



*St. Thomas of  
Canterbury, the  
Parish Church for  
Brentwood*

**The Order of Mass**

**Ash Wednesday**

**Wednesday  
18<sup>th</sup> February 2026**

## These prayers are suitable as preparation for Mass

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen

*From the Book of Common Prayer*

Almighty and ever-living God, I approach the sacrament of Your only-begotten Son Our Lord Jesus Christ, I come sick to the doctor of life, unclean to the fountain of mercy, blind to the radiance of eternal light, and poor and needy to the Lord of heaven and earth. Lord, in your great generosity, heal my sickness, wash away my defilement, enlighten my blindness, enrich my poverty, and clothe my nakedness. May I receive the bread of angels, the King of kings and Lord of lords, with humble reverence, with the purity and faith, the repentance and love, and the determined purpose that will help to bring me to salvation. May I receive the sacrament of the Lord's Body and Blood, and its reality and power.

Kind God, may I receive the Body of Your only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, born from the womb of the Virgin Mary, and so be received into His mystical body and numbered among His members. Loving Father, as on my earthly pilgrimage I now receive Your beloved Son under the veil of a sacrament, may I one day see him face to face in glory, who lives and reigns with You for ever. Amen

*St Thomas Aquinas*

*It is our custom to keep a prayerful silence before Mass.*

*Please STAND when the bell rings. We sing the opening hymn as the sacred ministers enter and the altar is revered and censed.*

## Processional Hymn

NEH 67



**All**    **Forty days and forty nights**  
**Thou wast fasting in the wild,**  
**Forty days and forty nights**  
**Tempted and yet undefiled.**

**Sunbeams scorching all the day,**  
**Chilly dewdrops nightly shed,**  
**Prowling beasts about thy way,**  
**Stones thy pillow, earth thy bed.**

**Let us thine endurance share,**  
**And awhile from joys abstain,**  
**With thee watching unto prayer,**  
**Strong with thee to suffer pain.**

**And if Satan, vexing sore,**  
**Flesh or spirit should assail,**  
**Thou, his vanquisher before,**  
**Grant we may not faint nor fail.**

**So shall we have peace divine,**  
**Holier gladness ours shall be,**  
**Round us too shall angels shine,**  
**Such as ministered to thee.**

**Keep, O keep us, Saviour dear,**  
**Ever constant by thy side,**  
**That with thee we may appear**  
**At the eternal Eastertide.**

*Words: G.H Smyttan (1822-70) & Francis Pott (1832-1909)*

*Music: Possibly by M. Herbst (1654-81)*

## The Gathering

✠ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## The Greeting

The Lord be with you  
**and also with you.**

*The priest welcomes us and introduces the service.*

## The Collect

*The Celebrant introduces a period of silent prayer with the words 'Let us pray':*

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing that you have made and forgive the sins of all those who are penitent: create and make in us new and contrite hearts that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may receive from you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

*We SIT for the readings.*

## THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

*Joel 2:1-2, 12–17*

A reading from the book of the prophet Joel.

Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming, it is near – a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness spread upon the mountains a great and powerful army comes; their like has never been from of old, nor will be again after them in ages to come. Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the LORD, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing. Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain-offering and a drink-offering for the LORD, your

God? Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her canopy. Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep. Let them say, 'Spare your people, O LORD, and do not make your heritage a mockery, a byword among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, "Where is their God?"'

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*The choir sing the verses. We join in with the appropriate response.*

Psalm 51:1-18



David Rooke

Have mer - cy on us, O Lord, for we have\_ sinned.

**R Have mercy on me, O Lord, for we have sinned.**

Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness according to the multitude of thy mercies do away mine offences. Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my faults and my sin is ever before me. Against thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight that thou mightest be justified in thy saying, and clear when thou art judged. **R**

Behold, I was shapen in wickedness and in sin hath my mother conceived me. But lo, thou requirest truth in the inward parts and shalt make me to understand wisdom secretly. Thou shalt purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. **R**

Thou shalt make me hear of joy and gladness : that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. Turn thy face from my sins : and put out all my misdeeds. Make me a clean heart, O God : and renew a right spirit within me. **R**

