

# Guidance for the Distribution of Ashes on Ash Wednesday

## Archdiocese of Louisville

Please observe the following instructions for the distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday, issued January 12, 2021, by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments:

“Distribution of Ashes in Time of Pandemic

The Priest says the prayer for blessing the ashes. He sprinkles the ashes with holy water, without saying anything. Then he addresses all those present and only once says the formula as it appears in the Roman Missal, applying it to all in general:

‘Repent, and believe in the Gospel’, or

‘Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return’.

The Priest then cleanses his hands, puts on a face mask and distributes the ashes to those who come to him or, if appropriate, he goes to those who are standing in their places. The Priest takes the ashes and sprinkles them on the head of each one without saying anything.”

If large crowds are expected, it is advisable to offer opportunities for distribution outside of Mass within a Liturgy of the Word according to the *Book of Blessings* no. 1656-1678. Whether within Mass or within a Liturgy of the Word, please follow the above instructions for distribution of ashes.

Noting the popularity of Ash Wednesday, it is important to utilize all means of parish communications in the coming weeks to share plans for distribution of ashes.