

Ash Wednesday 2026

YEAR OF SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Call to Prayer:

Today is Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. During Lent, Jesus invites us to journey with Him to Calvary by prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. At this holy time, Pope Leo XIV has also announced that 2026 is a SPECIAL YEAR OF SAINT FRANCIS. In this year, Our Holy Father has called us to keep the spirit of Jubilee alive by celebrating the 800th anniversary of the death of Saint Francis of Assisi.

May Saint Francis, who created the very first Stations of the Cross, be our model and guide as we enter into these 40 solemn days. We pray that the example of Saint Francis will teach us to SERVE with JOY, PRAY at the CROSS, LOVE all CREATION, GIVE with COMPASSION, and LIVE as true PEACEMAKERS during this sacred season of Lent and always.

Gathering Song: Lift High the Cross: Verses 1 and 2

Opening Prayer: Father in heaven, bless our Lenten journey with Jesus. Help us to be more like Your Son. Inspire us by His love and guide us by the example of Saint Francis. May the Cross that we carry in our pocket remind us of Jesus who died for us and redeemed us. This we ask through Christ our Lord. Amen.

First Reading: Joel 2: 12-18
Return to the Lord with your whole heart

Sung Response: Psalm 113 - Loving and Forgiving

Gospel Acclamation: Praise to You, Lord, Jesus Christ, King of
Endless Glory

Gospel: Matthew 6:1-6, 16 - 18
Pray - Fast- Give Alms in secret

Distribution of Ashes

We will now receive "Ashes" which were the palms that were burned from Palm Sunday. They are a sign that we are entering into a season of penance. They remind us how precious time is and how we should use each day to grow closer to God.

**"Pay it Forward" Outreach and
Service Announcements from each grade**

Intercessions

Prayer: Father in heaven, bless our Lenten journey and all those who will journey with us in spirit and in faith.

Response: **LORD, HAVE MERCY.**

For Pope Leo and the leaders of our Church, our country, and our world, that they may lead with wisdom, courage and compassion, let us pray to the Lord...

For all in need of healing in mind or heart or body, that they may find strength in knowing that Jesus carries their cross with them, let us pray to the Lord...

For all of us here, that we may use this time of Lent to come to know Jesus better and to share His generous and forgiving love with others, let us pray to the Lord...

For all those whose journey on earth has ended, especially Father McLaughlin, and all departed loved ones that they may now know the Easter joy of heaven, let us pray to the Lord...

Prayer:

Loving Father, please accept our prayers and hopes for this Lenten season. May this holy time fill us with love and compassion that we may walk with Jesus to Calvary and rise with Him at Easter. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Closing Prayer:

Student's Prayer for Lent

PEACE PRAYER OF SAINT FRANCIS

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;

where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.
O Divine Master, grant that I may not
so much seek
to be consoled as to console
to be understood as to understand
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned
and it is in dying that we are born to
eternal life. Amen.

Closing Hymn: Lift High the Cross: Verses 3 and 4