Cast me not away from thy presence and take not thy holy Spirit from me. O give me the comfort of thy help again and stablish me with thy free Spirit. Then shall I teach thy ways unto the wicked and sinners shall be converted unto thee. **R**

Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou that art the God of my health and my tongue shall sing of thy righteousness. **R**

Thou shalt open my lips, O Lord and my mouth shall shew thy praise. **R**

For thou desirest no sacrifice, else would I give it thee but thou delightest not in burnt-offerings. The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit a broken and contrite heart, O God, shalt thou not despise. **R**

O be favourable and gracious unto Sion : build thou the walls of Jerusalem. **R**

*2 Corinthians 5: 20b-6.10*

A reading from the second letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says, 'At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you.' See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labours, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honour and dishonour, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not

killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*We STAND to greet the gospel.*

## **Gospel Reading**

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

Blessed are those who have endured temptation; they have stood the test and will receive the crown of life.

**Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.**

The Lord be with you

**And also with you.**

✠ Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-21*

‘Beware of practising your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. ‘So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. ‘And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. ‘And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others

but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. 'Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## The Sermon

*We SIT for the sermon and for the blessing of Ashes.*

### Blessing and Distribution of Ashes

*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, he continues, with hands extended:*

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.**

*Or:*

O God, who desire not the death of sinners, but their conversion, mercifully hear our prayers and in your kindness be pleased to bless ✠ these ashes, which we intend to receive upon our heads, that we, who acknowledge we are but ashes and shall return to dust, may, through a steadfast observance of Lent, gain pardon for sins and newness of life after the likeness of your Risen Son. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

*He silently sprinkles the ashes with holy water.*

*We come forward to receive the ash, standing around the bottom step of the dais as directed by the sidespersons. The Priest places ashes on the head of all those present who come forward and says to each one:*

Repent and believe in the Gospel.

*Or:*

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

*The response is. Amen.*

*After receiving the ash, we return silently to our places in the nave. During the distribution of ashes, the choir sing the Lent Prose.*

## Lent Prose

NEH 507

Refrain



Hear us, O Lord, have mercy upon us: for we have sinn'd against thee.

**Choir** *Hear us, O Lord, have mercy upon us  
for we have sinn'd against thee.*

To thee, Redeemer, on thy throne of glory  
lift we our weeping eyes in holy pleadings  
listen, O Jesu, to our supplications. [Refrain]

O thou chief Corner-stone, Right Hand of the Father  
Way of Salvation, Gate of Life Celestial  
cleanse thou our sinful souls from all defilement. [Refrain]

God, we implore thee, in thy glory seated  
bow down and hearken to thy children  
pity and pardon all our grievous trespasses. [Refrain]

Sins oft committed now we lay before thee  
with true contrition, now no more we veil them  
grant us, Redeemer, loving absolution. [Refrain]

Innocent, captive, taken unresisting  
falsely accused, and for us sinners sentenced,  
save us, we pray thee, Jesu our Redeemer. [Refrain]

## Prayers of Intercession – Universal Prayers

We pray to the Lord for courage to give up other things and to give ourselves to him this Lent. Give your Church the courage to give up her preoccupation with herself and to give more time to your mission in the world. [We pray for ...]

May the blood and water flowing from the side of Jesus bring forgiveness to your people and help us to face the cost of proclaiming salvation.

Lord, meet us in the silence,

**give us strength and hear our prayer.**

Give your world the courage to give up war, bitterness and hatred, and to seek peace. [We pray for ...]

May the shoulders of the risen Jesus, once scourged by soldiers, bear the burden of political and military conflict in our world.

Lord, meet us in the silence,

**give us strength and hear our prayer.**

Give us the courage to give up quarrels, strife and jealousy in our families, neighbourhoods and communities. [We pray for ...]

May the presence of the risen Jesus, his body once broken and now made whole, bring peace and direction as we live with one another.

Lord, meet us in the silence,

**give us strength and hear our prayer.**

Give us the courage to give up our selfishness as we live for others, and to give time, care and comfort to the sick. [We pray for ...]

May the wounded hands of Jesus bring his healing touch, and the light of his presence fill their rooms.

Lord, meet us in the silence,

**give us strength and hear our prayer.**

Give us the courage to give up our fear of death and to rejoice with those who have died in faith. [Especially we hold ... in our minds.]

