

MAKING A GOOD LENT

Lent begins this Wednesday and so we should begin (if we haven't already) to pray about "making a good Lent." The first question we want to ask ourselves is "why am I doing this?" The answer, of course, is to prepare our souls for God. With this in mind we can then make our plan for the prayers, penances, and charitable practices which will shape and form our lenten observances.

Everything begins with prayer and sacraments which unite us to God. The parish will be praying together in special ways this Lent. We will celebrate Mass every Friday of Lent at 9:00AM. In the evening we will have opportunity for Confession from 6:30PM until we begin the Stations of the Cross at 7:00PM.

Friday's are always a day of penance throughout the year but more so during Lent. The rules of fasting and abstinence are as follows:

-Abstinence and fast are to be observed on Ash Wednesday and on Good Friday (Canon 1251). Abstinence means no meat. Fasting means (at a minimum) one modest meal and two smaller meals (snacks) which do not equal together the one modest meal. No in-between meal snacks. We are required to abstain from meat on all Fridays of Lent.

-Everyone 14 and older are bound by the law of abstinence; all adults are bound by the law of fast up to the beginning of their sixtieth year (Canon 1252).

Finally, almsgiving is the third discipline of Lent. Since prayer and sacrament is the font of grace and penance and fasting are gifts to God, we find in almsgiving the fulfillment of the first two. To be generous in helping others fulfills the commandment to love our neighbors as ourselves. As a parish we will be giving to the Catholic Ministries Appeal. It is a perfect Lenten charity for it certainly assists those in need and we receive no recognition or direct reward from those we help. It is our Heavenly Father who sees what we do and will surely reward us.

Whatever it is you decide to do for Lent make sure to do it with love. All three practices: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving are our gifts to God. Make a good Lent and see for yourself God's grace working in you and in your family.

Random Quotes

"Fasting is a virtue only when it is accompanied by conditions which render it pleasing to God. Thus it happens that it profits some and not others, because it is not undertaken by all in the same manner."

- Saint Francis de Sales

God bless you all,
Fr. Sikorski

ASH WEDNESDAY

The reception of blessed ashes by the Catholic faithful as the hallmark of the beginning of the season of Lent remains very important for the people. However, in the time of the pandemic, the imposition of ashes in the usual manner is not possible.

Please use adult, prudential judgement.

If you are sick please stay home.

If you have health issues or age-related concerns please stay home.

If you are apprehensive, worried or uncomfortable with any gathering please stay home.

Ash Wednesday is not a Holy Day of Obligation, and that one is not obliged to attend Mass, nor is one obliged to receive ashes.

Because of the instruction from the Prefect of the Congregation of Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments and due to the current state of the pandemic, **this year the Diocese of Rockville Centre will administer ashes to the faithful by sprinkling the blessed ashes on the top of the head of the recipient.** Those receiving ashes should bow slightly to facilitate the sprinkling.

This is the traditional practice of the Roman Rite, and is currently observed in Rome, throughout Europe, and in various other parts of the world. This method, rooted in the scriptural tradition, will allow for ashes to be given easily without making physical contact.

While imposition of ashes with the sign of the cross on the forehead has been customary in the United States of America on Ash Wednesday, in many other parts of the world, the Roman Rite's tradition of sprinkling of dry ashes on top of the head is, in fact, the more common practice. The faithful may be interested to know this is how the Holy Father, Pope Francis, always receives his ashes on Ash Wednesday!

Sprinkling ashes on the crown of the head recalls the biblical method of putting on sackcloth and ashes as a sign of penance. A number of accounts in the Bible mention people sprinkling or pouring ashes over their head (for example, Numbers 19:17, Jonah 3:6, Nehemiah 9:1, Judith 4:11, & Esther 4:1). This gesture, while not as dramatic, recalls that penitential practice. The ashes not being visible will also more clearly help those who receive them to put into practice the teaching of the Gospel appointed for the day to carry out one's penance in private. Additionally, it is helpful to recall that in Baptism, we have been anointed on the crown of the head. The ashes to be imposed on the crown signify our repentance from sin, which has marred the grace of Baptism.

In the Diocese of Rockville Centre this year, it is not permitted to impose ashes on the forehead of a member of the faithful with the thumb of the hand, even if that hand is gloved. Hands and gloves would be considered “contaminated” after each imposition of ashes if physical contact were made.

With that stated, ashes are available on Ash Wednesday at Saint Elizabeth’s at the following times:

- After the 9:00 AM Mass from 9:30 to 10:00AM
- From 12:15PM and ending 12:45PM
- From 7:00PM to 7:30PM

At 12:15PM and 7:00PM you will be able to walk in and receive ashes immediately. You are welcome to sit and say some private prayers. I offer the following litany you may wish to use.

