

PANDEMIC DISTRIBUTION OF BLESSED ASHES: Due to the Liturgical COVID Safety Guidelines issued by our bishop, Blessed Ashes, during all our parish's Ash Wednesday Masses, will be distributed by **sprinkling them ON TOP of the heads, and not on the foreheads,** of the faithful wishing to receive them. The faithful receiving the ashes are to simply bow their heads a bit to receive ashes as the minister sprinkles them on the head. This has been a very common and longstanding Catholic practice, even before the pandemic, on Ash Wednesdays in certain countries of Europe and around the world. So, this will be the liturgical practice we honor at all Ash Wednesday Masses throughout our diocese during the pandemic. This way the advised medical guidelines of both being masked, and unnecessary touching, will be honored. While still honoring the Catholic Church's laws of Abstinence from Meats and Fasting from meals on Ash Wednesdays and Good Friday are still in place, please be reminded that Ash Wednesday is not a Holy Day, and that receiving Blessed Ashes is not a Sacrament. Any person with a repentant heart may receive ashes during an Ash Wednesday Mass.