

MATTHEW 6: 1;18

ASH WEDNESDAY

Today Ash Wednesday is the first day of the liturgical season called Lent. Traditionally, lent the 40 days before Easter is a time of penance, fasting, and preparing for the paschal mystery. Yesterday was Mardi gras, a serious party in south Louisiana. It's always the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday. Mardi Gras is French for fat Tuesday. A real stark contrast the partying then lent.

In a little while we will be distributing ashes. The church gives us two sets of words to say as we mark your forehead with the ashes.

Remember you are dust and to dust you shall

return.

Turn away from sin and be faithful to the gospels.

I can remember my first few ash

Wednesdays. Maybe it was the ashes that made me feel bad, the remember you are dust statement didn't help. Seemed like the church was trying to create a little fear, everything about Ash Wednesday seemed so somber. Do you remember the scripture," the beginning of wisdom is fear of the lord"? The church seemed to be taking that real seriously. No doubt lent for our Catholic church is about getting our attention, but is it really about creating fear. The readings the church chose for today help here.

Joel: "Return to me with your whole heart.

Rend your hearts not your garments."

Psalms; “A clean heart create for me oh God

Cast me not out from your presence oh God”

**2Corinthians: “In an acceptable I heard you, and on
the day of salvation I helped you”**

**Gospel: “When you pray go to your inner room,
close the door and pray to your father in
secret”.**

**These readings are all about something else not
fear. They are about our hearts, prayer, and the
presence of God. So what is lent about?? It is simply
the time to take stock of our relationship with God in
preparation to honor at Easter the greatest gift we
have ever received.**

**We say, “Taking stock???” “A relationship with
God?” ?? I’m not a saint!!!!!! How can I have a**

relationship with God ???? How can you not have a
relationship with God??? He has one with you!!!!!!!

**Lent is about examining our life, asking how is
my relationship with God?? Is it about Him or is it
about me? Is there real TLC between He & I???**
**That's right TLC Tender, Loving, Care. T does
stand for tender but also for Time. For any
relationship to exist we must invest time in it. How
much time do we spend on things of God, our Faith,
our Church?? L is for loving, but also for
listening. For any relationship to exist we must
listen. You say God doesn't speak to me. Our Faith
tells us He's never stopped speaking to us, we just
haven't been listening. What about care?? C is for
care but it also stands for commitment, a
relationship takes commitment. Are we committed to**

our relationship with God?? Does He mean something to us??? Is He really important to us?

You see things that make a human relationship work; Tender Loving Care, Time, Listening, Commitment are the same for our relationship with our creator. As for this fear thing it's really; If the beginning of wisdom is fear of the Lord the very height of all wisdom is LOVE !!!!!

It is about love and He loved each one of us first. Our catholic faith teaches that our God is love, He is present, He is active in our lives, He is alive!!! Is that how you see God or is he perhaps somewhere else perhaps over there. If you haven't sensed or been aware of God's active love for you maybe it's time, our faith tells us that He is waiting.

This Lenten season define your relationship

**with God use your heart not your head. Is there TLC
? Take stock and then you make it better.**

AND THE PEOPLE SAY, AMEN !!!!!