

ASH WEDNESDAY



FAMILY FOCUS IN LENT

- Eat one meal together each day
- Choose a Lenten sacrifice to do as a family

Finding God in Ash Wednesday

Every year Catholics celebrate Ash Wednesday. Do you know the meaning behind Ash Wednesday?

[Click here](#) to read more about celebrating Ash Wednesday

Try a 3 minute Ash Wednesday retreat [click here](#)

Your Father who sees.... (Matthew 6:4)

Welcome to another season of Lent! Beginning today, we will be encouraged to take up the traditional practices of fasting, praying, and giving alms. Today, in fact, is set aside as a special day of fasting, along with a Mass where we will be marked with ashes and reminded that we are dust. We'll wonder what we should "give up" for Lent, and we'll hear readings at Mass calling us to repent and follow Jesus more closely. In other words, this can be an intense season as we prepare for Easter.

But there's another side to Lent. It's almost hidden in plain sight, tucked away three times in today's Gospel reading: "Your Father who sees" (Matthew 6:4, 6, 18). It tells us that God is always looking on us in love, so we don't have to work hard to get his attention. If anything, our Lenten observances are there to help us begin looking at *him*.

Open to the first page of Genesis, and you'll find similar words. God saw his creation and announced it to be "very good" (Genesis 1:31). He was pleased, especially when he looked upon men and women - the crown of his creation.

Even when sin darkened his masterpiece, God never stopped seeing us with his eyes of love. In fact, he intensified his gaze, giving us the Law, the prophets, and, ultimately, Jesus himself. Even on the cross, Jesus was seeing us, looking on us with mercy and forgiveness.

This is the good news of Lent: God sees you. He knows you. He is committed to you. He loves you. No amount of work on your part can increase his love for you. It's already complete, perfect.

By all means, do fast and pray and give alms! Just remember that these practices aren't meant to grab hold of God's attention. They're meant to fix your eyes on your Father, who sees. And your Father, who sees, promises to reward you.

Let us Pray,

*"Thank you, Father, that you see me with love.
Help me gaze at you this Lent."*

Today's Other Readings:

Joel 2:12-18

Psalm 51: 3-9; 12-14, 17

2 Corinthians 5:20-6:2