

What is Ash Wednesday and what does it symbolise?

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, a six-week season of preparation for Easter. In the earliest centuries, Christians who had been stuck in persistent sin had ashes sprinkled on their bodies as a sign of repentance, even as Job repented “in dust and ashes” (Job 42:6).

Ash Wednesday is not some dour, depressing holy day because it symbolically anticipates Good Friday and Easter. Ashes are placed on the foreheads of each of us as a reminder of our mortality and sinfulness. The priest who imposes the ashes quotes what God once said to Adam after he had sinned: “You are dust, and to dust you shall return” (Gen 3:19).

What I value most about the Ash Wednesday service is the chance for us all to acknowledge our frailty and sinfulness. In a world that often expects us to be perfect, Ash Wednesday gives us an opportunity to confess our imperfections one-to-one with God.

Why don't you join us for our Ash Wednesday service at 7.30 on the 5th March 2014