

St. Patrick Catholic Church, Mount Dora, FL

SACRISTAN ASH WEDNESDAY NOTES - 2/19/2026

There were four 2026 distribution of ashes services: 9 AM English Mass; 12 N Liturgy of the Word without Communion; 5 PM Liturgy of the Word without Communion; 7 PM bi-lingual Mass. Both Masses should have two Sacristans assigned, one to manage the Altar and one for the ashes.

The 9 AM Mass should have 13 EMHCs assigned plus the Presider. Only the nine assigned “HOST EMHCs” at the Mass will distribute ashes; not the “4 CUP EMHCs”. [10 Ash positions: Presider, Capt., 2, 7, 7A, HH, 8,10,12, 13.] 431 attended this 3/5/2025 Mass; 380 the 2/18/2026 Mass. Fr. Vibin presided and Deacon Chuck assisted. (Unscheduled Fr. Rowland also distributed ashes.) No Wednesday Adoration after the Mass. The Presider/Deacon should be reminded to distribute ashes to the Church day care workers after the Mass.

Plus prepare disposable ash containers to be blessed for the Ministry To the Sick. See the MTS NOTE below for the 2026 number.

The 12 N Liturgy of the Word (no Communion) service should have 7 EMHCs plus the Presider for the distribution of ashes. [7 Ash positions: Presider, Capt., 2, 7, 7A, HH, 8.] 254 attended this 3/5/2025 service; 330 the 2/18/2026 service. Fr. Vibin presided. (Unscheduled Fr. Rowland also distributed ashes.)

The 5 PM Liturgy of the Word (no Communion) service should have 7 EMHCs plus the Presider for the distribution of ashes. [7 Ash positions: Presider, Capt., 2, 7, 7A, HH, 8.] 360 attended this 3/5/2025 service; 410 the 2/18/2026 service. Deacon Jose presided. (Unscheduled Fr. Vibin also distributed ashes.)

The 7 PM Mass should have 13 EMHCs assigned plus the Presider. Only the nine assigned “HOST EMHCs” at the Mass will distribute ashes; not the “4 CUP EMHCs”. [10 Ash positions: Presider, Capt., 2, 7, 7A, HH, 8, 10,12, 13.] 639 attended this 3/5/2025 Mass; 780 the 2/18/2026 Mass. Fr.

Rowland presided and Deacon Jose assisted. (Unscheduled Fr. Vibin also distributed ashes as did Deacon Jose, so there were 12 positions.)

Understand that not all assigned EMHC positions may be filled. Be prepared to adjust both for ashes and Communion.

There is no 'normal Wednesday' Adoration following the 9 AM Mass. There will be Adoration for the remaining Wednesdays of Lent.

Set the air conditioner timers for the abnormal occupied times.

The Church Office orders two bags of ashes, 'enough for 1200 applications/bag' in a small zip-lock bag. 1690 plus MTS recipients were served in 2025, an increase of 399 or 30% over 2024. 1900 plus MTS recipients were served in 2026, and increase of 210 or 12% over 2025. There were no reports of any minister running out of ashes.

There is no liturgy involved in placing the dry ashes in the bowls and wetting them with either water or Holy Water; a blessing is done during the service.

Referencing the Order of Mass or Liturgy of the Word, after the homily, the ashes are sprinkled* with Holy Water by the Presider and blessed. If no Deacon, the Altar Server should be prepared to hold the binder for the Presider during his blessing. *In 2025 Fr. Hank requested the small Holy Water 'squirt' bottle. For 2026, Fr. Vibin requested the ashes be moistened in the sacristy, then they were blessed/sprinkled during the services.

The ashes are distributed per the normal Communion Host distribution positions. Application statement: "Repent and believe in the Gospel." Provide a copy for each EMHC at each service. [An optional statement: "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."] The EMHCs are invited to the Altar during the blessing of the ashes. The presider signs each EMHC and the Deacon or Captain carries the tray behind him for the EMHC to take their ash bowl and then go to their assigned position.

After distribution, the Presider and EMHCs wash using lemon water in a bowl and dry their hands. (Using sanitizing wipes is not liturgically correct /

Fr. Hank 2/12/24.) If no Deacon, the Altar Server should be prepared to manage the water pitcher. (Purchase 2 lemons; place 2 lemon quarters in the bowl, plus dish soap, for each service.)

The Prayers of the Faithful follow ash distribution for a Mass. Reference the Orders of Worship provided by the Liturgy Director.

ASH TABLE SET-UP

Set-up on the longer table placed next to the lectern's Altar side (see photo).

1. Holy Water aspersorium and aspergillum ('broom' sprinkler).
2. 10 (Mass) or 7 (Lit. Word) pinch bowls with ashes at each service. Place 3/8 to 1/2 teaspoon of dry ashes in each bowl.
3. A water pitcher, bowl with lemon water, and towels as determined by the number of those placing ashes at each service.
4. A wicker basket for the used towels. (Additional towels are stored in the blue bin on the Sacristy closet shelf.)

After each service prep the water and pinch bowls and towels for the next service by draining the poured water into the sacrarium, replacing the lemon water in the pitcher and bowl, and replacing the towels. The existing ashes in the pinch bowls, if not used for unanticipated MTS, are rinsed into the sacrarium and the bowls washed for the next service. Note, if in 'good' condition, the ashes can be reused at the following service.

NOTES

1. For the Ministry to the Sick, coordinator Lois Hennessy provided 2 oz portion cups with lids for the MTS Ministers. 14 cups were used in 2026.

Ask Lois to remind the MTS Ministers that any remaining blessed ashes should be rinsed from the cups to the ground, not down the 'drain'. Also, Fr. Rowland reminded the MTS that ashes can be given to any Christian, not just Catholics.

2. The request for volunteers for Ash Wednesday should include a notice that the Host EMHCs are expected to distribute ashes. In 2024 some EMHC volunteers refused to distribute ashes when they were told this.

3. Ask the Church Office if pews should be reserved for the Day Care children.

4. In 2024 Fr. Hank made it known that 'he would not be distributing ashes in the Sacristy; that those wanting ashes should attend the service. In 2026 Frs. Vibin and Rowland gave ashes after the services.

5. The Usher Coordinator should ensure ushers are assigned for each Mass.

6. A collection will be taken at the normal time during the Masses. There were no collections for the Liturgy of the Word services in 2026.

7. Request a mid-afternoon refresh of the restrooms.



TABLE SET FOR 10 MINISTERS & MINISTRY TO THE SICK. (Note separate tray for MTS; aspensorium and aspergillum missing in this photo.)