

Homily for Ash Wednesday

Once again, we begin the Season of Lent. Once again, it is time to come forward and to have ashes placed on our forehead. And the question we must ask ourselves is: what do these ashes mean?

It means that we are beginning a time of doing. It is time for us to do something. And the Church is pretty clear as to what we are to do.

It is a time to pray...to spend more time in prayer, to put aside a few moments each day and seek to be in the presence of God. Perhaps it means to come to Mass more often than just on Sunday. Lent is a time of prayer...to be with and in God.

It is a time to fast. It is a time to eat less, abstain from our favorite foods, to feel the pangs of hunger and to remind ourselves that our desires should not rule our lives and that others do feel the loss of food and love and compassion.

It is a time to be generous with others. It is a time to reach out to the poor, the unwanted, the unloved, to those in need and give them our support by sharing with them some of our financial resources...better yet share with them our time, our ability to listen to them, our support to them in their loneliness and in their struggles. Life is not about what we gather but rather what we generously give to others.

It is Ash Wednesday. It is Lent. It is a time to “do” something. As you come forward to receive this ancient sign of repentance ask yourself: What am I going to do this Lent? And then...do it.