



## Ash Wednesday & Lenten Information

The three traditional pillars of Lent are prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Through the three pillars of Lent we journey to develop a closer relationship to God.

### Ash Wednesday Gospel - Mt 6:1-6, 16-18

Jesus said to his disciples:

"Take care not to perform righteous deeds  
in order that people may see them;  
otherwise, you will have no recompense from your heavenly Father.  
When you give alms,  
do not blow a trumpet before you,  
as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets  
to win the praise of others.  
Amen, I say to you,  
they have received their reward.  
But when you give alms,  
do not let your left hand know what your right is doing,  
so that your almsgiving may be secret.  
And your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

"When you pray,  
do not be like the hypocrites,  
who love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on street corners  
so that others may see them.  
Amen, I say to you,  
they have received their reward.  
But when you pray, go to your inner room,  
close the door, and pray to your Father in secret.  
And your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

"When you fast,  
do not look gloomy like the hypocrites.  
They neglect their appearance,



so that they may appear to others to be fasting.  
Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward.  
But when you fast,  
anoint your head and wash your face,  
so that you may not appear to be fasting,  
except to your Father who is hidden.  
And your Father who sees what is hidden will repay you."

### **Parallels to Consider**

I wonder what you perceive when you hear the word "Lent"?

Do you draw a parallel between Ash Wednesday and God saying to Adam, from dust thou art and unto dust thou shall return?

Does the story of Jonah come to mind?

Jonah preached to Nineveh and warned them to repent before the city is destroyed in 40 days. The people believed Jonah, turned from their wickedness, and God had mercy on them. Jonah now became angry and bitter because God did not destroy the Ninevites who were Israel's enemy!

Do you sense a parallel between the 40 days of Lent, and the 40 years wandering in the desert in Exodus that culminates in entry to the promised land?

How about Christ's temptation in the wilderness - 40 days

Christ lay forty hours in the tomb?

Lent. Begins with Ash Wednesday, a call for repentance.

Lent culminates in Easter!

The resurrection of Christ is our basis for hope.

The fulfillment of God's promised messiah.



During the forty days of lent we try to do what Christ did in the wilderness... through the gift of the Holy Spirit, put on the armor of God using Faith in the Grace of God.