

Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust...

We are children of earth, created in the dust, yet filled with the breath of God. On Ash Wednesday we face our mortality and the limits of our earthborn existence. Ashes are smeared on our forehead as we hear the same words spoken first by God to Adam and Eve following their disobedience: *You are dust and to dust you shall return*. It is hard not to make the connection with the words said at the rite of committal as we bury the dead: *Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust*.

The imposition of ashes feels like an imposition, a stark warning that we will not live forever. It is a humbling reminder of our limits and finitude as human beings. But it is also an invitation to embark on a profound spiritual journey that will lead us from death to waters of rebirth and the new life of resurrection. The purpose of Lent is to lead us to the destination of Easter, when we renew our baptismal vows and celebrate the paschal mystery of Jesus' death and resurrection.

Lent is a spring housecleaning of the soul. As we prepare for Easter we are invited to clear the clutter and wash away the grit and grime. The simplicity of the season calls us to focus on things that matter most. *I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent* (BCP page 265).

Holy Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes

Wednesday, March 1

12 Noon and 6:00 p.m.

(A nursery will be provide at the 6:00 p.m. service)