

Achievement Objective

Children will be able to: recognise Lent as a season for getting ready for Easter.

Learning Outcomes:

The children will:

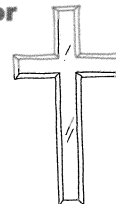
- 1 name the first day of *Lent*
- 2 recognise the *Ash Wednesday ritual* of the signing with ashes

Preparation for the Lesson:

- *Liturgical Year Calendar* and *Days of Lent* chart
- A bowl of ashes, also the soap, water and small towel to wash hands
- A piece of palm from the previous year, something suitable to burn it on, and matches
- Caption card of the words said when the ashes are distributed - check this with parish priest

**Create in me a clean heart,
O God, and put a new and
right spirit within me**

**Psalm 51:10 Mass for
Ash Wednesday**



Teacher's Notes:

The season of *Lent* begins on a special day called *Ash Wednesday*. *Ash Wednesday* is the first of the 40 days of *Lent*.

It is called *Ash Wednesday* because on that day ashes are used to make the Sign of the Cross on our foreheads. This reminds us that the season of *Lent* is a time to try harder to be a loving person like Jesus. For a very long time ashes have been a sign that people are sorry for the wrong things they do. In *Lent* we remember times when we have not been kind and loving. We say sorry, and try to be more loving like Jesus. When we turn away from being mean or unkind we are turning to Jesus, and he helps us.

Long ago people put a lot of ash on their heads to show how sorry they were for not being a loving person like Jesus. Now we just get a small cross on our foreheads, but we keep it on all day to show that we are friends of Jesus.

The ashes are made by burning the palm leaves we were given in church on *Palm Sunday* the year before.

Teaching and Learning Experiences:

- Children identify the place of *Ash Wednesday* on the *Liturgical Year Calendar*, and on the *Days of Lent* chart. *Ash Wednesday* is written in and highlighted.
- Teacher burns the old palm and shows children how the ashes are made and explains how the priest blesses them and makes them holy and uses them to make a Sign of the Cross on the heads of all the people in the parish on *Ash Wednesday*.
- Children look at the ashes, and share ideas about where they come from. Teacher uses the ashes on his/her thumb to make a cross on a child's forehead. Children look at this and talk about how this reminds them to try to be a more loving person in *Lent*.
- The children share ideas about:
 - times when they have been sorry, or had to say sorry
 - how it feels when someone says sorry to you
 - what people do to show they are sorry
 - how it feels after you say sorry.

Consolidation and Extension Activities:

- Prepare the children for the *Ash Wednesday* liturgy, whether it is to be celebrated during a Eucharist in the parish church, or as a non-sacramental celebration for the class. Show and explain the words said by the priest or lay minister when distributing the ashes

Suggested Assessment Examples:

- **LO 1** Complete the sentence:
The first day of the season of *Lent* is called Ash Wednesday.
- **LO 2** Draw a large self-portrait and mark forehead with a cross. Caption or explain why there is a cross on the forehead and what it is made from

