



St. Paul's Co-Cathedral Parish

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1st Sunday of Lent March 9, 2025

Homily of the Holy Father Pope Francis for Ash Wednesday:

This evening, we receive the imposition of the holy ashes. This brings to mind the *memory* of what we are, but also the *hope* of what we will be. The ashes remind us that we are dust, but they also set us on a journey towards the hope to which we are called. For Jesus descended to the dust of the earth and, by his Resurrection, has drawn us with himself into the Father's heart.

Thus the Lenten journey towards Easter unfolds amidst the *remembrance* of our fragility and the *hope* that, at the end of the road, the Risen Lord is waiting for us.

First, we must *remember*. We bow our heads in order to receive the ashes as if to look at ourselves, to look within ourselves. Indeed, the ashes help to remind us that our lives are fragile and insignificant: we are dust, from dust we were created, and to dust we shall return. Moreover, there are so many times when, looking at ourselves or at the reality that surrounds us, we realize that “everyone stands as a mere breath [...] for nothing they are in turmoil; they heap up, and do not know who will gather” (Ps 39:5-6).

We learn this above all through the experience of our own fragility: our weariness, the weaknesses we have to come to terms with, the fears that dwell in us, the failures that consume us, the fleetingness of our dreams and the realization that what we possess is ephemeral. Made of ashes and earth, we experience fragility through illness, poverty, and the hardships that can suddenly befall us and our families. We also experience it when, in the social and political realities of our time, we find ourselves exposed to the “fine dust” that pollutes our world: ideological opposition, the abuse of power, the re-emergence of old ideologies based on identity that advocate exclusion, the exploitation of the earth's resources, violence in all its forms and war between peoples. This “toxic dust” clouds the air of our planet impeding peaceful coexistence, while uncertainty and the fear of the future continue to increase.

Furthermore, the condition of fragility reminds us of the tragedy of death. In many ways, we try to banish death from our societies, so dependent on appearances, and even remove it from our language. Death, however, imposes itself as a reality with which we have to reckon, a sign of the precariousness and brevity of our lives.

Despite the masks we wear and the cleverly crafted ploys meant to distract us, the ashes remind us of who we are. This is good for us. It reshapes us, reduces the severity of our narcissism, brings us back to reality and makes us more humble and open to one another: none of us is God; we are all on a journey.



Lent, however, is also an invitation to rekindle our *hope*. Although we receive the ashes with our heads bowed in remembrance of who we are, the Lenten season does not end there. On the contrary, we are invited to lift our eyes to the One who rises from the depths of death and brings us from the ashes of sin and death to the glory of eternal life.

The ashes remind us of the hope to which we are called in Jesus, the Son of God, who has taken upon himself the dust of the earth and raised it to the heights of heaven. He descended into the abyss of dust, dying for us and reconciling us to the Father, as we heard from Saint Paul: “For our sake, he made him to be sin who knew no sin” (2 Cor 5:21).

This, brothers and sisters, is the hope that restores to life the “ashes” of our lives. Without such hope, we are doomed passively to endure the fragility of our human condition. Particularly when faced with the experience of death, a lack of hope can lead us to fall into sadness and desolation, and we end up reasoning like fools: “Short and sorrowful is our life, and there is no remedy when a life comes to its end [...] the body will turn to ashes, and the spirit will dissolve like empty air” (Wis 2:1-3). Yet the hope of Easter that we journey towards reassures us of God's forgiveness. Even while submerged in the ashes of sin, hope opens us up to the joyful acknowledgment of life: “For I know that my Redeemer lives, and that at the last he will stand upon the earth” (Job 19:25). Let us remember this: “Man is dust and to dust he shall return, but dust is precious in God's eyes because God created man, destining him to immortality” (Benedict XVI, [General Audience](#), 17 February 2010).

Brothers and sisters, having received the ashes, we walk towards the hope of Easter. Let us turn back to God. Let us return to him with all our hearts (cf. *Joel* 2:12). Let us place him at the centre of our lives, so that the memory of what we are — fragile and mortal as ashes scattered upon the wind — may finally be filled with the hope of the Risen Lord. Let us direct our lives towards him, becoming a sign of hope for the world. Let us learn from almsgiving to go beyond ourselves, sharing each other's needs and nurturing the hope of a fairer world. Let us learn from prayer to discover our need for God or, as Jacques Maritain put it, that we are “beggars for heaven”, and so foster the hope that beyond our frailties there is a Father waiting for us with open arms at the end of our earthly pilgrimage. Finally, let us learn from fasting that we do not live merely to satisfy our needs, but that, hungry for love and truth, only the love of God and of one another can truly satisfy us and give us hope for a better future.

Let us persevere in the certainty that ever since the Lord took upon himself the ashes of humanity, “the history of the earth is the history of heaven. God and man are bound together in a single destiny” (C. Carretto, *Il deserto nella città*, Roma 1986, 55), and he will forever sweep away the ashes of death and make us shine with newness of life.

With this hope in our hearts, let us begin our journey. Let us be reconciled with God.

