

# Message From The Pastor

February 17, 2021

## Ashes

When I was a very young boy, while living at 109 Grand Street in Paterson, I was fortunate to have a large backyard. I had a lot of fun there with friends and family! However, there was one activity I recall which I am quite humiliated to share. But, for the sake of this spiritual reflection, I will do so.

During a hot, sunny summer day, when boredom sometimes got the better of me, I would bring a magnifying glass into the large backyard. Immediately, very stealthily, spy a small hole from which ants would crawl in and out. Next, to my shame as I remember my behavior on those days of my youth, I would spot an ant crawl out of the hole, then place the magnifying glass over it. Soon, ashes would be seen through the glass. The ant was no more, as I held the magnifying glass over its one time living body.

Awful and demented behavior it was at 109 Grand Street, on my part! Maybe, you, as a young boy or girl, did the same. Hopefully, not in my backyard! In truth, the ashes I saw on the ground should have been an embarrassment to me!

Today, you and I will receive “ashes” on our forehead. Unlike the aforementioned ones, the ashes which you and I will carry will be blessed- a sacramental! But, may they not be a sign of what the charred ants are for me today. May the recollection of the reception of the ashes at the conclusion of this Lent not be an embarrassment due to the failure of not fulfilling our Lenten promises we make today.

We hope and pray for an outstanding Lent! And, don't forget...if an ant can carry an object about one hundred times its weight, you can carry whatever you set out to do as your Lenten sacrifice this year!

Peace  
Fr. Marc