



Father Danny Murphy is a retired Pastor from Brooklyn NY. A gifted man with a God given talent to inspire and God's gift to us at Holy Cross Church in Vero Beach Florida. This is just one of his inspirational homilies.

Fr. Danny Murphy – ASH WEDNESDAY – 2018

With the help and the grace of God, each of us today has the challenge of discerning what is the best way for me to spend this Lent – Lent 2018. What's the best way for me to spend the next forty days? In addition to whatever you may discern as the best way for you to spend this Lent? Allow me to add to that something else you might consider. This Lent, face death! Face it square ahead – face your death. The ashes on our forehead today are a reminder that someday, when we die, we, our bodies are going to be ashes – whether actually or through cremation, our bodies are going to be ashes. Today, that cross of ashes on our forehead is a reminder of that – that we are going to be ashes. Now, back in the day, well, lookin' around – you're all too young to remember this, but back in the day there was only one prayer that accompanies the imposition of ashes, now there are several choices.

Back then, this is what you heard: "Remember that you are dust, and unto dust you shall return." My recommendation for all of us this Lent is to indeed remember that: to face our death head on. You know, that every time we pray the creed, we say these words: "I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come." Do you look forward to that or are you afraid of that? In my experience as a priest, I have been so blessed to be with many people who were facing death, who were quite sick and whose death, in all probability, was imminent. The people who accepted that: that they indeed they were close to their death, those people were filled with a calm, with serenity. And when their time came, they died a peaceful death, because they weren't afraid of it – they accepted it. Those people who were near death but who weren't at peace with it, who didn't accept it; no matter what prayers I said, no matter what words I said, I couldn't bring them peace. They died filled with turmoil. Why wait until we're near death to face death? My suggestion is to face death – your death, this Lent! Starting today, when the ashes that you'll see in the mirror on your forehead and that you'll see on the foreheads of all of us who are in church, a reminder: "That's going to be me someday and I'm okay with that..." As Jesus told us, and it really applies to facing your death: "Fear is USELESS, what is needed is TRUST!"