

Lenten Season Kicks Off In Style At Area Churches

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
February 27 2023 4:10 PM





ALTON - Father Christopher Uhl, OMV, the St. Mary's pastor, said he is excited as always as the Lenten season begins for parishioners and that this is such an important time for parishioners in their penitence and sacrifice.

St. Mary's had several Masses this past Ash Wednesday where the ashes were delivered. The ashes come from the previous Palm Sunday.

Uhl and the Oblates of the Virgin Mary members said that parishioners should enjoy these 40 days with the Lord at their side.

"How is the Lord inviting you to spend this forty-day retreat in the desert? Do you feel like you already failed? Do not lose courage!

"Allow the Lord into places of the heart, so that he may offer comfort again," he said.

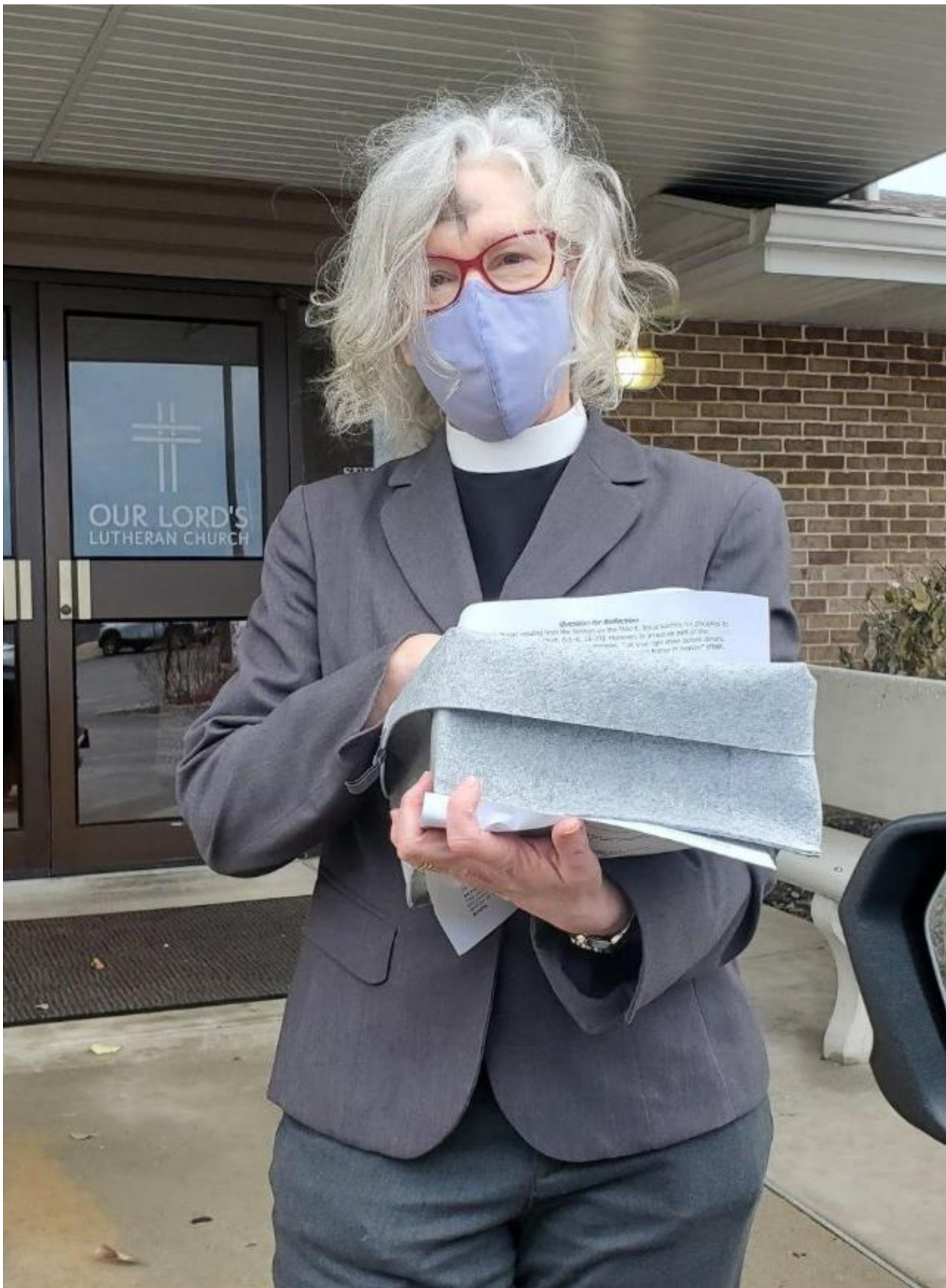
The church invites us to go into a 40-day retreat invited into the journey of lent and we will never be ourselves you might want to change or improve your life. Change can be very difficult change can be scary for some of us. We are with Jesus and the one who knows us and one we can trust we don't have to be afraid to be vulnerable. We need to continue to keep our eyes on him. He is waiting to take this journey with you. When he sees your sins and desires he has the desire to heal. I pray that you allow the Lord into places of your heart you are so afraid of. Enjoy these 40 days in the desert with the Lord at your side."

St. Boniface Church in Edwardsville had multiple Ash Wednesday observations and now also continues its journey into the Lenten season.

Father Goeckner, VF, said Ash Wednesday Masses were very well attended as usual and the congregation appears ready to proceed with the 40 days of penance and Lenten observation.

He sees Ash Wednesday as a time when many start over and clean the slate and then proceed with the Lenten season of sacrifice. It brings him great joy to see the heavy participation during the Lenten time and on Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday, two of the key observances for the Catholic Church.









Pastor Darla Ann Kratzer of Our Lord's Lutheran Church at 150 Wilma Drive in Maryville, formulated an innovative Ashes To Go event.

Upon arrival at the Ash Wednesday To Go event, Pastor Kratzer came to each car window and handed a single page with prayers, and then the person stood near the car door while speaking. She used a cotton swab and imposed a cross of ashes on the forehead of each who attended.

Kratzer said a small bus even brought about 20 residents from a care facility so they could have ashes and there was a good stream of people throughout the day.

“I feel so blessed as people arrive and I am able to not only remind people of our fragility and finitude but to also affirm that we are deeply loved by a God who renews us.”

[Bradley Piros also contributed to this story.](#)