LITANY OF THE PASSION

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

God the Father of Heaven,

Have mercy on us.

God the Son, Redeemer of the World,

Have mercy on us.

God the Holy Spirit,

Have mercy on us (repeat after each petition).

Holy Trinity, One God,

Jesus, the Eternal Wisdom,

Jesus, sold for thirty pieces of silver,

Jesus, prostrate on the ground in prayer,

Jesus, strengthened by an angel,

Jesus, in Thine agony bathed in a bloody sweat,

Jesus, betrayed by Judas with a kiss,

Jesus, bound by the soldiers,

Jesus, forsaken by Thy disciples,

Jesus, brought before Annas and Caiphas,

Jesus, struck in the face by a servant,

Jesus, accused by false witnesses,

Jesus, declared guilty of death,

Jesus, spat upon,

Jesus, blindfolded,

Jesus, smitten on the cheek,
Jesus, thrice denied by Peter,
Jesus, despised and mocked by Herod,
Jesus, clothed in a white garment,
Jesus, rejected for Barabbas,
Jesus, torn with scourges,
Jesus, bruised for our sins,
Jesus, esteemed a leper,
Jesus, covered with a purple robe,
Jesus, crowned with thorns,
Jesus, struck with a reed upon the Head,
Jesus, demanded for crucifixion,
Jesus, condemned to an ignominious death,
Jesus, given up to the will of Thine enemies,
Jesus, loaded with the heavy weight of the Cross,
Jesus, led like a sheep to the slaughter,
Jesus, stripped of Thy garments,
Jesus, fastened with nails to the Cross,
Jesus, reviled by the malefactors,
Jesus, promising Paradise to the penitent thief,
Jesus, commending St. John to Thy Mother as her son,
Jesus, declaring Thyself forsaken by Thy Father,
Jesus, in Thy thirst given gall and vinegar to drink,
Jesus, testifying that all things written concerning Thee were accomplished,
Jesus, commending Thy spirit into the hands of Thy Father,
Jesus, obedient even to the death of the Cross,
Jesus, pierced with a lance,
Jesus, made a propitiation for us,
Jesus, taken down from the Cross,
Jesus, laid in the sepulcher,
Jesus, rising gloriously from the dead,
Jesus, ascending into Heaven,
Jesus, our Advocate with the Father,
Jesus, sending down on Thy disciples the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete,
Jesus, exalting Thy Mother above the choirs of angels,
Jesus, Who shall come to judge the living and the dead,

Be merciful, *spare us, O Lord.*

Be merciful, *graciously hear us, O Lord.*

From all evil, *Lord Jesus, deliver us.*

From all sin, *Lord Jesus, deliver us.*

From anger, hatred, and every evil will, *Lord Jesus, deliver us (repeat after each petition).*

From war, famine and pestilence,
From all dangers of mind and body,
From everlasting death,
Through Thy most pure Conception,
Through Thy miraculous Nativity,
Through Thy humble Circumcision,
Through Thy baptism and holy fasting,
Through Thy labors and watchings,
Through Thy cruel scourging and crowning,
Through Thy thirst, and tears, and nakedness,
Through Thy precious death and Cross,
Through Thy glorious Resurrection and Ascension,
Through Thy sending forth the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete,
In the Day of Judgment,

We sinners beseech Thee, *hear us.*

That Thou wilt spare us, *we beseech Thee, hear us.*

That Thou wilt pardon us, *we beseech Thee, hear us (repeat after each petition).*

That Thou wilt bring us to true penance,

That Thou wilt mercifully pour into our hearts the grace of the Holy Spirit,

That Thou wilt defend and propagate Thy holy Church,

That Thou wilt preserve and increase all societies assembled in Thy Holy Name,

That Thou wilt bestow upon us true peace,

That Thou wilt give us perseverance in grace and in Thy holy service,

That Thou wilt deliver us from unclean thoughts, from the temptations of the devil, and from
everlasting damnation,

That Thou wilt unite us to the company of Thy saints,

That Thou wilt graciously hear us,

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,
Spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,
Graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,
Have mercy on us.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee,

Because by Thy Holy Cross Thou hast redeemed the world.

Let us pray:

May the image of Your suffering for love of us move each of us to a change of heart. May we sincerely repent of the sins by which we have rejected Your presence in our lives and with the help of Your grace and the intercession of the saints in Heaven, change our way of life. We ask this through Christ, Our Lord. *Amen.*

