

Pope Francis Ash Wednesday Homily 2024

When you give alms, or pray or fast, take care to do these things *in secret*, for your Father sees in secret. "Go to your room": this is the invitation that Jesus addresses to each of us at the beginning of the Lenten journey. *Going to your room* means returning to the *heart*, as the prophet Joel admonishes. It means journeying from without to within, so that our whole life, including our relationship with God, is not reduced to mere outward show, a frame without a picture, a draping of the soul, but is born from within and reflects the movements of our heart, our deepest desires, our thoughts, our feelings, the very core of our person. Lent, then, immerses us in a bath of purification and of self-spoilation: it helps us to remove all the cosmetics that we use in order to appear presentable, better than we really are. To return to the heart means to go back to our true self and to present it just as it is, naked and defenceless, in the sight of God. It means looking within ourselves and acknowledging our real identity, removing the masks we so often wear, slowing the frantic pace of our lives and embracing life and the truth of who we are. Life is not a play; Lent invites us to come down from the stage and return to the heart, to the reality of who we are: a return to the heart and the truth. That is why this evening, in a spirit of prayer and humility, we receive ashes on our head. This gesture is meant to remind us of the ultimate reality of our lives: that we are dust and our life passes away like a breath. Yet the Lord – he and he alone – does not allow it to vanish; he gathers and shapes the dust that we are, lest it be swept away by the winds of life or sink into the abyss of death. The ashes placed on our head invite us to rediscover the secret of life. They tell us that as long as we continue to shield our hearts and hide ourselves behind a mask, to appear invincible, we will be empty and arid within. When, on the other hand, we have the courage to bow our heads in order to look within, we will discover the presence of God who loves us and has always loved us. At last those shields you have built for yourself will be shattered and you will be able to feel yourself loved with an eternal love. Sister, brother, I, you, each of us, is loved with an eternal love. We are ashes on which God has breathed his breath of life, we are the earth which he has shaped with his own hands dust from which we will rise for a life without end prepared for us from all eternity. And if, in the ashes that we are, the fire of the love of God burns, then we will discover that we have indeed been shaped by that love and called to love others in turn. To love the brothers and sisters all around us, to be considerate to others, to feel compassion, to show mercy, to share all that we are and all that we have with those in need. Almsgiving, prayer and fasting are not mere external practices; they are paths that lead to the heart, to the core of the Christian life. They make us realize that we are ashes loved by God, and they enable us to spread that love on the "ashes" of so many situations in our daily lives, so that in them hope, trust and joy may be reborn. Saint Anselm of Aosta has left us these words of encouragement that this evening we can make our own: "Escape from your everyday business for a short while, hide for a moment from your restless thoughts. Break off from your cares and troubles and be less concerned about your tasks and labours. Make a little time for God and rest a while in him. Enter into your mind's inner chamber. Shut out everything but God and whatever helps you to seek him; and when you have shut the door, look for him. Speak now to God and say with your whole heart: I seek your face; your face, O Lord, I desire" (*Proslogion*, 1). Let us listen then, throughout this Lent, to the voice of the Lord who does not tire of repeating: *go to your room*, return to your heart. It is a salutary invitation for us, who so often live on the surface of things, who are so concerned to be noticed, who constantly need to be admired and appreciated. Without realizing it, we find ourselves no longer having an "inner chamber" in which we can stop and care for ourselves, immersed as we are in a world in which everything, including our emotions and deepest feelings, has to become "social" – but how can something be "social" that does not come from the *heart*? Even the most tragic and painful experiences risk not having a quiet place where they can be kept. Everything has to be exposed, shown off, fed to the gossip-mill of the moment. But the Lord says to us: *Enter into the secret*, return to the centre of yourself. Precisely there, where so many fears, feelings of guilt and sin are lurking, precisely there the Lord has descended in order to heal and cleanse you. Let us enter into our inner chamber: there the Lord dwells, there our frailty is accepted and we are loved unconditionally. Let us return, brothers and sisters. Let us return to God with all our heart. During these weeks of Lent, let us make space for the prayer of silent adoration, in which we experience the presence of the Lord, like Moses, like Elijah, like Mary, like Jesus. Have we noticed that we have lost the sense of worship? Let us return to worship. Let us lend the ear of our hearts to the One who, in silence, wants to say to us: "I am your God – the God of mercy and compassion, the God of pardon and love, the God of tenderness and care Do not judge yourself.

Our Lady of Divine Providence

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

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THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT



HOLY MASS

Saturday: 05:30 pm English, Church.

Sunday: 09:00 am English, Church.
10:30 am Creole, Church.
12:30 pm Spanish, Church.

Weekdays: 05:30 pm English, Upper Room, St. Maria Goretti.

Fridays: 04:00 pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Rosary.

05:30 pm Upper Room St. Maria Goretti.

SCHEDULE OF SACRAMENTS

Baptisms: Contact one of the priests in person.

