

Ash Wednesday by Simon Foster

Last years palm crosses  
Brought in by the faithful  
Burned crosses  
Turned to black ash  
To mix with water  
To use to trace the cross  
On the forehead  
For the start of Lent  
Ash Wednesday  
The priest says  
As ash is 'imposed'  
"Remember you are dust  
And to dust you shall return"  
Seems a miserable line!  
But not at all  
Life giving  
In other words  
'Put all your worries  
Put all your selfish ambitions  
Put all your possessions  
All your comforts  
Into perspective"  
The human being  
Says mysterious faith  
Has Eternal destiny  
To live forever  
We, to be nurtured in this  
To prepare for  
These eternal 'habitations'  
Eternal forever bliss  
There is this life  
Seen as part of eternity, forever life  
So often our lives  
Our priorities, our concerns  
Are not to do with the eternal  
Yet it is fostered in and through human life and care of creation  
NOW,  
Quality lasting love  
Quality lasting justice  
Lasting peace  
Lasting real quality Life  
Encounter with God, Mystery  
Deepening spiritual life  
Deepening love of the sacred

The ash is to say  
Remember these healthy priorities  
Not the transitory  
Work at things  
That matter, can be lasting  
Participate in bringing in love NOW  
Participate in bringing in justice NOW  
Participate in bringing in peace NOW  
Participate in growing in knowledge of God, Mystery NOW  
Participate in growing in living out good spiritual values NOW  
To make life, your life, others  
The rest of creation  
So much better  
These things matter eternally  
The size of our house, car  
The size of our pension and pension plan  
Getting and having the 'right' job  
All kind of matter  
But don't matter in the end at all  
People matter, God matters, we matter  
The animals and the Universe/s matter  
The eternal matters  
Which begins in this life!  
The ash cries out  
Concentrate on what is important  
Work at love, justice and peace  
Growing in knowledge and experience of depth, Mystery  
Happy Lent my friend  
Happy Ash Wednesday  
Priorities are being challenged!  
How will we respond?