

The First Four Days of Lent

Ash Wednesday

Lord, it feels like we are embarking on a Lenten journey together, you and I. The beautiful words in the today's prayer talk about the "quiet remembrance of our need for redemption." That feels like what I am looking for - or what you are looking for in me. I want to remember how much I need you in my life and how much my life needs redemption. I want to remember it clearly and in the background of my day today and all through Lent.

On this special day, Ash Wednesday, may my small sacrifices in fasting be a way to clear away the clutter in my life to see you more clearly. May my longing for meat and other food, help me to focus my life today more outside myself. Let me be aware of those who are in so much more suffering than I am and may I be aware of them as the brothers and sisters you have placed in my life. Lord, I know there is darkness within me and around me.

Bless these days with your Word. Let your Light shine in the darkness. Help me long for that Light until we celebrate it at the Vigil six weeks from now. And most of all Lord, help me to honor this day with the ashes on my forehead. They help me remember where I have come from and where I am going. May I acknowledge to you my sins and my deep need for your loving forgiveness and grace. I pray that this Lenten season will make me so much more aware of how much I need your healing in my life.

Thursday After Ash Wednesday

Lord, let everything I do this day and in this season of Lent come from you, be inspired by you. I long to be closer to you. Help me to remember that nothing is important in my life unless it glorifies you in some way. It's so easy to get caught up in the day to day of my life and keep saying, "Tomorrow, I will spend more time in prayer," but now my longing meets your love and I want to do it now. Help me to rely on you for help. The prayer asks you that I reach perfection. Please, Lord, remind me that "perfection" isn't the crazy, "successful" way I try to live my life, but a perfection of my most authentic, real self. My "perfection" might be holding my many flaws in my open hands, asking you to help me accept them. Heal me, Lord, and help me to find you in the darkness of my life. Let me reach out in this darkness and feel your hand and love there to guide me.

Friday After Ash Wednesday

Lord, I know how much you love me. It's hard for me to feel it sometimes, but I know your love is always with me.

Help me to use your love as a way to persevere in my Lenten intentions. I am weak, but I know with your help, I can use these small sacrifices in my life to draw closer to you.

Saturday After Ash Wednesday

Loving creator, I am not asking to overcome my weakness, but to use it in some way to glorify you. Let me be aware of the many ways you reach out to help me today and let me stand in awe of the power that you use in such loving ways.