

Ash Wednesday (By: Fr. James Luke Meagher, 1883)

The name Ash Wednesday comes from the ceremony of putting ashes on the heads of the clergy and the people on this day. Let us



understand the meaning of this rite. When man sinned by eating in the garden the forbidden fruit, God drove him from Paradise with the words: "*For dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return*" (Genesis 3: 19). Before his sin, Adam was not to die, but to be carried into heaven after a certain time of trial here upon this earth. But he sinned, and by that sin he brought upon himself and us, his children, death. Our bodies, then, are to return to the dust from which God made them, to which they are condemned by the sin of Adam. What wisdom the Church shows us when she invites us by these ceremonies to bring before our minds the dust and the corruption of the grave by putting ashes on our heads. We see the great men of old doing penance in sackcloth and ashes. Job did penance in dust and ashes (Job 2: 12). By the mouth of His prophet the Lord commanded the Jews "*...in the house of Dust sprinkle yourselves with dust*" (Micheas 1: 10). Abraham said, "*I will speak to the Lord, for I am dust and ashes*" (Genesis 18: 27). Joshua and all the ancients of Israel fell on their faces before the Lord and put dust upon their heads (see: Joshua 7: 6). When the ark of the covenant was taken by the Philistines, the soldier came to tell the sad story with his head covered with dust (see: I Kings 4: 12). When Job's three friends came and found him in such affliction, "*...they sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven*" (Job 2: 12). "*they have sprinkled their heads with dust,...*" (Lamentations 2: 10). Daniel said his prayers to the Lord his God in fasting, sackcloth and ashes (see: Daniel 9: 3). Our Lord tells us that if in Tyre and Sidon had been done the miracles seen in Judea, that they had long ago done penance in sackcloth and ashes (see: Matthew 11: 21; Luke 10: 13). When the great city will be destroyed, its people will cry out with grief, putting dust upon their heads (see: Apocalypse 18: 19). From these parts of the Bible, the reader will see that dust and ashes were used by the people of old as a sign of deep sorrow for sin, and that when they fasted they covered their heads with ashes. From them the Church copied these ceremonies which have come down to us. And on this day, when we begin our fast, we put ashes on our heads with the words, "*Remember, man, that thou art dust, and into dust thou shalt return*" (Genesis 3: 19).

Mater Dei Catholic Church



February 2024

Month of the Holy Family



O God of goodness and mercy, Who hast been pleased to call us to love the Holy Family; grant that we may always honour and imitate Jesus, Mary, and Joseph; so that, pleasing Them on earth, we may enjoy Their presence in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

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SUNDAY MASS

10:30 AM

Daily Masses *see page 3.

Sacrament of Penance : Confession time is one hour prior to all scheduled Masses, or by appointment.

Other Sacraments / Requiems (funerals) / Inquiries : Please contact office.

All Masses are offered at St. Michael Church – 48 William Av, Coniston

***THE HOLY ROSARY IS RECITED PUBLICLY 40 MINUTES PRIOR TO ALL MASSES.

OPPORTUNITY TO GAIN (UNDER USUAL CONDITIONS) A PLENARY INDULGENCE.

FIRST FRIDAY DEVOTIONS

To complete, one must: receive Holy Communion, in the state of grace, on **NINE CONSECUTIVE FIRST FRIDAYS OF THE MONTH**, in honour of, and, for reparation to, the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Devotion includes:

4PM ~ Holy Hour with Exposition, Acts of Consecration & Reparation, Litany of the SHJ, Adoration & Solemn Benediction

5PM ~ Confessions

5:20 ~ Rosary

6PM ~ SHJ Votive Mass (as the Ordo permits)



FIRST SATURDAY DEVOTIONS

To complete, one must: receive Holy Communion, in the state of grace, on **FIVE CONSECUTIVE FIRST SATURDAYS OF THE MONTH**, in honour of, and, for reparation to, the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Devotion includes:

10AM ~ Confessions

10:20 ~ Rosary

11AM ~ IHM Votive Mass (as the Ordo permits)

After Mass: Acts of Consecration & Reparation, Litany of the BVM (Loreto), & Keeping our Lady company for 15 minutes while meditating on the Mysteries of the Rosary.



