

# Liturgy Alive of Friday after Ash Wednesday

## Introduction

People in the Old Testament ask: “What is the use of fasting?” God seems not to be near when they fast. The prophet tells them because real fasting consists in justice and love. Since God has made a covenant with his people, that covenant comprises also of justice and love from one person to the other. In the Gospel, the disciples of John, who fasted, were asking the disciples of Jesus why these didn’t fast. In the other parts of the Gospel, Jesus gives an answer similar to that of the prophet, but now Jesus said that because he has come and is with his disciples, they should rejoice rather than fast.

## Opening Prayer

Lord of the Covenant,  
we don’t have not to fear your judgment  
if like you, we become rich in mercy  
and full of compassion to our neighbor.  
May we not only know that you ask us,  
to practice with sincere hearts  
sharing our food with the hungry  
and to loosen the bonds of injustice,  
that through us your light may shine  
and your healing spread far and wide.  
Be with us in your goodness.  
We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

## General Intercessions

- For the Church that she be concerned that no one is trampled upon or exploited, we pray:
- For the leaders of nations, that they may bring justice to their people and care for the poor, we pray:
- For all of us, that we may have eyes, ears, and hearts for people in need and those who try to hide that they are distressed and poverty-stricken, we pray:

## Prayer over the Gifts

God of mercy and compassion,  
you have invited us at the table of your Son,  
that we may learn from him  
to share our food and ourselves  
with everyone in need.  
Do not allow us ever to forget  
how good you have been to us  
and how you let Jesus raise us up  
from our selfish greed.  
Let his love grow and shine among us,  
for he is our Lord for ever.

## **Prayer after Communion**

Merciful God,  
we are seeking you  
and we want to be close to you.  
Accept our thanks that you let us find you  
in the lively, challenging word of Jesus  
and in his presence among us  
as our food and drink of life and joy.  
Make us bring him especially  
to people who suffer and are in need.  
Let this be the way that we  
find healing and compassion,  
through Christ, our Lord.

## **Blessing**

Jesus wants to stay with us as the source of our life and our joy. May we recognize his presence among us in the weak and the victims of injustice. May God bless you for this task, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.