



# The Anglican Orthodox Church



Office of the Bishop

PO Box 128

Statesville, N.C. 28687

E-mail: [usa@anglicanorthodoxchurch.org](mailto:usa@anglicanorthodoxchurch.org) • [standrews.church@gmail.com](mailto:standrews.church@gmail.com) Pho 704-873-8365

Bishop's Lenten Letter for 26 February 2020, Anno Domini

LENTEN SEASON

## The first day of Lent, commonly called Ash Wednesday.

*The Collect.*

**A**LMIGHTY and everlasting God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made, and dost 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 obtain of thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

¶ This Collect is to be said every day in Lent, after the Collect appointed for the day, until Palm Sunday.

ASH Wednesday is a time of deep reflection on the price with which we were bought out of condemnation by our Lord Jesus Christ as well as the penitence we should feel toward our sins and transgressions that compelled our Lord, through LOVE, to the Cross.

The Observance of Ash Wednesday has nothing to do with the superficial application of ashes to the forehead of the Roman invention, but the symbolic application of ashes to the heart. It should never be made into an outward display of piety and fasting for all to see, but an inward sense of deep gratitude for that redemption made available by the grace of God, and an equal sense of the enormity of past sins we have committed.

The Romish custom of application of ashes on the forehead to announce to the world our proud penitence is to be avoided as a fool's superstition. Our Lord was quite clear on this point, and would we not always accept the Words of Holy Writ over and above those of the unholy traditions of men: <sup>16</sup> *Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.* <sup>17</sup> *But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;* <sup>18</sup> *That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.* (Matthew 6:16-18)

With what part of the Lord's counsel do you dare disagree? Too many churches among the Protestant Faith, have fallen for this ruse of Rome. Penitence is an inherent quality of the heart and not of the outward, cosmetic appearance.

This ASH Wednesday, let us remember, as individuals, the chains of sin from whence we have been purchased by the precious and redeeming blood of our Passover Lamb – the Lord Jesus Christ, and that purchase be all of GRACE. And then let us remember the deplorable condition to which the mainstream churches have fallen. Pray for their repentance and restoration. At last, let us pray for our respective nations that the Law of God would be elevated above every law of man. Let us pray for a return to the great truths uncovered, at great sacrifice, during the English and Continental Reformation – that instead of *deformation* we might enjoy the fruits of the *REFORMATION* of true religion and piety of those great Christian professors who were willing to go to the stake of burning rather than renounce a single Word or Line of Holy Scripture.

God bless us as a people, as a Church, and as a nation devoted to our Lord Jesus Christ.

In Christ,

Anglican Orthodox Church Worldwide

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jerry L. Ogles". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jerry L. Ogles, Presiding Bishop