May the feet of the risen Lord Jesus, once nailed to the cross, walk alongside the dying and bereaved in their agony, and walk with us and all your Church through death to the gate of glory.

Lord, meet us in the silence,

**give us strength and hear our prayer, here and in eternity.**

**Amen.**

## The Peace

*After the final prayer we stand as the priest introduces the Peace:*

Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given us access to his grace.

The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us offer one another the sign of peace.

## THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

### The Offertory

*A collection is taken at this celebration. If you don't have cash or are not part of our planned giving scheme and would like to support the ministry costs of St Thomas' please scan the QR code on the back of the chair in front of you, to be taken to the online donations page where you can easily donate to support the work of St Thomas' and complete the details allowing the reclamation of Gift Aid on your donation. We sing this hymn while the altar is prepared.*

### Offertory Hymn

NEH 70



**All**    **Lord Jesus, think on me,  
And purge away my sin;  
From earthborn passions set me free,  
And make me pure within.**

**Lord Jesus, think on me,  
With care and woe opprest;  
Let me thy loving servant be,  
And taste thy promised rest.**

**Lord Jesus, think on me,  
Amid the battle's strife;  
In all my pain and misery  
Be thou my health and life.**

**Lord Jesus, think on me,  
Nor let me go astray;  
Through darkness and perplexity  
Point thou the heavenly way.**

**Lord Jesus, think on me,  
When flows the tempest high:  
When on doth rush the enemy  
O Saviour, be thou nigh.**

**Lord Jesus, think on me,  
That, when the flood is past,  
I may the eternal brightness see,  
And share thy joy at last.**

*Words: Translator A. W. Chatfield (1808-96)*

*Music: Adapted from Ps xlv by W. Daman (1540-91)*

## **The Preparation of the Altar**

*After all have been censed the Priest says;*

Pray, my brothers and sisters, that this my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the almighty Father.

**May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good, and the good of all his Church.**

As we solemnly offer the annual sacrifice for the beginning of Lent, we entreat you, O Lord, that, through works of penance and charity, we may turn away from harmful pleasures and, cleansed from our sins, may become worthy to celebrate devoutly the Passion of your Son. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## The Preface

The Lord be with you  
**and also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right and good  
to give you thanks and praise,  
almighty God and everlasting Father,  
through Jesus Christ your Son.  
For in these forty days  
you lead us into the desert of repentance  
that through a pilgrimage of prayer and discipline  
we may grow in grace  
and learn to be your people once again.  
Through fasting, prayer and acts of service  
you bring us back to your generous heart.  
Through study of your holy word  
you open our eyes to your presence in the world  
and free our hands to welcome others  
into the radiant splendour of your love.  
As we prepare to celebrate the Easter feast  
with joyful hearts and minds  
we bless you for your mercy  
and join with saints and angels  
for ever praising you and saying:

*We remain **STANDING** as we say/sing the Sanctus and the Benedictus:*

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.**

**✠ Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

*We KNEEL after the Sanctus and Benedictus.*

Lord, you are holy indeed, the source of all holiness; grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit, and according to your holy will, these gifts of bread and wine may be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;

who, in the same night that he was betrayed, took bread and gave you thanks; he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;  
do this in remembrance of me. ✠

In the same way, after supper he took the cup and gave you thanks; he gave it to them, saying:

Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me. ✠

*After the consecration, the following acclamation is said/sung:*

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died:**

**Christ is risen:**

**Christ will come again.**

And so, Father, calling to mind his death on the cross, his perfect sacrifice made once for the sins of the whole world; rejoicing in his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension, and looking for his coming in glory, we celebrate this memorial of our redemption.

As we offer you this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, we bring before you this bread and this cup and we thank you for counting us worthy to stand in your presence and serve you.

