

KIDS IN THE DIVINE SERVICE

What is Ash Wednesday all about?

You may see something strange happening in church on Ash Wednesday. You'll see your family and friends go forward to receive the sign of the cross on their foreheads. The strange part about all of this is that it will be done with the ashes from last year's Palm Sunday palm branches.

Why do we do this?

Usually when someone gets dirty they know they need water to get clean. The ashes that are put on our foreheads remind us that in sin we are dirty and need to be cleaned. It also helps us to remember the first time the sign of the cross was made on us at our Baptism. In the waters of Baptism, we are cleaned and the dirt of sin is washed away. Ash Wednesday helps to remind us of this.



Parents: At home after the service, when your children are washing the ashes off, remind them once again that we are washed clean of sin at our Baptism. Jesus did all of this for us through His death on the cross which we prepare for during Lent. Ash Wednesday is the beginning of this time of preparation.

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What is “Lent”?

Lent is a season of the Church Year that lasts six weeks. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and ends the day before Easter Sunday. During these six weeks we look forward to Good Friday, the day our Lord died on the cross to pay for our sins, and to Easter Sunday, the day He rose from the dead to prove it!



How can I remember to think about Jesus during Lent?

You can give up something you enjoy during Lent. You might see your parents give up their morning coffee. Maybe your brother or sister has decided not to eat candy during Lent. Every time you think about doing what you gave up for Lent, it will remind you of what Jesus gave up for you — His life! Blessings to you as you experience the wonderful journey of Lent!



Parents:

We encourage you to help your child decide on something in their life that they can give up during Lent. Be sure to give up something too. Being their example and companion on this journey makes a big difference!

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Why do we celebrate Lent for 40 days?

Don't forget what Lent is all about! It is a time when we are reminded of what Jesus gave up for us, and a time when we look forward to and prepare for His death and resurrection!



We celebrate Lent for six weeks, or 40 days, as we remember Christ's temptation in the wilderness in the Gospel of Matthew. There **Jesus was without food** for 40 days.



We remember the temptation of **the Israelites in the desert** after the Lord had delivered them from Egypt. This lasted 40 years.



Finally, we can remember the story of **Noah and his family**. After 40 days and 40 nights of rain, the Lord delivered them as He promised.

During these 40 days of Lent, we remember God's faithfulness to His people and how His faithfulness is complete in Jesus, our Savior. Jesus remains faithful to us, always being where He promises to be: in His Word and Sacraments. Wow! What a Savior!



Parents: Continue to encourage your children in their Lenten preparation. During worship, point out the places where our Lord comes to us (i.e. God's Word, Holy Communion, Holy Baptism, Absolution). Remember, being their example and companion on this Lenten journey makes a difference!

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Hey! What happened to the “a” word?

There’s one word we often use in the Church that isn’t used during Lent. Usually we use it after responsories, antiphons and other parts of our worship. Have you guessed what the word is yet? If you guessed “alleluia,” then you are right. We stop singing and saying “alleluia” during Lent and won’t speak it again until Easter morning.

What does “alleluia” mean and why don’t we say it during Lent?

“Alleluia” is a Hebrew word that means “Praise the Lord.” Since we focus on the sufferings and death of Jesus during Lent, we stop using this joyful word until we celebrate Jesus’ glorious resurrection. On Easter morning the first words you hear will be: “The Lord is risen. He is risen indeed! Alleluia!”

Parents:

During worship, help your children to look for places in the service where “alleluia” has been omitted. Notice the red writing in the hymnal. These words will help to point out when and where we might use or refrain from using the “a” word.

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Why do we have a week called "Holy Week"?

Why would we refer to a week as being holy? The word "holy" means that it is from God. That's why we call the Bible "holy." It isn't just any book. It is God's living Word given to us for our salvation! The same goes for Holy Week. This is "God's Week." This is the week in the Church Year when Jesus actually paid for our sins and won our salvation!

Which days are in Holy Week?

There are particular days during Holy Week that are extra special. During Holy Week we celebrate **Palm Sunday**, when Jesus went to Jerusalem and people celebrated His arrival; **Maundy Thursday**, when Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper; **Good Friday**, when Jesus died on the cross; and **Holy Saturday**, when we await His resurrection on Easter Sunday!



Parents:

During worship, help your children to look for other things in the church that are considered holy (i.e. God's Word, the Sacraments, etc.). Ask them: "How does God use these things to give us His forgiveness?"

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Why do we celebrate "Palm Sunday"?

The Sunday before Jesus was crucified by the people, they honored and adored Him as their Lord and king with palm branches. We remember this as the beginning of Christ's bitter walk to the cross.



PRAISE HIM!

CRUCIFY HIM!

Why did the people honor and adore Jesus on Palm Sunday and then kill Him on Good Friday?

When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, the people began to praise and honor Him as their king. They believed Him to be a powerful leader who would overthrow the Roman government and restore Israel. When Jesus did not do this, the people wanted Him crucified. You and I know what kind of a king He is. He's a king who came to die for the sins of His people. Wow! What a king!



Parents: Remind your children that it was important that Jesus did die for their sins. That is exactly what He came to earth to do. He came to pay the price that we could never pay. Direct your children to the symbols in the church that reflect Christ's death. Remind them that we will hear of His victory over death next Sunday on Easter!!!

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