

ASH WEDNESDAY

http://www.eslHolidayLessons.com/02/ash_wednesday.html

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ALL ANSWERS ARE IN THE TEXT ON PAGE 2.

THE READING / TAPESCRIPT

Many Christians around the world celebrate Ash Wednesday, which marks the first day of Lent. It is the start of a religious period that leads up to Palm Sunday and the Easter holidays. On Ash Wednesday, people traditionally start fasting for 40 days, eating only simple food. The 40 days is because Jesus fasted in the wilderness for a similar period of time. Roman Catholics should only eat one full meal and two smaller ones during this time. Many Catholics will fast completely on Ash Wednesday or just have bread and water. It is one of only two days in the Catholic calendar when fasting is required. The other day is Good Friday. Ash Wednesday falls between February the 4th and March the 10th each year, depending on the date of Easter.

It is called Ash Wednesday because priests draw a small cross on the foreheads of people in church. The cross is a sign that you have regretted your sins and want to cleanse your soul. It is tradition to keep the cross on one's forehead until the sun sets. In other churches, people write their sins on a small piece of paper, which is then burnt and turned into ash. In Biblical times, people covered themselves in ash to express their sorrow for their sins. Priests say a prayer to show we are all mortal and will return to ashes after we die. A traditional prayer is: "God our Father, you create us from the dust of the earth. Grant that these ashes may be for us a sign of our sins, and a symbol of our mortality."

PHRASE MATCH

Match the following phrases from the article.

Paragraph 1

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. the start of a religious period that | a. similar period of time |
| 2. people traditionally start | b. when fasting is required |
| 3. Jesus fasted in the wilderness for a | c. full meal |
| 4. only eat one | d. leads up to Palm Sunday |
| 5. two days in the Catholic calendar | e. the 4 th and March the 10 th |
| 6. Ash Wednesday falls between February | f. fasting for 40 days |

Paragraph 2

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. The cross is a sign that you have | a. are all mortal |
| 2. keep the cross on one's forehead | b. on a small piece of paper |
| 3. people write their sins | c. mortality |
| 4. In Biblical times, people covered | d. regretted your sins |
| 5. Priests say a prayer to show we | e. themselves in ash |
| 6. a symbol of our | f. until the sun sets |

LISTENING GAP FILL

Many Christians _____ celebrate Ash Wednesday, which marks the first day of Lent. It is the start of a religious period _____ Palm Sunday and the Easter holidays. On Ash Wednesday, people traditionally start fasting for 40 days, eating _____. The 40 days is because Jesus fasted in the wilderness for a similar period of time. Roman Catholics should only eat one full meal and two smaller ones _____. Many Catholics will fast completely on Ash Wednesday or just have bread and water. _____ two days in the Catholic calendar when fasting is required. The other day is Good Friday. Ash Wednesday falls between February the 4th and March the 10th each year, _____ of Easter.

It is called Ash Wednesday because priests _____ on the foreheads of people in church. The cross is a sign that you have regretted your sins and _____ soul. It is tradition to keep the cross on one's forehead until the sun sets. In other churches, people _____ a small piece of paper, which is then burnt and turned into ash. In Biblical times, people covered themselves in ash to express their _____ sins. Priests say a prayer to show we are all mortal and will return to ashes after we die. A traditional prayer is: "God our Father, _____ the dust of the earth. Grant that these ashes may be for us a sign of our sins, and _____ mortality."

