

Sacred Beginnings Answer Key

1. It marks the beginning of Lent.
2. From burned palm leaves from the previous Palm Sunday.
3. They symbolize repentance and humility.
4. Things like sweets, games, or screen time.
5. That life is precious and people can choose goodness and faith.

Teacher's Guide

- **Purpose:** Helps students understand **the origins and meaning of Ash Wednesday** through a short nonfiction passage that builds reading comprehension and cultural awareness.
- **Differentiation Tips:**
 - For **Grades 3-4**, read the passage aloud and pause to define key terms such as *Lent* and *repentance*.
 - For **Grade 5**, have students underline evidence from the text to support their answers.
- **Engagement Ideas:**
 - Display palm leaves or show an image of an ash cross to make the text more visual.
 - Ask students to connect the lesson of repentance to real-life actions like saying sorry or helping others.
- **Extension Activities:**
 - Encourage students to write a short paragraph describing what they would like to "give up" or "do more of" during Lent.
 - Have students research how Ash Wednesday is celebrated in different parts of the world and share one interesting fact.