

# ASH WEDNESDAY

REMEMBER YOU ARE DUST,  
AND TO DUST YOU SHALL RETURN.

In our culture, we're not very good at dealing with death. We tend to hide it away and sanitise it, as if it is a bit of an embarrassment. We even try to avoid saying the word, talking instead about people passing away or going to a better place.

But on Ash Wednesday, our mortality hits us in the face. Literally. Our foreheads are smeared with Ash in the shape of a Cross, while the Priest recites God's words from Genesis 3:16, reminding us that we will all return to the dust.



Lent is not about making us feel bad; it's about remembering that all of us are human beings - flawed, frail and mortal. Everyone messes things up from time to time, and all of us stand in need of God's forgiveness and mercy - and each others' forgiveness too.



Death (like taxes) is a certainty for all of us, but we have a choice as to how we approach it. We can believe that it's the just end of our lives, bringing nothing but decay for our bodies and grief for our loved ones; or we can trust in Jesus Christ, who broke the power of death forever and made it the gate to eternal life. Today we think about death, but we do so in preparation for Easter, when we celebrate Christ's gift of everlasting life.

TURN AWAY FROM SIN  
AND BE FAITHFUL TO CHRIST.