



The term **shrine** signifies a church or other sacred place to which the faithful make pilgrimages for a particular pious reason with the approval of the local ordinary. At shrines, more abundant means of salvation are to be provided for the faithful; the Word of God is to be carefully proclaimed; liturgical life is to be appropriately fostered especially through the celebration of the Eucharist and penance; and approved forms of popular piety are to be cultivated.

Code of Canon Law, 1230 and 1234

Le Decine del Rosario is the Italian phrase for decades of the rosary, representing the twenty decades of the rosary, for which our weekly bulletin is named.

Whether you eat or drink,
or whatever you do,
do everything
for the glory of God.
~1 Corinthians 10:31

LE DECINE DEL ROSARIO

THE SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF POMPEII

The Oldest Continuing Italian-American Catholic Church
in the City of Chicago, located in the heart of historic "Little Italy."

A Gift of Italian-American Hospitality, Embracing All Pilgrims of Faith
Founded in 1911 ✕ Established as a Shrine in 1994

So Where Do We Get the Ashes?

Dear Friends of Our Lady,

This Wednesday, February 18, is Ash Wednesday.

Around the world, Catholics and other Christians will stand in line to receive ashes on their foreheads with the words: Remember you are dust, and into dust you shall return.

This ancient tradition signals the willingness, on the part of those who are signed with ashes, to repent and believe in the good news.

But, you may wonder, where do we get these ashes?

The answer is simple: they are the dust that remains from the palms that were blessed last year on Palm Sunday.

I remember as a young boy, gathering with other children my age, with the church janitor, Dominick Leo, on Mardi Gras, the day before Ash Wednesday. He took all the extra palms, by this time all dried out, and made a huge fire in which they all turned to smoke.

When the fire died down, he would rake up all the ashes into a silver bowl to let them cool down.

Then I remember he would take what looked like a utensil my mom used to make mashed potatoes and he would crush the black ash into a fine powder.

From the silver bowl, Monsignor Spina would fill the smaller bowls with powdered ashes.

These would be blessed at Masses on Ash Wednesday and put on our foreheads, to be worn proudly to school that day. It was a Catholic day... we knew those who were Catholic by the smudge of ashes!

Many parish churches continue to do the same ritual that Dominick did years ago. Some do burn the dried palms publicly, in view of all who attend the ritual. In either case, this is the ancient connection: the joy of Palm Sunday's Hosannas and the reminder of mortality... are linked for us who believe in Christ.

These ashes are for us a sign that true repentance allows us to embrace both life and death, joyfully, as a gift from God. Remembering that we are mortal ashes, allows us to live fully in life, sharing ourselves together in love.

Our Shrine will distribute ashes at 7:30 am, Noon, and 6:00 pm, Ash Wed., Feb. 18.

Blessings, Fr. Richard, Rector

P.S. Please read our Inside the Shrine note from Susan Pudelek, director of pilgrimage ministry: "It's good to travel with companions on our spiritual journey. I hope you'll join us for a day of quiet reflection and reconciliation at our **Lenten Day** on **March 28th**. You're always welcome at the Shrine!