

Wednesday Dark

by [Stella Nesanovich](#) in the [March 2025](#) issue

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The ashes do not lie.

—Rev. Whitney Miller

A friend in the Rothko chapel reflects
on the darkening mind of the artist
whose blocks of deep purple merge
with black, foreshadow the artist's suicide.

In the Assumption Chapel at St. Charles Center,
across the Sabine in Louisiana, we hear
homilies on death this Ash Wednesday
while beyond the floor-to-ceiling windows
the swamp around us darkens:

first shades of gray and charcoal
drape cypress, then deepen night.
Slow and steady as the tortoise
of Aesop's fable, the dusk etches
Lenten ashes on our brows.