

Last Sunday after the Epiphany

[2 Kings 2:1-12](#)

[Psalm 50:1-6](#)

[2 Corinthians 4:3-6](#)

[Mark 9:2-9](#)



St. Matthew's Cathedral eNews

Christ + Compassion + Community

From the Dean

Are You Ready to Live . . . Are You Ready to Die?

I am writing this with Ash Wednesday on my mind. I confess that I get a "catch" in my throat every time this year when I put ashes on the foreheads of each of my children and tell them, "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return."

Ash Wednesday reminds us of our own death. I suspect that most of us share Woody Allen's attitude about death: "I don't mind death so much; I'd just rather not be there when it happens." I preached at and assisted at a funeral two weeks ago of a former parishioner, "CC," in Fredericksburg. She was 88 years old and lived life fully to the last minute. Her body was discovered by her daughter who was in town for a visit. This dear woman fell asleep, literally. Five feet away was her kitchen/dining area—it is an old "Sunday House." The table was set for a party with several friends. The table was beautifully set, and on top of each plate was a letter that CC had written telling them how much they meant to her.

The old prayer book had a prayer, "Deliver us from dying suddenly and unprepared." Lent is God's way of helping us to prepare for our death. . .so that we can live authentic lives. The Psalmist said it wisely, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." (Psalm 90:12) CC certainly died suddenly. She did not die unprepared.

Only if you're ready to die can you be really ready to live. I pray that you will go deep this Lent and further prepare yourself both to die and to live..