Send the Holy Spirit on your people and gather into one in your kingdom all who share this one bread and one cup, so that we, in the company of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St Joseph her spouse, St Thomas of Canterbury and all the saints, may praise and glorify you for ever, through Jesus Christ our Lord;

by whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory be yours, almighty Father, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## **COMMUNION RITE**

As our Saviour taught and commanded us, we are bold to say:

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**Though we are many, we are one body,  
because we all share in one bread.**

*We sing the Agnus Dei:*

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,  
grant us peace.**

*The Celebrant invites the people to communion*

Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word,  
and I shall be healed.**

Please follow the direction of the celebrant and sidespersons to come forward and receive communion. Those who are confirmed are welcome to make their communion at our celebration today. Otherwise, please come forward for a blessing with your hands crossed across your chest. We have returned to receiving communion in both kinds. The response after receiving a blessing is **Amen.**

## Anthem

The Choir sing – ‘Turn thy face from my sins’ by Thomas Attwood

*While communion is being distributed, we all sing the communion hymn.*

## Communion Hymn

NEH 82



**All** Drop, drop, slow tears, And bathe those beauteous feet,  
Which brought from heaven, The news and Prince of peace.

Cease not, wet eyes, His mercies to entreat;  
To cry for vengeance Sin doth never cease.

In your deep floods Drown all my faults and fears;  
Nor let his eye See sin, but through my tears.

*Words: Phineas Fletcher (1582-1650)*

*Music: Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625)*

## Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Blessed Sacrament. I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there, and I unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you. **Amen.**

*St Alphonsus Liguori*

## Post Communion

*We STAND as the priest leads the post-communion prayers:*

Almighty God, you have given your only Son to be for us both a sacrifice for sin and also an example of godly life: give us grace that we may always most thankfully receive these his inestimable gifts, and also daily endeavour to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Father of all, we give you thanks and praise, that when we were still far off you met us in your Son and brought us home. Dying and living, he declared your love, gave us grace, and opened the gate of glory. May we who share Christ's body live his risen life; we who drink his cup bring life to others; we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world. Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us, so we and all your children shall be free, and the whole earth live to praise your name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## Blessing and dismissal

*We STAND for the final blessing and dismissal.*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness, to deny yourselves, take up your cross, and follow him; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, ✠ the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

The Mass is ended, go in the peace of Christ.

**Thanks be to God.**

*The sacred ministers then leave during the final hymn.*

## Recessional Hymn

NEH 383



**All**    **Jesu, Lover of my soul,  
Let me to thy bosom fly,  
While the nearer waters roll,  
While the tempest still is high:  
Hide me, O my Saviour, hide  
Till the storm of life is past;  
Safe into the haven guide,  
O receive my soul at last.**

**Other refuge have I none,  
Hangs my helpless soul on thee;  
Leave, ah, leave me not alone,  
Still support and comfort me.  
All my trust on thee is stayed,  
All my help from thee I bring;  
Cover my defenceless head  
With the shadow of thy wing.**

**\*Thou, O Christ, art all I want,  
More than all in thee I find:  
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,  
Heal the sick, and lead the blind.  
Just and holy is thy name,  
I am all unrighteousness;  
False and full of sin I am,  
Thou art full of truth and grace.**

**Plenteous grace with thee is found,  
Grace to cover all my sin;  
Let the healing streams abound,  
Make and keep me pure within.  
Thou of life the fountain art,  
Freely let me take of thee,  
Spring thou up within my heart,  
Rise to all eternity.**

*Words: Charles Wesley (1707-88)*

*Music: Joseph Parry (1841-1903)*

## Private Devotions during Communion or after Mass

We do not presume to come to this thy table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy table. But thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy: grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

*From the Book of Common Prayer*

Soul of Christ, sanctify me  
body of Christ, save me  
blood of Christ, inebriate me  
water from Christ's side, wash me  
passion of Christ, strengthen me.

O good Jesus, hear me  
within thy wounds hide me.

Suffer me not to be separated from thee.

From the malicious enemy defend me.

In the hour of my death call me  
and bid me come unto thee  
that I may praise thee  
with thy saints and with thy angels  
forever and ever. Amen

Hail holy Queen, Mother of Mercy,  
our life, our sweetness and our hope!  
To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve;  
to thee do we send up our sighs,  
mourning and weeping in this vale of tears.  
Turn then, O most gracious advocate,  
thine eyes of mercy towards us,  
and after this our exile,  
show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb,  
Jesus. O clement, O loving,  
O sweet Virgin Mary.

*The Salve Regina*

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