WHILE READING / LISTENING GAP FILL

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Many Christians around the world _____ Ash Wednesday, which marks the first day of Lent. It is the start of a religious period that _____ up to Palm Sunday and the Easter holidays. On Ash Wednesday, people traditionally start _____ for 40 days, eating only simple food. The 40 days is because Jesus fasted in the wilderness for a _____ period of time. Roman Catholics should only eat one full meal and two smaller ones during this _____. Many Catholics will fast completely on Ash Wednesday or _____ have bread and water. It is one of only two days in the Catholic calendar when fasting is _____. The other day is Good Friday. Ash Wednesday falls between February the 4th and March the 10th each year, _____ on the date of Easter.

required

fasting

time

depending

celebrate

similar

just

leads

It is called Ash Wednesday because priests _____ a small cross on the foreheads of people in church. The cross is a sign that you have _____ your sins and want to cleanse your soul. It is tradition to keep the cross on one's _____ until the sun sets. In other churches, people write their sins on a small piece of paper, which is then _____ and turned into ash. In Biblical times, people covered themselves in ash to express their _____ for their sins. Priests say a prayer to show we are all mortal and will _____ to ashes after we die. A traditional prayer is: "God our Father, you create us from the _____ of the earth. Grant that these ashes may be for us a sign of our sins, and a _____ of our mortality."

burnt

symbol

forehead

return

draw

sorrow

regretted

dust

CHOOSE THE CORRECT WORD

Delete the wrong word in each of the pairs of *italics*.

Many Christians around the world *celebrate / celebration* Ash Wednesday, which marks the first day of Lent. It is the start of a religious *periods / period* that leads up to Palm Sunday and the Easter holidays. On Ash Wednesday, people traditionally start *fast / fasting* for 40 days, eating only simple food. The 40 days is because Jesus fasted in the *wilderness / wilder* for a similar period of time. Roman Catholics should only eat one *fully / full* meal and two smaller ones during this time. Many Catholics will fast *completely / complete* on Ash Wednesday or just have bread and water. It is one of only two days in the Catholic calendar when fasting is *required / requirement*. The other day is Good Friday. Ash Wednesday falls between February the 4th and March the 10th each year, *depends / depending* on the date of Easter.

It is called Ash Wednesday because priests *drawing / draw* a small cross on the foreheads of people in church. The cross is a sign that you have *regretted / regret* your sins and want to cleanse your soul. It is *tradition / traditions* to keep the cross on one's forehead until the sun *sets / set*. In other churches, people write their sins on a small piece of paper, which is then burnt and turned into *cash / ash*. In Biblical times, people covered themselves in ash to express their sorrow for their *sinner / sins*. Priests say a prayer to show we are all mortal and will return to ashes after we die. A traditional *player / prayer* is: "God our Father, you create us from the dust of the earth. Grant that these ashes may be for us a sign of our sins, and a *symbol / symbolic* of our mortality."

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Many Christians around the world (1) _____ Ash Wednesday, which marks the first day of Lent. It is the start of a religious period that leads (2) _____ to Palm Sunday and the Easter holidays. On Ash Wednesday, people traditionally start (3) _____ for 40 days, eating only simple food. The 40 days is because Jesus fasted in the wilderness for a similar period of time. Roman Catholics should only eat one (4) _____ meal and two smaller ones during this time. Many Catholics will fast completely on Ash Wednesday or just have bread and water. It is one of only two days in the Catholic calendar when fasting is (5) _____. The other day is Good Friday. Ash Wednesday falls between February the 4th and March the 10th each year, (6) _____ on the date of Easter.

It is called Ash Wednesday because priests (7) _____ a small cross on the foreheads of people in church. The cross is a sign that you have regretted your sins and want to (8) _____ your soul. It is tradition to keep the cross on one's forehead until the sun sets. In other churches, people write their sins on a small piece of paper, which is then burnt and turned (9) _____ ash. In Biblical times, people covered themselves in ash to express their sorrow for their sins. Priests say a prayer to (10) _____ we are all mortal and will return to ashes after we die. A traditional (11) _____ is: "God our Father, you create us from the dust of the earth. Grant that these ashes may be for us a sign of our sins, and a (12) _____ of our mortality."

