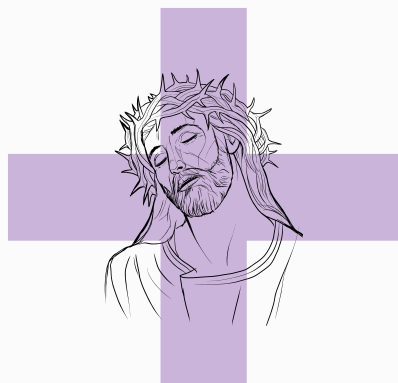


## What is Lent?



Lent is a special time in the Catholic Church. It consists of forty days, not including Sundays. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. These special forty days remind us of the time Jesus spent in the desert in prayer. He resisted temptations of the devil and prepared himself to begin his public ministry. The forty days we spend in Lent call us to recollect and remember when we may have not been attentive to God in our life. We remember and we pray for forgiveness.

This year Lent begins on Wednesday, February 17, 2021. During Lent we are asked to consider the opportunity to grow in our relationship with God in three specific ways. Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving are the ways our Church has asked us to be attentive to this special time.

Use this time to:

Pray more (say a rosary or a morning prayer before school)

Fast (give up your favorite dessert or time from video games or social media)

Almsgiving (participate in Operational Rice Bow, donate extra toys you may have to local Catholic Charity centers or your local parish or family that would use them.)

Take time to reflect on yourself your relationship with God. Consider these questions to see how you have failed to follow Jesus.

- How have you honored God in the past year?
- Is there something you would do differently?
- How could this help you and try to build ways to deepen your relationship with Him?

## What is Ash Wednesday?



Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent. Many Christians go to church to participate in the “distribution of ashes”. Ashes are a public sign of our intent to “die” or set aside our worldly desires (materialism and selfishness), and live simply by seeking to be in a prayerful relationship with Christ. As our foreheads are marked with ashes (during this time of the pandemic, ashes will be sprinkled on your head), these words are said:

“Remember, that you are dust, and unto dust you shall return.”

Where do ashes come from? The ashes are made from the left over palms from the previous year's Palm Sunday Masses. The palms are saved over the year, and are gathered by the pastor of the parish and burned in a special fire. The ashes are gathered and used in the Ash Wednesday services the parish celebrates.

## Some terms to know:

**Almsgiving** - giving to others money or goods to the poor.

**Abstain** - to choose not to do or have something. During Lent, we abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and Fridays.

**Fast** - choosing to reduce the amount to do or have something. During Lent, we fast from the amount of food we may eat at a meal or reduce the amount of time we may spend on an activity enjoyed.

**Holy Week** - The most important week in the Church year. Christians celebrate in a special way the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The Church marks this time from Palm Sunday and ending on Holy Saturday.

## Mission prayer for Lent



Jesus help me during this time of Lent to be your missionary. I offer my prayers and your love to all those who are in the missions. I want to deepen my relationship with you. Help me to reflect on the things I may do that hurt you, and/or my neighbor, and my friends, etc. Help me to thank you and see You in everything and every person I encounter in during the day. Amen.