

## **Service for Ash Wednesday**

The Service for Ash Wednesday will be available on YouTube on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> February. I will send out the link by email. It will also be available on our website and Facebook page, and on our 'St Mary's Acocks Green' YouTube Channel (*Please choose from the 'Playlist'*)

**[\\*You may like to Light a Candle, sit down and watch this video at 7.30pm on Ash Wednesday when the service would have taken place in St Mary's.\\*](#)**

**[If you cannot view the service – you may like to light a candle and use the sheets to say a service at 7.30pm](#)**

---

### **Service + Collect & Readings on the back**

#### **Hymns for the week:**

O For a Heart to Praise My God

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0FyAY9fzcnU>

Father, Hear the Prayer We Offer

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFoactKMJHQ&t=30s>

#### **The Thought**

Today's great cry, 'Remember that you are Dust!', calls us in our Christian context to question. Is today about life ending or beginning? Is today morbid, or a reminder...a great opportunity...to live life to the full? Either way, today, Ash Wednesday, forces us to be realistic about life. And about our faith.

The words, hurtful and true come without mercy at you today: 'Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.' The news is a regular reminder of our mortality in these Covid days, as the death toll rises and we all know of someone, maybe someone close to us, who has died due to the virus...or from other conditions, diseases or accidents which happen on life's way at any time!

But mortality is only part of our story, and it interweaves with God's story in Jesus Christ, centring on life, not death, with the message that, in his resurrection, death is not the end!

Yes, you are dust – but dust that is given life and opportunities by God – a start, a beginning – great potential. Ok, we can make it a waste! How sad it is when a young life is cut short. How much sadder when a life is not truly lived! You can waste your life, or you can use it to the full. We either view things negatively or positively. A glass is half-empty or half-full. We can mourn what we did not have or what others have taken from us...or...we can grasp hold of life's fullness and live. And everything can be turned around by inviting our Lord into our lives, melding our story with His. Our need of God's point of view is especially true, in 'lockdown', limited in our lives' outward opportunities, travel and meeting as we are.

This year's Lent Book '#LIVE LENT', available in hard copy (delivered, collected or on the free App) explores life's story. Through its pattern of Bible verse, reflection, prayer and weekly action, we can discover how God's love shines through our mortal stories to turn them around and upward to His eternal life.

You are dust and to dust you shall return – but opportunity to love and live and give and celebrate the life God has given you are here. Ash Wednesday and Lent using '#LIVE LENT' could be just the opportunity you need to guide you to a positive view of life through God's word and prayer.

Return to God and receive wholeness. Be at peace with yourself, and accept your flesh, blessed by God, and the opportunity it presents in Jesus' name. Remember you are dust, yet God loves you!! You are a sinner and no better than others and worse than many – yet God loves even and especially you!! Be reminded of this by discovering the ways His story interacts with your story in '#LIVE LENT'. I will be adding to the booklet with short reflections on each week's themes.

Remember you are dust, and God will strengthen and hearten you this Lent. He will give you opportunities for faithful service, healing, giving, comfort and love. Use these opportunities...in his Holy Name. Amen.

#### **Intercessions**

A Litany of Prayer replaces today's Intercessions.