Put the correct words from this table into the article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. | (a) celebrate | (b) celebration | (c) celebratory | (d) celebrates |
| 2. | (a) down | (b) in | (c) up | (d) on |
| 3. | (a) fastest | (b) fast | (c) fasted | (d) fasting |
| 4. | (a) fill | (b) fully | (c) full | (d) fills |
| 5. | (a) required | (b) requirement | (c) requiring | (d) requires |
| 6. | (a) depends | (b) depending | (c) depend | (d) dependant |
| 7. | (a) drawn | (b) draw | (c) drawing | (d) drawer |
| 8. | (a) cleaning | (b) cleaner | (c) cleanse | (d) cleans |
| 9. | (a) onto | (b) out of | (c) up to | (d) into |
| 10. | (a) shown | (b) show | (c) showing | (d) shows |
| 11. | (a) player | (b) praying | (c) playing | (d) prayer |
| 12. | (a) symbol | (b) symbolic | (c) symbolize | (d) symbols |

SPELLING

Spell the jumbled words (from the text) correctly.

Paragraph 1

1. ebrlaetec Ash Wednesday
2. a religious oredip that leads up to Palm Sunday
3. start asfitgn for 40 days
4. one full meal and two arlsmel ones
5. two days in the Catholic ncadrael
6. Ash Wednesday lfsal between February the 4th and March the 10th

Paragraph 2

7. a small oscsr
8. enslcae your soul
9. a small ieecp of paper
10. express their rwroso
11. we are all oratlm
12. a mblosy of our mortality

PUT THE TEXT BACK TOGETHER

Number these lines in the correct order.

- () religious period that leads up to Palm Sunday and the Easter holidays. On Ash Wednesday, people traditionally start
- () February the 4th and March the 10th each year, depending on the date of Easter.
- () fasting for 40 days, eating only simple food. The 40 days is because Jesus fasted in the wilderness for a similar
- () It is called Ash Wednesday because priests draw a small cross on the foreheads of people in church. The cross is a
- () and turned into ash. In Biblical times, people covered themselves in ash to express their sorrow for their
- () sign that you have regretted your sins and want to cleanse your soul. It is tradition to keep the cross on one's
- () sins. Priests say a prayer to show we are all mortal and will return to ashes after we die. A traditional
- (**1**) Many Christians around the world celebrate Ash Wednesday, which marks the first day of Lent. It is the start of a
- () be for us a sign of our sins, and a symbol of our mortality."
- () fast completely on Ash Wednesday or just have bread and water. It is one of only two days in the Catholic
- () prayer is: "God our Father, you create us from the dust of the earth. Grant that these ashes may
- () period of time. Roman Catholics should only eat one full meal and two smaller ones during this time. Many Catholics will
- () calendar when fasting is required. The other day is Good Friday. Ash Wednesday falls between
- () forehead until the sun sets. In other churches, people write their sins on a small piece of paper, which is then burnt

SCRAMBLED SENTENCES

With a partner, put the words back into the correct order.

1. Ash Christians the celebrate Wednesday around world

2. a religious period It is the start of

3. traditionally fasting 40 people start for days

4. wilderness days Jesus the 40 because in The is fasted

5. fasting the is Catholic required calendar days when in

6. cross foreheads priests small the people a on of draw

7. a sign that you have regretted your sins The cross is

8. their a of write on piece people sins small paper

9. Biblical themselves times in , ash people In covered

10. say to are Priests prayer we mortal a show all

DISCUSSION (Write your own questions)

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

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DISCUSSION (Write your own questions)

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

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THE ASH WEDNESDAY SURVEY

Write five questions about Ash Wednesday in the table. Do this in pairs/groups. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

Without your partner, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

Return to your original partner(s) and share and talk about what you found out. Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information about Ash Wednesday. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. MAGAZINE ARTICLE: Write a magazine article about Ash Wednesday. Write about what happens around the world. Include two imaginary interviews with people who did something on this day.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Give each other feedback on your articles.

4. POSTER: Make your own poster about Ash Wednesday. Write about what will happen on this day around the world.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Give each other feedback on your articles.