

St. Louis Catholic Church

Ash Wednesday

Now is the Acceptable Time. Return to me with your whole heart, with fasting, weeping, and mourning. We are ambassadors for Christ. These lines come to us in today's Mass from the prophet Joel and Paul's second letter to the Corinthians.

I love the identity for all in that we are ambassadors. In the political world an ambassador represents the policy, values, world-view and ideals of his/her country. We are in this world to represent Christ. To be salt of the earth and light of the world. The church calls us to assemble as one on Ash Wednesday and return to the Lord. He wants our hearts and our lives to recommit to that call and identify. It is a time to be reconciled to God and one another. It is a time to seek the ever generous mercy of God. It is a deep call to change our hearts. This is a call to the daily communicant, the weekly communicant, the now and again communicant, the once or twice a year communicant and certainly the inactive Catholic.

Ashes are an external sign that we are mortal and here on earth for a brief time. How are we all utilizing this time? We can all be better ambassadors! Our acts of penance are not a badge of achievement nor a competition. They represent an inner attitude that we want to die to what we have been and who we are and rise to what God calls us to be.

God will pour out His Spirit upon us and re-create us.

As ambassadors, let our neighbors, co-workers, family and friends ask why we leave the house at 6:00 a.m. and tell them that we go to daily Mass. Let them see people who forgive, pray, serve and love unconditionally.

God Bless You as we all begin this 40 Day Journey that God has called us to enter.

Msgr. John McArthur