

**BEHOLD  
THE MAN!**

## ASH WEDNESDAY

# A GOD WHO HUNGERS

### AS WE GATHER

“Behold the man!” was Pontius Pilate’s short, yet most profound, sermon. Our endeavor this Lententide and Easter Sunday is to behold the man, God in human flesh, Jesus. Each time together, we are meditating on and proclaiming His real, bodily suffering and death as well as His physical resurrection. He knew all that real bodies experience; He suffered, wept, bled, ate, and hoped.

Today, we remember how the man Jesus fasted for forty days, refusing to eat—the direct opposite to our first parents, who ate the forbidden fruit in their rebellion. Eating and fasting were very physical actions for Jesus; His body needed sustenance. In the Sermon on the Mount (today’s Gospel), Jesus doesn’t command fasting, once a hallmark of Lent; rather, He says, “When you fast.” Whether we individually fast or not, our elder Brother does give us what we need for every aspect of our lives: Himself, in, with, and under the bread and wine, for the forgiveness of sins.

As we move through this season of Lent, it will become increasingly clear why God became man: He lived this physical life in order to be nailed to a cross. Thereby, we are truly preparing for the celebration of His real, bodily, flesh-and-blood resurrection. Without that, our faith and our preaching are all in vain. God the Son became the embodied, incarnate Son of Mary. In Jesus, God has human flesh, a body, just like us. What could be more profound? Behold the man, who has led the way for us through death to our own physical resurrection!

HYMN

“O Lord, throughout These Forty Days”

*LSB* 418 Vs. 1-4

INVOCATION

**P** In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

## ADDRESS

- P** The forty days of Lent have historically been a time for introspection for the whole Body of Christ as we prepare to celebrate our Lord’s resurrection. The disciplines of Lent include repentance, prayer, acts of service, and fasting. This year, we will behold the man Jesus in His physical life, suffering, death, and resurrection. And today, we consider His fasting during His forty days in the wilderness, His extreme hunger. Today is also a day for us to reflect on food, how we have dealt with our own physical hunger and our trust in God for all we need to support this body and life.

## OPENING SENTENCES

- P** When the woman saw that the tree was good for food... she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.
- C** **Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked.** *Genesis 3:6–7*
- P** Jesus... for forty days, being tempted by the devil... ate nothing during those days.
- C** **And when they were ended, He was hungry.** *Luke 4:1–2*
- P** The birds of the air... neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them.
- C** **Are you not of more value than they?** *Matthew 6:26*
- P** Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good!
- C** **Blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!** *Psalms 34:8*

## OLD TESTAMENT READING, Part 1, *Joel 2:12–17 (God calls us to stop everything and repent.)*

- L** Through the prophet Joel, the Lord calls for repentance. A reading from the second chapter of Joel.

“Yet even now,” declares the LORD, “return to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments.” Return to the LORD your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and He relents over disaster. 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; consecrate a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather the people. Consecrate the congregation; assemble the elders; gather the children, even nursing infants. Let the bridegroom leave his

room, and the bride her chamber. Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep and say, “Spare Your people, O LORD, and make not Your heritage a reproach, a byword among the nations. Why should they say among the peoples, ‘Where is their God?’”

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** O Lord, have mercy.

## CONFESSION

**P** Let us heed our Lord’s call and go to Him in repentance.

**C** **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean.**

**P** We have sinned in our thinking.

**C** **When food was plentiful, we have assumed we deserve full stomachs and filled pantries.**

**P** We have sinned in our speaking.

**C** **When food was scarce or costs increasing, we have wondered aloud about Your caring for us.**

**P** We have sinned in our acting.

**C** **When having to make choices, we have put our wants before the physical needs of our neighbors.**

**P** Show us the true humanity of our Lord Jesus; help us grasp the pain and suffering He endured as He dealt with physical hunger and as He hungered for our salvation.

**C** **Forgive us, renew our trust in Your daily and eternal care, and lead us in paths of righteousness for Your name’s sake. Amen.**

## IMPOSITION OF ASHES

**P** Ashes have been a sign of repentance and contrition over the centuries. They are a reminder that, without the mercy of almighty God, we deserve the spiritual death pronounced on our first parents. Without the sustenance God provides on every level of human existence, we are only dust, and to dust we shall return.

*(Those desiring ashes come forward as directed. As he makes the sign of the cross with the ashes, the pastor reminds the penitent, “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”)*

*(The penitent responds, “Amen.”)*

*(Silence is kept as the ashes are applied. Those in their seats may meditate on Psalm 51 in the hymnal.)*

OLD TESTAMENT READING, Part 2, *Joel 2:18–19 (The Lord responds in forgiving love.)*

- L** When God’s people have repented, the Lord has had pity on them. Joel continues:  
Then the LORD became jealous for His land and had pity on His people. The LORD answered and said to His people, “Behold, I am sending to you grain, wine, and oil, and you will be satisfied; and I will no more make you a reproach among the nations.”
- L** This is the Word of the Lord.  
**C** **Thanks be to God!**

#### ABSOLUTION

- P** The Lord has had pity on us. Because of the obedience of His only-begotten Son, the man Jesus, we are able to come into God’s presence without fear of punishment. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** **Amen.**

#### PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P** The Lord be with you.  
**C** **And also with you.**
- P** Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, You despise nothing You have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent. You sent Your Son into our time and space as a true man.
- C** **Increase in us gratitude for the depth of Your love and the pain of His sacrifice, and renew in us joy in serving You and the people You give us to love;**
- P** Through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

EPISTLE READING, *2 Corinthians 5:20b–6:10* (Assured of salvation, the Christian can be reconciled to God and fellow brothers and sisters in Christ even while enduring physical hardship.)