FASTING & ABSTINENCE (traditional)

Laws of Days of Abstinence

- Applies on one's 7th birthday.
- **Complete Abstinence:** all Fridays of the year, Ash Wednesday, Holy Saturday, and the Vigil of Christmas.
- **Partial Abstinence (meat and soup or gravy made from meat permitted once a day at the principal meal):** all the days of Lent, the Ember Days of Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, and the Vigils of Pentecost and Assumption.
- Abstinence from meat is dispensed on Holy Days of Obligation.

Laws of Fast

- Applies for those aged 21 to 59, inclusive.
- Days of Lent from Ash Wednesday (inclusive), Ember Days, and Vigils of Christmas, Pentecost, and Assumption.
- One full meal permitted, and two other meals may be taken which, when combined, are less than a full meal.

The Law of the Eucharistic Fast

Complete fast from all food and alcoholic drinks for three hours before the reception of Holy Communion, and one hour for non-alcoholic drinks (except for water, which can be taken at any time and does not break the fast). Those who are able to maintain the midnight fast, which was the previous discipline, are still encouraged to do so.

"Mardi Gras"

Potluck Luncheon

11 February

Last Sunday before the Great Fast

All are invited to the lower hall, after Mass.



Please forward all communications to the Events Contact:

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Practice During Lent

By: Dom Prosper Guéranger, 1870

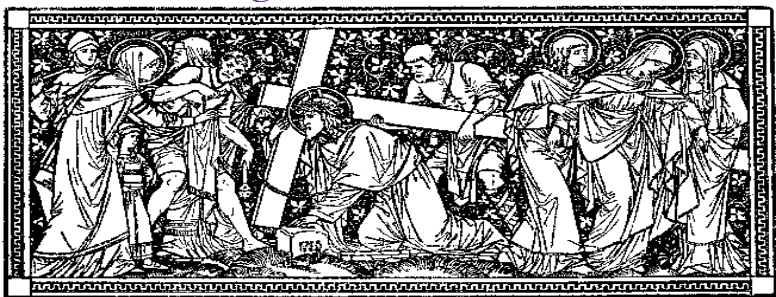
After having spent the three weeks of Septuagesima in meditating upon our spiritual infirmities, and upon the wounds caused in us by sin,--we should be ready to enter upon the penitential season, which the Church has now begun. We have now a clearer knowledge of the justice and holiness of God, and of the dangers that await an impenitent soul; and, that our repentance might be earnest and lasting, we have bade farewell to the vain joys and baubles of the world. Our pride has been humbled by the prophecy, that these bodies would soon be like the ashes that wrote the memento of death upon our foreheads.

During these Forty Days of penance, which seem so long to our poor nature, we shall not be deprived of the company of our Jesus. He seemed to have withdrawn from us during those weeks of Septuagesima, when everything spoke to us of his maledictions upon sinful man;--but this absence has done us good. It has taught us how to tremble at the voice of God's anger. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Psalms 110: 10); we have found it to be so;--the spirit of penance is now active within us, because we have feared.

Now, Penance consists in contrition of the soul, and in mortification of the body; these two parts are essential to it. The soul has willed the sin; the body has frequently co-operated in its commission. Moreover, man is composed of both Soul and Body; both, then, should pay homage to their Creator. The Body is to share with the Soul, either the delights of heaven, or the torments of hell; there cannot, therefore, be any thorough Christian life, or any earnest penance, where the Body does not take part, in both, with the Soul.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

During Lent *(resource provided)*



Fridays, 4:30 PM

(EXCEPT THURSDAY 4:30 PM THE WEEK OF THE 1ST FRIDAY OF MARCH)

A plenary indulgence – under the usual conditions – may be gained daily when a pious WAY OF THE CROSS is said (publicly or privately) before legitimately erected Stations, i.e. in a church.

