

# PRAYER FOR ASH WEDNESDAY 2011

**God of compassion and justice**

**We offer our prayers for the communities of West Yorkshire;**

**We give thanks**

**That they are places of belonging and welcome  
And for the countless ways in which the needs of each person are met  
through the commitment, gifts and skills of others.**

**Forgive us we pray,**

**When we take the work of others for granted;  
When we diminish the value of human life;  
When we fail to treat all people with the respect which they deserve;  
When we forget our need of one another;  
When we forget the needs of the poor among us;  
When our own desire for status or security dulls our senses,  
closes our ears, blinkers our sight;**

**Gift us with vision, we pray,**

**To see the world around us with new eyes;  
To recognise the light of your presence in every person;  
To discern Godly wisdom in the midst of hard human choices;**

**Attune our listening, we pray,**

**To hear the cries of those deprived of work,  
and of those bearing the burden of working long hours;  
To know the anger and the angst of people who feel pushed to the margins  
by those with wealth and power;  
To catch the whispers of our neighbours who feel they have been silenced,  
whilst others shout more loudly;**

**Give us courage, we pray,**

**To stand alongside those in greatest need;  
To challenge easy solutions and false assumptions;  
To work in partnership with others where we can make a difference together.**

**God of justice and compassion,**

**As, on this day, we face the truth  
that we are made of dust and to dust we shall return,  
Re-mind us of the common humanity that we share;  
Re-kindle your compassion in our hearts;  
Strengthen our resolve to live more generous lives;  
Re-tune us to your deep wisdom amidst the responsibilities that we hold  
and the choices that we make,**

**That we might seek to walk in the way of Christ,  
and remain true to our calling, even through the wilderness.**

**We ask this, and all our unspoken prayers, in the name of Christ, Amen.**