

Welcome to Saint Mary's Episcopal Church!



Blessing the Dust © Jan Richardson

Ash Wednesday February 17, 2021

For 134 years, Saint Mary's has been
a Christ-centered community
with a mission to express God's love for all people.

Prelude

Litany

Healer of Our Every Ill
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Marty Haugen

Opening Collect

Presider Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Reading

Blessing the Dust for Ash Wednesday
from Circle of Grace: A Book of Blessings for the Seasons

Jan Richardson

All those days
you felt like dust,
like dirt,
as if all you had to do
was turn your face
toward the wind
and be scattered
to the four corners

or swept away
by the smallest breath
as insubstantial –

did you not know
what the Holy One
can do with dust?

This is the day
we freely say
we are scorched.

This is the hour
we are marked
by what has made it
through the burning.

This is the moment
we ask for the blessing
that lives within
the ancient ashes,
that makes its home
inside the soil of
this sacred earth.

So let us be marked
not for sorrow.
And let us be marked
not for shame.
Let us be marked
not for false humility
or for thinking
we are less
than we are

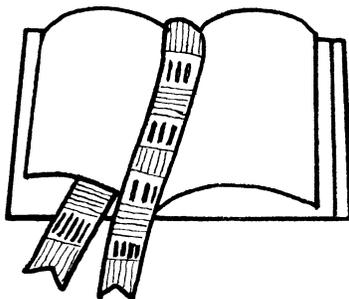
but for claiming
what God can do
within the dust,
within the dirt,
within the stuff
of which the world
is made
and the stars that blaze
in our bones
and the galaxies that spiral
inside the smudge
we bear.

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Music

Ashes
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Tom Conry



Gospel

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Deacon The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

People **Glory to you, O Christ.**

Jesus said, "Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. "So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. "And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Deacon The Gospel of the Lord.

People **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Meditation

The Reverend Susan Moss



Imposition of Ashes

Presider Dear People of God:

The first Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church to prepare for them by a season of penitence and fasting. This season of Lent provided a time in which converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism. It was also a time when those who, because of notorious sins, had been separated from the body of the faithful were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to the fellowship of the Church. Thereby, the whole congregation was put in mind of the message of pardon and absolution set forth in the Gospel of our Savior, and of the need which all Christians continually have to renew their repentance and faith.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word. And, to make a right beginning of repentance, and as a mark of our mortal nature, let us now kneel before the Lord, our maker and redeemer.

Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth: Grant that these ashes may be to us a sign of our mortality and penitence, that we may remember that it is only by your gracious gift that we are given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

The ashes are imposed with the following words

Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

Peace

Leader The peace of Christ be with you always.
People **And also with you.**

We greet each other in the name of Christ.

Lord's Prayer

Our Fa-ther who art in hea-ven
Hall-owed be thy Name, thy king-dom come, thy will be done, on
Earth as it is in hea-ven. Give us this day our dai-ly bread and for-
give us our tres-pass-es, as we for-give those who tres-pass a-gainst us.
And lead us not in-to temp-ta-tion but de-li-ver us from e-vil. For thine is the king-dom, and the
Pow-er and the glo-ry, for e-ver and e-ver. A-
men.

Sending

Presider

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness, to take up your cross and follow him; and the blessing of God almighty, the Creator, Redeemer, and the Sustainer, be among you and remain with you always.

Music

In the Bulb There Is a Flower
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Natalie Sleeth



SOURCES

Opening Collect and Gospel are from the *Revised Common Lectionary*.
Imposition of Ashes is from *The Book of Common Prayer*.
Lord's Prayer music by Jim May.