Ash Wednesday: A Time to Remember

By Sister Delia Calis, SSND

Ash Wednesday is here again, again inviting us once more into the paschal journey. The cross traced in ashes upon my forehead is one with the cross of Jesus Christ. The Word Remember etches itself deep into my heart.

One by one, child with parent, young and old
Some with eagerness, others yoked heavy with pain:
The faithful walk up the aisle ready to be signed with dust.
There is a certain comfort in the age-old signing.
God is always with us, saving, healing.
It is we who move away.

Remember who you are:
creature loved and cherished, beloved child of God,
baptized, grafted into my body;
sinner redeemed through my fidelity and love.
Child of God, breathed into with my spirit.
I have called you by name, you are Mine.

As you come through the dry desert sands,
blowing and dark,
blinding:
Remember!
I brought you through the raging waters of sea
safe and sure,
from slavery to freedom
from bondage to liberation
from death to life.

Remember!
I am who I am.

Always here, ever present.

Do not let this slip from your heart
like morning mist
to be tossed about upon stormy waters.

I am who I am:
I walk upon this earth.
My footprints mark every land.
You have seen and believed.
Hold sacred in memory my loving embrace.
Celebrate around my altar my mercy,
my compassionate love.
Do this in memory of me
and you will live my gift
of universal communion.

Lent is a time of remembering who has walked our road before us.

Jesus knows the winding path, the deep valleys, crucifixion and death because He has been there, is there now and will always be. We do not walk alone.

Love pours out, faithful through death, showing us the way of transformation: Not responding in kind to hatred and rejection; meeting violence with forgiveness and compassionate love.

Remember those moments of closeness with God, when you smiled into God's face and knew you were precious. Remember and have hope. Remember and love again.