

ASH WEDNESDAY



Turning Our Hearts

Loving God,
you call us to return to you
with our whole heart.
We stand before you now,
seeking your kindness,
and ask that you lead us to conversion,

and make holy our lives.
During this season of mercy,
guide us with your grace,
give us a clean heart,
and grant us your peace.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Wednesday, March 2, 2022

Even Now



Today's readings: Joel 2:12–18; Psalm 51:3–4, 5–6ab, 12–13, 14 and 17; 2 Corinthians 5:20—6:2; Matthew 6:1–6, 16–18. Have you ever walked by someone with ashes on the head and said, “Happy Lent” or “Merry Ash Wednesday”? It’s likely you have not. Few associate happiness with Lent. But what do we hear in today’s readings? “Even now, says the LORD, return to me with your whole heart.” This Lent, once again, God calls us to return to unending forgiveness and unconditional love. God knows we have sinned, he knows that there have been times when we failed to live as disciples of his Son. And even now, at this moment in our lives, God wants us to turn our lives over to him and live

in the light of the love of his Son. What would be more joyful than basking in the goodness of God’s unending love and mercy?

When we pray, give alms, and fast, Jesus asks us not to look glum or make a display of our generosity. He invites us to live authentic lives and not be like the hypocrites. Today’s readings challenge us to be aware of our sinfulness, to know that when we say that we are sorry, forgiveness will be ours. Lenten practices offer an opportunity to ask God to create a clean heart within us, so that we can bring the good news of Jesus Christ our Lord to all people. Even now, especially now.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, February 28 Inheriting Eternal Life

Treasure in heaven is not measured in numbers, wealth, or possessions. God invites us over and over to turn toward Jesus and follow him. In these days leading up to Lent, set aside time to prepare for this season of repentance and baptismal renewal. What will you let go of, detach yourself from, and surrender to, in order to have a fruitful and meaningful Lent? *Today's readings: 1 Peter 1:3–9; Psalm 111:1–2, 5–6, 9 and 10c; Mark 10:17–27.*

Tuesday, March 1 For the Sake of the Gospel

Peter seems to express frustration with having given up everything to follow Jesus. Jesus' way is to rely solely on God. When our life is for the sake of the Gospel, we will receive more than we can imagine. Jesus' words contain a challenge, and this Lent can help us deepen our understanding that love, sacrifice, joy, and sorrow are all part of life. Decide today how to schedule prayer time for every day of Lent. *Today's readings: 1 Peter 1:10–16; Psalm 98:1, 2–3ab, 3cd–4; Mark 10:28–31.*

Wednesday, March 2 Our Whole Heart

Through the prophet Joel, God invites us to rend our hearts this day, and return to the everlasting love that has no bounds, no limits, no conditions. Our heavenly Father asks us to return with our whole heart, and not make a lukewarm response to this invitation. Fully embrace this holy season of Lent, which gives us a chance to refocus our priorities and redirect our energies, so that we can follow Jesus. *Today's readings: Joel 2:12–18; Psalm 51:3–4, 5–6ab, 12–13, 14 and 17; 2 Corinthians 5:20–6:2; Matthew 6:1–6, 16–18.*

Thursday, March 3 A Life of Discipleship

Each of us makes hundreds of choices daily, from what to wear to how to regard the people who come into our lives. St. Katharine Drexel, whose feast day is today, treated people of every race with respect and cared for those whom society shunned. She chose discipleship over a life of privilege. Make an effort today to lose your life for the sake of the cross and, in so doing, choose life. This Lent can be a time to commit to a transformation in your life. *Today's readings: Deuteronomy 30:15–20; Psalm 1:1–2, 3, 4, and 6; Luke 9:22–25.*

Friday, March 4 Cleanse My Heart

The Church prays Psalm 51 often during Lent. The psalm is one of the great laments in the Book of Psalms, part of the wisdom literature in the Bible. While praying a lament, we join the psalmist in a plea for mercy and forgiveness. As you pray Psalm 51 today, notice how your heart responds to the moving words that believers have prayed for over two millennia. *Today's readings: Isaiah 58:1–9a; Psalm 51:3–4, 5–6ab, 18–19; Matthew 9:14–15.*

Saturday, March 5 Teach Me Your Way

The prophet Isaiah says, “If you lavish your food on the hungry / and satisfy the afflicted; / Then your light shall rise in the darkness.” Who has shown you that “your light shall rise” by acting justly and removing oppressive words from speech? Who has given you courage to follow Jesus even when others may ignore their faith? Make an effort today to express your gratitude to those persons for the truth they have shared. Decide how you will share that truth with someone else today. *Today's readings: Isaiah 58:9b–14; Psalm 86:1–2, 3–4, 5–6; Luke 5:27–32.*

