

## A Message from Fr. Roberto

### Ash Wednesday Mass and Service Schedule – February 14, 2018

- 8:00 a.m. Mass
- 10:00 a.m. Mass
- 5:30 p.m. Mass in English in church; Spanish service in the gym;
- 7:30 p.m. Mass in Spanish in the church; English service in the gym;
- 7:45 p.m. Mass in Spanish in the Dominican Hall
- 12:00 noon Mass
- 4:00 Prayer service in the church



### Why Do We Receive Ashes?

The imposition of ashes is an ancient symbol of repentance and mourning (see Isaiah 58:5; Esther 4:1; Daniel 9:3; 2Sam 13:19, etc.), and reminds us that our life on earth is fleeting and that our ultimate life is in heaven. The words used for the imposition of ashes, are: "Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return" or "Repent and believe in the Gospel."

Receiving ashes is not a magical rite, and does not take away our sins; for that we have the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Rather, it is a sign of repentance, penance, and, above all, conversion. It is the beginning of the Lenten journey, to follow Jesus from the desert to the day of his triumph on Easter Sunday.

### Lenten Guidelines for Fasting and Abstinence

**Ash Wednesday:** This day is observed by fasting and abstinence (see below for more info).

**Fridays in Lent:** These days are marked by abstinence (see below for more info).

**Good Friday:** This day is observed by fasting and abstinence.

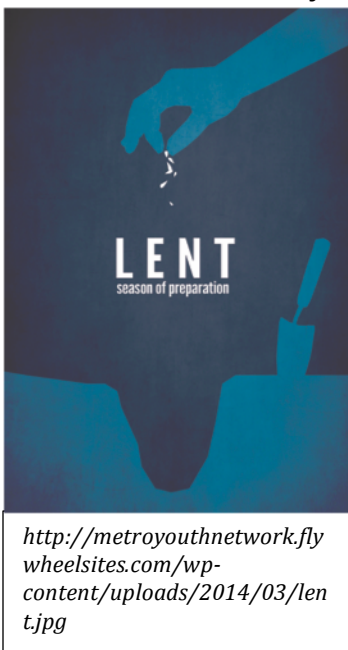
#### Fasting

Those who are 18 to 59 years old are bound by this discipline and may take only one full meal. Two smaller meals are permitted if necessary to maintain strength according to one's needs, but eating solid foods between meals is not permitted.

The traditional Lenten *fast* is observed for 40 days, starting on Ash Wednesday, going through Wednesday of Holy Week, and excluding the Sundays of Lent. Many people try to continue their Lenten sacrifices even on Sundays; this is certainly commendable but not strictly required.

#### Abstinence

This discipline is for those 14 to 59 years old. Traditional abstinence is the practice of refraining from meat and meat products. Entering fully into the spirit of the Lenten fast, we are also encouraged to abstain from other foods, practices or activities. The Lenten fast is one of penance. Our self-denial is a way of emphasizing our dependence on God.



### **Why We Fast and Abstain**

When we fast and abstain, we do it together. The practice of the Lenten fast is a practice of the whole community. Though the fast is carried out personally, we are united in our action through Jesus Christ. Our united fast and abstinence are our prayers to the Father through Jesus. Our actions speak louder than our words. Both personally and as a community we deliberately place ourselves in need (hunger being the most basic need) so that we can discover that for which we hunger spiritually in our lives and in our world. We do this to give concrete expression to our trust in God to give us the spiritual sustenance we require. Our joint action is intended to strengthen our deep belief that the God who raised Jesus from the dead also fills our every need.

### **Daily Lenten Reflections for Free**

- From Bishop Robert Barron (English and Spanish) at <http://www.lentreflections.com/>;
- From Matthew Kelly (English) at <http://dynamiccatholic.com/bestlentever>.