February Schedule of Masses

NPM = No Public Mass

- 01 *1st Thu*, 6:00 PM – Jesus Christ the High Priest (Votive)
- 02 *1st Fri*, 6:00 PM – Purification of the BVM (Candlemas)
- 03 *1st Sat*, 11:00 AM – Immaculate Heart of Mary (Votive) [St. Blaise]
- 04 **SUN, 10:30 AM – SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY**
- 05 Mon, NPM – St. Agatha, *Virgin & Martyr*
- 06 Tue, NPM – St. Titus, *Bishop & Confessor*
- 07 Wed, NPM – St. Romauld, *Abbot*
- 08 Thu, 6:00 PM – St. John of Matha, *Confessor*
- 09 Fri, 6:00 PM – St. Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria, *Doctor*
- 10 Sat, 11:00 AM – St. Scholastica, *Virgin*
- 11 **SUN, 10:30 AM – QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY**
- 12 Mon, NPM – 7 Holy Founders–Order of Servants of the BVM, *Confessors*
- 13 Tue, 6:00 PM – Votive Mass of the Thanksgiving (Holy Ghost)
- 14 ~~WED, 7:00 PM – ASH WEDNESDAY~~
- 15 Thu, 6:00 PM – Thursday after Ash Wednesday
- 16 Fri, 6:00 PM – Friday after Ash Wednesday
- 17 Sat, 11:00 AM – Saturday after Ash Wednesday
- 18 **SUN, 10:30 AM – FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT**
- 19 Mon, NPM – Feria of Lent
- 20 Tue, 6:00 PM – Feria of Lent
- 21 Wed, 6:00 PM – Ember Wednesday in Lent
- 22 Thu, 6:00 PM – Chair of St. Peter, *Apostle*
- 23 Fri, 6:00 PM – Ember Friday in Lent
- 24 Sat, 11:00 AM – Ember Saturday in Lent
- 25 **SUN, 10:30 AM – SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT**
- 26 Mon, NPM – Feria of Lent
- 27 Tue, 6:00 PM – Feria of Lent
- 28 Wed, 6:00 PM – Feria of Lent
- 29 Thu, 6:00 PM – Feria of Lent

Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary

2nd February (also called "Candlemas")

By: Fr. Leonard Goffine, 1871

On this day the Church solemnly celebrates the presentation of Jesus in the temple, and the obedience and humility both of Mary and her divine Son, who, though not subject to the law in regard to purification and presentation, yet subjected themselves to it. Hence this feast is called the Purification of the Virgin Mary. In common speech we call it also Candlemas, because on this day the candles required for the divine service are blessed and carried in procession.

What is the design of this custom?

1. It is to remind us that Jesus, the light of the world, was offered up to His heavenly Father, by Mary, in the temple at Jerusalem, where He was called by Simeon "a light for the revelation of the gentiles, and the glory of the people of Israel" (Luke 2: 32).
2. To remind us, also, of several important truths, to which the priest refers in the prayers at the blessings. Thus he prays that as the earthly light dispels the darkness of night, so Jesus, with the light of His divine doctrine, may clear away our spiritual blindness and ignorance, and lead us in the way of virtue; that as the Holy Ghost enlightened Simeon, so He may also enlighten us to acknowledge Jesus as the true light, to love Him and follow Him, to keep our hearts from the way of sin, and to guide them in the way of virtue, and to kindle them with the fire of holy love; finally, that God may preserve, in soul and body, those who use blessed candles with devotion, may hear their prayers, and grant them entrance into the kingdom of the eternal and ever-blessed light.

