

CELEBRATION OF BURNING OLD PALMS FOR ASH WEDNESDAY

Introduction:

The celebration of Burning Old Palms is to be done after the last Mass of the Sunday preceding Ash Wednesday.

All present gather in front of the church or in a designated place where the burning of old palm leaves will take place. The priest begins with the sign of the cross and greets the people with the invitation to heed the Father's call to a change of heart. All remain silent for a brief period.

Opening Hymn:

Presider: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Presider: The Lord be with you

All: And with your spirit

Presider: As we gather today to witness the burning of the Old Palms, let us be reminded of our sinfulness. May I now invite you for a moment of silence and think of the times we have offended God and our brethren.

For the times I failed to show love to the people around me, *(silence)*

For the times I entertained bad thoughts against others, *(silence)*

For the times I failed to forgive those who have wronged me, *(silence)*

For the times I failed to ask for forgiveness from those I have wronged,
(silence)

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life.

All: Amen.

OPENING PRAYER:

Presider: Let us pray

God of tender mercy, you fashioned us from the dust of earth and bid us follow your Gospel call in the company of the Church. Look on us with kindness as we prepare the ashes which will mark the beginning of our Lenten journey. Grant that we who make the desert pilgrimage might come to the font of rebirth with a renewed passion for justice. May our alms serve your people and bring us peace, may prayer sanctify all our deeds, and may we come at last to the table you set in the place where you reign with Christ and Holy Spirit forever and ever.

All: Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD:

Lector: A Reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians

Dear brothers and sisters.

You must give up your former way of living the *old self*, whose deceitful desires bring self-destruction. Renew yourselves spiritually, from inside, and put on

the *new self* or *self* according to God, that is created in true righteousness and holiness.

Therefore, give up lying; let all of us speak the truth to our neighbors for we are members of one another. *Be angry but do not sin:* do not let your anger last until the end of the day, lest you give the devil a foothold.

Let the one who used to steal, steal no more, but busy himself working usefully with his hands so that he may have something to share with the needy. Do not let even one bad word come from your mouth, but only good words that will encourage when necessary and be helpful to those who hear.

Do not sadden the Holy Spirit of God which you were marked with. It will be your distinctive mark on the day of salvation. Do away with all quarreling, rage, anger, insults and every kind of malice: be good and understanding, mutually forgiving one another as God forgave you in Christ.

The Word of the Lord.

REFLECTION BY THE PRESIDERS:....

BURNING OF THE PALMS

The old palm branches are burned while the people and the choir sing Psalm 51 or an appropriate song about repentance and God's mercy.

BLESSING:

Priest: Lord
Bless these ashes (+)
By which we (will) show that we are dust,
Pardon our sins and keep us faithful to the discipline of Lent,
For you do not want sinners to die
But to live with the risen Christ,
Who reigns with you forever and ever.

All: Amen.

CONCLUDING RITE:

Presider: As one community, let us now pray the prayer that Jesus taught us.

All: OUR FATHER....

Presider: The Lord be with you

All: And with your spirit

Presider: May almighty God bless you, the Father...

All: Amen

Presider: Let us now go in peace.

Final Hymn: