND MAKING THE SIGN OF THE CROSS IN THIS WAY WHICH COMES TO US FROM THE RCIA RITUAL. IT CAN BE DONE WITHOUT THE NEED FOR ANY BODILY TOUCH. THERE IS AN OPTIONAL RESPONSE GIVEN HERE - OR IT COULD SIMPLY BE RECEIVED IN SILENCE. THIS COULD ALSO BE DONE AT MASS ON ASH WEDNESDAY.

**SIGNING OF THE SENSES** *One person stands in front of the other. As the leader says each prayer, the cross is traced/made over the person as indicated.*

**Leader:** Receive the sign of the cross on your forehead.

It is Christ himself who now strengthens you with this sign of his love. Learn to know and follow him.

*Optional response: Christ will be your strength! Learn to know and follow him!*

**Receive the sign of the cross on your ears,  
that you may hear the voice of the Lord.**

*Christ will be your ...*

**Receive the sign of the cross on your eyes,  
that you may see the glory of God.**

*Christ will be your...*

**Receive the sign of the cross on your lips,  
that you may respond to the word of God.**

*Christ will be your...*

**Receive the sign of the cross over your heart,  
that Christ may dwell there by faith.**

*Christ will be your...*

**Receive the sign of the cross on your shoulders,  
that you may bear the gentle yoke of Christ.**

*Christ will be your...*

**Receive the sign of the cross on your hands,  
that Christ may be known in the work which you do.**

*Christ will be your...*

**Receive the sign of the cross on your feet,  
that you may walk in the way of Christ.**

*Christ will be your...*

**We entrust ourselves to the sign of eternal life,  
in the name of the Father, + and of the Son, and of the Holy  
Spirit. Amen.**