



Diocese of Aberdeen and Orkney's Lent Course 2024

THE WAY TO THE CROSS

FRIDAY 16 FEBRUARY



WORDS FROM OTHERS

Today you're invited to reflect on poems about Ash Wednesday. As you read them, take notice of what resonates with you, what do you agree with or disagree with, how do the words of T.S. Eliot or Malcolm Guite resonate with your experience of Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent?

A Sonnet for Ash Wednesday by Malcolm Guite

Receive this cross of ash upon your brow,
Brought from the burning of Palm Sunday's cross.
The forests of the world are burning now
And you make late repentance for the loss.
But all the trees of God would clap their hands
The very stones themselves would shout and sing
If you could covenant to love these lands
And recognise in Christ their Lord and king.
He sees the slow destruction of those trees,
He weeps to see the ancient places burn,
And still you make what purchases you please,
And still to dust and ashes you return.
But Hope could rise from ashes even now
Beginning with this sign upon your brow.

Collect for Ash Wednesday

O Lord, grant that
your faithful people
may enter this
season of penitence
with faithfulness,
and complete it
with steadfast
devotion; through
Jesus Christ, our
Lord, who lives and
reigns with you, in
the unity of the
Holy Spirit, one
God, world without
end.
Amen.

FROM ASH WEDNESDAY BY TS ELIOT

I
Because I do not hope to turn again
Because I do not hope
Because I do not hope to turn
Desiring this man's gift and that man's scope
I no longer strive to strive towards such things
(Why should the aged eagle stretch its wings?)
Why should I mourn
The vanished power of the usual reign?

Because I do not hope to know again
The infirm glory of the positive hour
Because I do not think
Because I know I shall not know
The one veritable transitory power
Because I cannot drink
There, where trees flower, and springs flow, for
there is nothing again.

Because I know that time is always time
And place is always and only place
And what is actual is actual only for one time
And only for one place
I rejoice that things are as they are and
I renounce the blessed face
And renounce the voice
Because I cannot hope to turn again
Consequently I rejoice, having to construct something
Upon which to rejoice.

And pray to God to have mercy upon us
And I pray that I may forget
These matters that with myself I too much discuss
Too much explain
Because I do not hope to turn again
Let these words answer
For what is done, not to be done again
May the judgement not be too heavy upon us

Because these wings are no longer wings to fly
But merely vane to beat the air
The air which is now thoroughly small and dry
Smaller and dryer than the will
Teach us to care and not to care
Teach us to sit still.

Pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death,
Pray for us now and at the hour of our death.

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

Ash Wednesday Liturgy

Usual Weekly Pattern

Sunday
RCL Eucharist
Readings and Collect

Monday
Delving Deeper into
the Readings

Tuesday
Words from Others
(sacred & secular)

Wednesday
Resources from the
Arts

Thursday
Contemplative Acts

Friday
Personal Reflection
- what this means to
me

Saturday
Acts & Deeds