We implore 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. Working together with Him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For He says, “In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you.” Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. We put no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

GRADUAL

*Hebrews 2:2*

**P** [O Come, let us fix our eyes on] Jesus,

**C** The founder and perfecter of our faith,

**P** Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame,

**C** And is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

HOLY GOSPEL, *Matthew 6:1–6, 16–21* (Our acts of piety, though quite physical, are to be private between us and God.)

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the sixth chapter.

**C** Glory to You, O Lord.

**P** [Jesus said,] Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

Thus, when you give to the needy,

- C** Sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others.
- P** Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give to the needy,
- C** Do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret.
- P** And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. And when you pray,
- C** You must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others.
- P** Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray,
- C** Go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret.
- P** And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. And when you fast,
- C** Do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others.
- P** Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast,
- C** Anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret.
- P** And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
- P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.
- C** Praise to You, O Christ.

SERIES HYMN

“Behold the Man before You”

*Behold the man before you:  
The One who would restore you  
Stands silent in your stead.  
He waits for His conviction—  
Your rightful crucifixion.  
He bows His holy, weary head.*

*Hands, feet, and shoulders bleeding,  
To God the Father pleading  
For your own heart and soul.  
Come, sinner, watch in wonder:  
His body laden under  
The ransom of your sin in whole.*

*Exposed and bare, He covers  
Your shame with grace that hovers  
Upon you night and day.  
His final breath expended—  
The reign of death upended.  
His verdict kills the devil's sway.*

*Behold your God, here buried:  
Your sin and sorrows carried  
Into the earthen tomb.  
But wait with expectation:  
The Lord of your salvation  
Will rescue you from graven doom.*

*Christ, God and man, is living!  
His risen body giving  
Proof that our Savior won.  
Your hands will raise to bless Him,  
Your lips will e'er confess Him:  
The born and dead and risen One!*

SERMON

“A God Who Hungers”

NICENE CREED

**C** I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

**I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made; Who for us and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered**

**and was buried; and the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit, The Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, Who spoke by the Prophets. And I believe one holy Christian and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, And I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

### PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** **And also with you.**

**P** Let us use the experiences of the man Jesus as we pray for ourselves, the Church around the world, and all people in their various circumstances.

*Special Ash Wednesday Prayers will be made at this time  
Petitions will end with the words, "Let us pray to the Lord"  
The congregation may respond, "Lord, have mercy."*

**P** Into Your hands, heavenly Father, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy for the sake of Your Son and our Brother, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**C** **Amen.**

### OFFERING

OFFERTORY

"Lord of All Good"

LSB 786

### PREFACE

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** **And also with you.**

**P** Lift up your hearts.

**C** **We lift them to the Lord.**

**P** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C** **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

**P** It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who was born as one of us, suffered physical hunger, pain, and death in our place, and who by His obedience destroyed the power of sin, death, and the devil. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

SANCTUS

“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”

LSB 621 Vs. 1&4

*Let all mortal flesh keep silence And with fear and trembling stand;  
Ponder nothing earthly-minded, For with blessing in His hand  
Christ our God to earth descending Comes our homage to demand.*

*At His feet the six-winged seraph, Cherubim with sleepless eye,  
Veil their faces to the presence As with ceaseless voice they cry:  
“Holy, holy, holy, Lord of hosts! Holy, holy, Lord Most High!”*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

**P** Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of the universe, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

In Your righteous judgment You condemned the sin of Adam and Eve, who ate the forbidden fruit, and You justly barred them and all their children from the tree of life. Yet, in Your great mercy, You promised salvation by a second Adam, Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. When He was tempted, He was obedient, refusing to eat in spite of His hunger. His cross is now a life-giving tree for all who trust in Him.

We give thanks for the redemption You have prepared for us and ask that by the help of the Holy Spirit we may eat and drink Christ’s body and blood and receive the blessings of forgiveness, life, and salvation.

**C** Amen.

WORDS OF OUR LORD

*Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20;  
1 Corinthians 11:23–25*

**P** Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My  $\dagger$  body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My  $\dagger$  blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

**P**: The Peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C**: **And also with you. Amen.**

#### LORD’S PRAYER

*Matthew 6:9–13*

**C**: **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 and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

#### AGNUS DEI

“Not All the Blood of Beasts”

*LSB 431*

#### DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

“Feed Thy Children, God Most Holy”

*LSB 774*

“What Wondrous Love Is This”

*LSB 543*

#### POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** **And also with you.**

**P** Let us pray. O God, our heavenly Father, the giver of all we need to support this body and life and who sent Your only-begotten Son to become one of us, we give thanks that You have given us pardon and peace, nourishing our bodies, minds, and spirits through this Sacrament.

**C** **By Your Holy Spirit, strengthen our faith that we may behold the man, our Lord Jesus Christ, at each reception of the Lord’s Supper and in every hearing of the blessed Gospel;**

**P** through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit one God, now and forever.

**C** **Amen.**

## BENEDICTION

**P** The blessing of God Almighty—the Father in eternity, the † Son, who entered time and space to redeem us from our sins, and the Holy Spirit, who works faith to trust in the man Jesus, that we may live with Him forever—be with you now and forever.

**C** **Amen.**

## HYMN

“Lord of All Hopefulness”

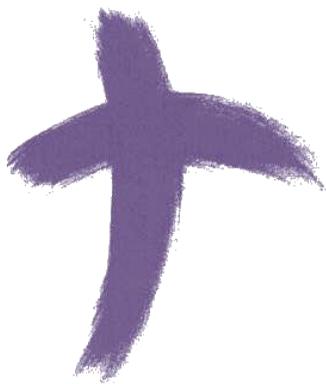
*LSB 738*

## DISMISSAL

**P** Go in peace as you serve the Lord.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

## POSTLUDE



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