

ASH WEDNESDAY
FEBRUARY 17, 2010
HOMILY – CHRIST CHURCH PARISH
FATHER CRAIG LOONEY

JOEL 2.12 ST. MATTHEW 6.16

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Is there a treasure to be found in Lent?

Look at the Altar. The cross has a figure on it. It is there to remind us God loves us so much he was willing to walk among us, so we could one day walk with him in heaven. His walk among us on earth led to his death on that Cross.

The ashes on our foreheads are in the shape of the Cross. They remind us of our roots...we are made from dust and we will return to dust. But the ashes are for us a symbol of hope, because it is by the Cross we are put right with God.

Jesus took your sins, my sins, the sins of the whole world on his shoulders to the Cross. With his death he defeated sin and its power over us. The Cross is for us our symbol of hope and everlasting life.

Lent is our opportunity to focus our eyes, hearts, and minds on the Cross. We will spend the next forty days walking with Jesus toward the Cross. And we will ask God to help us do the right things, and to stay away from the things that distract us and keep us from acting as we should.

If we use Lent as a time to turn away from our sins and to return to God, as the prophet Joel wrote, and accept his loving invitation to repentance, we will discover what Lent is really about.

If we ask God, as Psalm 51 puts it, to make our hearts pure and to put a new and loyal spirit in us, we will truly have a blessed and productive Lent, and be ready for Easter.

Lent is about God's love. That is the greatest treasure we have.

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