

# Grace-filled Voices

February 17, 2015

## Ashes to Ashes—Dust to Dust

by Fr. Joe Rees

**Lent** is upon us. On this Shrove Tuesday we gather to encourage one another in the love of Jesus, eat a few pancakes, use up the ‘fats’ of life, and consider our mortal nature. We are on the cusp of that time of fasting, of realizing with Jesus the 40 days in the wilderness and the temptations that come from the world, the flesh, and the devil. We go with Jesus giving us courage upon the journey of self-evaluation, examination, and release to more of His Holy Spirit who will cleanse us and help purify our souls and bodies for His habitation. We are to be more perfected with His Holy Grace. We wait upon Jesus. The Lenten discipline is really one of waiting; waiting and hoping to re-live the rolling back of the heavy stone that covers the tombs of our lives. We wait for Jesus to empower us for resurrection; the same as His, the joy of new life, and the promise of eternity.

As the Book of Common Prayer service for burial uses those words, “ashes to ashes, dust to dust” so too we experience the imposition of ashes with the sign of the cross upon our foreheads. We remember that we are dust, and to dust shall we return. We remember this life will come to an end.

I remember an elderly woman from Riverbank came to what would be her last Ash Wednesday service and received the ashes upon her forehead. Unknowingly, the press was there and captured a pic-

ture of her at the altar rail, her face serene, yet lined with the many years of age and tribulations she endured. She was at peace though and with hands folded in prayer she recognized without saying a word that her life here on earth was about finished. Only two weeks later she would die of natural causes, age 89. The whole of Modesto had seen her face on the front page of the newspaper. The witness to all was of a human being who trusted in God her Savior, Jesus Christ, to give her new life through the gateway of the cross. The life we live now must die. Even as the ashes that were pulverized to dust represent what must become of each of us, we remain filled with the real hope of life born from above of His Life. He fully demonstrated that victory over death and the grave. His is the hope of the cross, the arms of which embrace us all. We trust in His Life to give us eternal life. The very instrument of shame and torture became for all of us the “Door”—Jesus—the Way to eternal life. “All of us go down to the dust, but even at the grave we make our song; ‘Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!’”

So here we are, at the gate of another Lent, yet at the narrow gate of Eternity, waiting for Jesus who knows each of His believers’ names, loves each of us, will not forget us, nor reject us, but in fact, already made us His heirs, and welcomes us into His King-

dom of Heaven, now, and at the appointed time. We all need to remember, don't we? We are but dust and to dust we shall return. We are hid in Christ and made alive again in Him. Remember.

I am fully confident and hopeful that in fact, with absolute assurance, we will rise again into that Kingdom where there is no death, nor disease or crying, no sorrow or pain; but only light and love and peace for our journey into unlimited tomorrows. We will as Romans 8:37 says, "overwhelmingly conquer (the world's tribulations) through Him who loved us, Jesus Christ, our Savior." "For nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord!"

I pray we all have a Holy Lent. I pray we are filled with more of His Holy Spirit and each of us joins together in the Body of Christ, His Church, to remember and honor and worship His ageless sacrifice that keeps giving us that perfect and undefeatable hope. His Peace be with you all.

Love in Christ,

Fr. Joe

Saturday Morning, February 28 at 9:30 a.m.

Join us for the

## Hour of Power Prayer

in the Sanctuary

Come pray for the church, our communities and the world.

Don't Forget to sign up for the Stand Up For Kids Meal to be served on Wednesday, February 25th. There is a list of what is needed available on the Welcome Table. Please help with this ministry of helps to homeless teens.

From the Diocese-

Catechetical Academy. Six Saturdays in Lent held at Christ the King's offices in San Diego from 9:00 a.m. to 12 P.m.

They will begin with Morning Prayer, then have a content time, then have a time for the catechists to pray together. Please contact Fr. Brian Hughes for complete schedule

rev.brian.hughes@gmail.com

## Soup Suppers in Lent

We have the soups planned for each week and we encourage you to sign up for one of the recipes, take it home and make it for the following week.

The soups are from a Monastery Cookbook.

They are easy to make and delicious to eat.

## **This Week at Grace**

**February 17, 2015—February 24, 2015**

### **Tues. February 17**

11:30 a.m. Bible Study  
6-7:30 p.m. Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

### **Wed. February 18**

6:10 a.m. Br. Benno's Team  
10:00 a.m. Ash Wednesday Service  
with Imposition of ashes  
2—4 p.m. Fr. Joe & Pastor Kathleen will hear  
confessions.  
Please make an appointment.  
7:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday Service  
with imposition of ashes

### **Thurs. February 19**

7:00 a.m. Bible Study  
10:30 a.m. Sr. Women's Bible Study  
4:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

### **Fri. February 20**

Fr. Joe's Day off  
6:30 p.m. Evening Prayer & Healing

### **Sat. February 21**

8:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship

### **Sun. February 22, 2015**

#### **First Sunday in Lent**

9:15 a.m. Nursery opens  
9:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist Service  
9:30 a.m. Children's Church  
11:15 a.m. Coffee and Fellowship

### **Mon. February 23, 2015**

### **Tues. February 24 2015**

11:30 a.m. Bible Study  
6:30 p.m. Lenten Soup Supper  
7:00 p.m. Lenten Teaching  
Video by Bishop John Guernsey  
On Prayer (Will be repeated on  
Wednesday at 2:00 p.m.)

**Grace Anglican Church  
760-730-9900**

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### **Bible Readings for February 15, 2015**

Genesis 9:8-17

Psalm 25:3-9

1 Peter 3:18-22

Mark 1:9-13

Our readings come from the Lectionary in the  
Book of Common Prayer. We are in year B.

## **Sunday Servers**

<b>February 22, 2015</b>	<b>First Sunday in Lent</b>	<b>9:30 a.m. Service</b>
First Reader	Genesis 9:8-17	Myrna Lipnicke
Psalm Reader	Psalm 25:3-9	John Lipnicke
Second Reader	1 Peter 3:18-22	Dick Sholly
Intercessor/Acolyte		David Archer
Lay Euch. Ministers		Dick Phelps, Trish Stewart
Sub-Deacon		Bill Laitinen
Early Intercessors		Thor Strom, Richard Rieder
Welcomers		Paula Sholly, Myrna Lipnicke
Ushers		Dick Sholly
Vestry Person of Day		Holden Howell
Healing Ministers		Kay and Alfred Focke,
Counters		Cline Handy, Helen Reid