1st Confession: 24 May, 2024.
1st Communions: 02 June, 2024.

Confirmations: TBC (20 October, 2024).

Marriage: Call the parish office for preparation before setting a fixed date.

Anointing of the Sick: Upon request.

Confessions: Everyday before Mass or by appointment.

Today's Gospel has many images. Jesus' almost violent reaction to the money-changers in the House of God is most astonishing. He has zeal for His Father's House. May we all have such love not only for this particular church but for the whole Church and its teachings. The Second image is about the Temple, that is the body of Jesus. You and I are members of His body by our baptism. This is not just a figure of speech, but it means you can have the same confidence that God is your Father as Jesus himself has. The implications of this are that you can trust that God will provide for you. Everything you worry about is in the hands of your loving Father. Also, by receiving the sacraments worthily you become the Temple of the Holy Spirit.

The third image is 'Money'. Money is a real danger to your temple. Elsewhere in the Gospel Jesus says that there are only two gods and they are either the Lord or money. "You cannot serve two masters." This is important for everyone to reflect upon in this season of Lent. What is my relationship with money? Is it really my god? Do I worship the 'green stuff' more than anything. Perhaps you will begin to see that most, if not all, your major decisions are based on money. "Can I afford this or not?" So, instead of money being your servant you become its servant and that's not a life!

The final image is that Jesus knew what each person has in their hearts. Jesus knows what you have in your heart, and maybe you don't really know what's there and yet He still continues to call you to follow Him. He does not give up on you even if there's a lot of junk in your heart. May today's Gospel call us all to repentance in this time of Lent.

Fr. Paul

NOUVÈL EVAN- JELIZASYON.

Vi n jwenn mwen, nou
tout ki bouke, nou tout ki
anba chay, m'ap soulaje n.
(Mt 11, 28)

JEZIKRI RENMEN OU VIN KOUTE

KATECHEZ POU JENN AK
GRANMOUN

CHAK LENDI AK JEDI. A
7 PM

Dear parishioners,

I hope you have all seen the new sealed road at the back . We had a good offer and had to act quickly to take it but now we need to pay for it! If you can contribute something towards the cost of this project please be generous in the collection so we can continue later on with the parking lot as well. Blessings, Fr. Orlando

Remember this time of grace

Remember that the Holy Door will be open until April 7, 2024. I invite you to take advantage of this time of grace following the three requirements to get indulgences:

- A complete and whole-hearted detachment from all sin of any kind, even venial sin.
- Making a valid [sacramental confession](#).
- Receiving [Holy Communion](#) in the state of grace.
- Praying for the [intentions of the Pope](#)

Parish Events March 3-10

Sunday **Holy Mass: 09:00 am.10:30am. 12:30pm**
Coeur de Marie Children's group.
Fraternite, Red Room.
04:00pm
05:00pm Creole Youth Choir practice.
05:00pm
05:30pm Sacre Coeur de Jesus, P. Hall.
06:00pm Choeur D'hommes 1st and 3rd
Sunday at church.

Monday **St. Casimir**
05:00pm Confession near Holy Door
05:30pm Mass in English, SMG upstairs
07:00pm Catechesis in Creole Parish Hall

Tuesday
05:00pm Confession near Holy Door
05:30 pm Daily Mass, SMG upstairs
07:00pm First English Parish Hall
07:00pm Second English SMG
07:00pm Spanish Red Room

Wednesday
05:00pm Confession near Holy Door
05:30 pm Mass in SMG
07:00pm Third English, SMG
07:00pm Fourth English Red Room
07:00pm Fifth English, Blue chapel

Thursday **St.s Perpetua & Felicity**
05:00pm Confession near Holy Door
05:30 pm D. Mass , SMG
07:00pm Catechesis in Creole, Parish Hall

Friday **St. John of God**
04:00pm **Holy Hour:** St. Maria Goretti.
05:30pm D. Mass SMG
06:15pm Stations of the Cross, Church

Saturday **St. Frances of Rome**
05:30pm Mass Church
07:00pm NCW Eucharist



School Notes

Holy Family Academy
Tel: (+1649) 941-7875



The HFA college class received the visit of Professor Ryan Thornton who teaches them Introduction to Philosophy.

The HFA students have been preparing for the "2024 Inter high school track and field championships".

The readings of this week about humility helped the children to reflect and to enter into the Lenten season to be ready for Easter.

www.hfa.catholic.tc

SPONSORS / BENEFACTORS

We continue to look for donations and sponsors to support our [Scholarship Program](#) and help the school with necessary supplies.

Your sponsorship payment can be done through direct deposit or bank transfer or by donating any of the items below.

- Scientific Calculators
- Projectors and projector screens
- Projector stands
- Erasable markers and erasers
- Art Supplies
- Printing Paper
- Sport supplies
- AA Batteries
- Asthma Inhalers & AED



Click on our [Wish List](#) or scan the code to see more!