In the Introit of the Mass the Church sings: *"We have received Thy mercy, O God, in the midst of Thy temple; according to Thy name, O God, so also is Thy praise unto the ends of the earth; Thy right hand is full of justice. Great is the Lord and exceedingly to be praised in the city of our God, in His holy mountain." Glory be to the Father, etc.*

Let us pray. *Almighty, everlasting God, we suppliantly beseech Thy majesty that, as Thy only-begotten Son was this day presented in the temple in the substance of our flesh, so Thou wouldst grant us to be presented to Thee with purified souls. Through the same Lord Jesus Christ, etc.*

Blessing of Throats

With the candles blessed on *Candlemas*, the custom of blessing throats for the *Feast of St. Blaise* on Sat, 3 Feb will be offered after the 11:00 AM Mass. As well, the option of throat blessings will be offered following Sunday Mass on 4 Feb. If you desire to have your throats blessed, please remain after Mass and come forward, kneeling at the foot of the sanctuary as you would for the distribution of Holy Communion.



INSTRUCTION AND PRAYERS FOR CONFESSION

Whoever you are, O Christian soul, that approaches the Holy Sacrament of Penance, remember that you are going to undertake a work on the good performance of which, more than any other duty, your eternal welfare depends.

Therefore, retire apart from every external source of distraction, place yourself in the presence of God, and humbly adore Him. Represent to yourself that this may be the last confession you will ever have the opportunity of making. Let this reflection induce you to discharge every part of your duty, both as to the examination of your conscience, your sorrow for your sins, your firm purpose of amending your life, and the sincerity of your confession, in the most perfect manner possible.

Begin by imploring the light and grace of Almighty God, Who alone can discover to you the malice of your sins, and can give you true repentance.

PRAYER BEFORE EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

Most merciful God, Father in heaven, relying on Thy goodness and mercy, I come to Thee with filial confidence to confess my sins and to implore Thy forgiveness. Thou wilt not despise a contrite and humble heart. Bless me and receive me again into Thy favour; I acknowledge that I have been most ungrateful to Thee, but I sincerely repent and detest the wrong I have done, and I desire henceforth to walk in the way of perfection. O Jesus, my Saviour, my good Shepherd, I have strayed far from the path that Thou hast marked out for me; I did not follow in Thy footsteps; I wandered into forbidden places. Repentant and sorrowful, I beg to be admitted again into the fold of Thy faithful followers. I want to confess my sins with the same sincerity as I should wish to do at the moment of my death. My Jesus, I look to Thee with confidence for the grace to examine my conscience well. O Holy Spirit come in Thy mercy; enlighten my mind and strengthen my will that I may know my sins, humbly confess them, and sincerely amend my life. Mary, my Mother, immaculate Spouse of the Holy Ghost, refuge of sinners, assist me by thy intercession. Holy Angels and Saints of God, pray for me. Amen.

PRAYER BEFORE CONFESSION

Receive my confession, O most kind and merciful Lord Jesus Christ, the one hope of my soul's salvation. Grant, I beseech Thee, contrition to my heart, and tears to my eyes, that I may weep day and night with a humble and pure heart for all my negligences. O Lord, my God, receive my prayers. Saviour of the world, O good Jesus, Who gave Thyself to death on the cross that Thou mightest make sinners safe, look down upon me a wretched sinner, calling upon Thy Holy Name. Do not so regard my evil that Thou forget Thy own goodness. If I have done that for which Thou shouldst condemn me, Thou hast not lost the power to save. Spare me, therefore, Thou Who art my Saviour, and have mercy on my sinful soul. Break the bonds; heal my wounds. Send forth, O most gentle Lord, through the merits of most pure and immaculate Mary ever Virgin, Thy Mother, and all the Saints, Thy light and Thy truth into my soul, that it may show to me in very truth all those defects which I ought to confess. Aid me and teach me to reveal them with a full and contrite heart: Who livest and reignest world without end. Amen.

PRAYER AFTER CONFESSION

I beseech Thee, O Lord God, that this confession of mine may through the merits of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Thy Mother, and all the Saints, be pleasing and acceptable to Thee. Whatever is wanting in me, or may have been wanting at other times, inadequacy of contrition, purity and integrity of confession, may Thy kindness and mercy supply. Through it make me worthy to have a fuller and more perfect forgiveness in heaven: Who livest and reignest world without. Amen.