



# THE DIOCESE OF SAN JOAQUIN

ANGELICAN CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

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## ASH WEDNESDAY IN THE TIME OF COVID 19

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As we approach the season of Lent and the service of Ash Wednesday in particular, we need to think a bit differently about how we approach the imposition of ashes and conduct the service in general.

Assuming we are still in the purple tier, services will need to be outdoors or presented virtually and then parishioners can either come to you, or vice versa for the distribution of ashes – either drive through or outdoors.

In place of imposing the ashes by making the sign of the cross on the person's forehead, I recommend that we follow the Roman Catholic guidance to sprinkle ashes on the top of the head while saying, "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return." You can read an online article about it here: <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/ash-wednesday-vatican-offers-guidance-on-ash-distribution-amid-pandemic>.

Of course, the imposition of ashes, while a tradition, is not a requirement of the Ash Wednesday service, and thus may be omitted entirely.

Lastly, this liturgy does not require a priest to conduct the service. We have placed a copy of the liturgy led by a Deacon or Layperson on our website under the resource section.

Blessings,

+ *Eric Menees*