Let us pray:

*Almighty ever-living God, eternal health of believers,
Who willed that our infirmities
Be borne by your Only-Begotten Son for our salvation,
Listen in kindness to our prayers
For your servant Francis, our Pope and Shepherd:
Grant him, we implore you, your merciful help,
So that he may be restored to your Church in good health,
Ever ready to serve the flock you have entrusted to his care.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
Who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever. AMEN.*

MONDAY, March 10, 2025

11:00 am - Confessions & Rosary
12:10 pm - **Mass** († Gordon Johnson)
6:30 pm - Medjugorje Prayer Group
7:00 pm - K of C

TUESDAY, March 11, 2025

11:00 am - Confessions & Rosary
12:10 pm - **Mass** († Ronald Tolofson)

WEDNESDAY, March 12, 2025

11:00 am - Confessions, & Rosary
12:10 pm - **Mass** († Sundras Nainaar)
1:00 pm - **Eucharistic Adoration** until 5pm
4:30 pm - Confirmation Class

THURSDAY, March 13, 2025

11:00 am - Confessions & Rosary
12:10 pm - **Mass** († Bob Blackwell)
4:30 pm - RCIC
7:00 pm - RCIA
8:00 pm - Christ the King Prayer Group

FRIDAY, March 14, 2025

11:00 am - Confessions & Rosary
12:10 pm - **Mass** († Agapita Lagria)
5:30 pm - Sto. Nino Prayer Group
6:30 pm - Stations of the Cross

SATURDAY, March 15, 2025

11:00 am - Confessions & Rosary
12:10 pm - **Mass** († Brad Kovach)

SUNDAY, March 16, 2025 2nd Sunday of Lent

8:00 am - **Mass**
10:00 am - **Mass**
5:00 pm - Filipino **Mass**
7:30 pm - **Solemn Vespers**
8:00 pm - **Mass**

Stations of the Cross

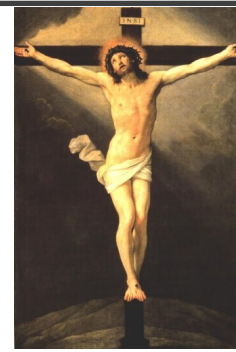
"We adore You O Christ and we praise You,

because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world"

Fridays at 6:30pm at St. Paul's Co-Cathedral during lent

NEW: Join us for Soup and Bread following the Stations of the Cross. All are welcome!

Volunteers to provide soup and bread are greatly appreciated. Please see the sign up sheet in the Welcome area or contact the parish office.



Eucharistic Adoration

Wednesdays 1 - 5 pm

As we resume our weekly Eucharistic Adoration, we again ask for volunteers to stay with our Lord. **Specifically, we are in need of someone between 2 and 3pm.** Please prayerfully consider this commitment. If you are able, please speak with Deacon Donat or contact the parish office.

FORGED - Iron sharpens Iron

Northern Canoe Trip with men over 18 years of age

August 15 - 18

Spiritually Guided by Father Penna

Come transform your heart and your mind to be leaders in our world.

Contact curtis.m.mann@gmail.com or 306-291-2931

OFFERING for March 2, 2025

Cash Donations	\$	700.56
Envelopes	\$	3,013.50
Renovations	\$	3,805.00

Registration for First Communion preparation is now open!

There will be a class for grades 2-3 on Mondays at 4:30pm in the welcome area starting April 28th. There will be a class for grades 4-6 on Wednesdays at 4:30pm in the welcome area starting April 30th.

You can find the registration on-line at <https://www.stpaulscc.com/parish-life/sacraments/> and can email it to srpetermary@stpaulcocathedral.ca or drop it off at the Parish office. The cost \$27 to cover the cost of the booklets for the children. The registration will be open until April 11.

Teen-Aid Fundraiser "Created for Greatness"

will be held 5 p.m. **Sunday, April 27** at Saint Anne Parish Hall, 217 Lenore Drive, Saskatoon, with a live and silent auction and entertainment. Register at: <https://teenaidssask.ca/> or call (306) 373-3645. Teen-Aid's goals are to reduce the many adverse consequences of teen sexual activity by encouraging chastity; to provide skills which will enable healthy relationships, and create a solid foundation for a future lifelong marriage; to teach responsibility and respect towards sexuality, and to promote the concept of renewed chastity for students who have already had sexual experiences. Chastity allows young people to form a healthy self-concept and protects them as they develop their attitudes and values.

Journey through Lent video series from the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops offers spiritual inspiration and guidance on how to prepare well for the Easter season. This year's presenters are Bishop Michel Proulx, of Bathurst, NB (in French), and Bishop Gary Franken of St. Paul, AB (in English). The first videos are now available on the CCCB website: cccb.ca. (They are updated weekly.)

Lenten Silent Retreat

Saturday, March 22nd 8:30-4pm at St. Paul's

Join the Academy of Our Lady and the Hermitage of the Three Holy Hierarchs for a day of silent prayer and reflection. In honour of the 1700th anniversary of the Nicene Creed, Father Gregory Hrynkiw will offer reflections on Christ's passion, resurrection and ascension as seen in the truths of the creed. Suggested donation of \$65 for individuals and \$110 for couples. Lunch is included. To register, please email Anne LaFlèche at alafleche.ourlady@gmail.com

Teen Aid Art Contest - Grade 8 theme: The Meaning of Chastity (1st place \$300, 2nd \$200, 3rd \$100);

Grade 9 theme: Chastity's Contribution to Our Well-being (1st place \$400, 2nd \$300, 3rd \$200). Artwork must be a two dimensional original art piece (may include meaningful phrase or message).

Submissions are due by March 21, 2025 to teenaidssaskatoon@gmail.com.

Hospital Chaplaincy: To receive the Sacrament of the Sick or the Holy Eucharist in Saskatoon hospitals, contact Fr Benedict Araakal directly at (306) 371-7125, or diocesan Hospital Chaplaincy Coordinator Jacqueline Saretsky at (306) 292-5531 or jsaretsky@rcdos.ca

Called and Gifted – Explore what gifts the Holy Spirit has given you! A Called and Gifted introductory workshop will be held 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Saturday, March 22, hosted by the Cathedral of the Holy Family, 123 Nelson Rd, Saskatoon, open to all those interested. Cost is \$80. Register at: <https://form.jotform.com/250085439325255>.