

## ASH WEDNESDAY

### ENTRANCE HYMN

1. God of mercy and compassion,  
Look with pity upon me,  
Father, let me call Thee Father,  
'Tis Thy child returns to Thee.  
  
Jesus, Lord, I ask for mercy;  
Let me not implore in vain;  
All my sins, I now detest them,  
Never will I sin again.
2. See our Savior, bleeding, dying,  
On the cross of Calvary;  
To that cross my sins have nail'd Him,  
Yet He bleeds and dies for me.



### FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Joel  
Let your hearts be broken, not your garments torn.

'Now, now - it is the Lord who speaks –  
come back to me with all your heart,  
fasting, weeping, mourning.'  
Let your hearts be broken not your garments torn,  
turn to the Lord your God again,  
for he is all tenderness and compassion,  
slow to anger, rich in graciousness,  
and ready to relent.

Who knows if he will not turn again, will not relent,  
will not leave a blessing as he passes,  
oblation and libation  
for the Lord your God?

Sound the trumpet in Zion!

Order a fast,  
proclaim a solemn assembly,  
call the people together,  
summon the community,  
assemble the elders,  
gather the children,  
even the infants at the breast.

Let the bridegroom leave his bedroom  
and the bride her alcove.

Between vestibule and altar let the priests,  
the ministers of the Lord, lament.

Let them say,

'Spare your people, Lord!

Do not make your heritage a thing of shame,  
a byword for the nations.

Why should it be said among the nations,  
"Where is their God?"'

Then the Lord, jealous on behalf of his land,  
took pity on his people.

The word of the Lord.



### RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 50:3-6.12-14.17.R) v.3

- R. Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned
1. Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.  
In your compassion blot out my offence.  
O wash me more and more from my guilt  
and cleanse me from my sin. (R.)
  2. My offences truly I know them;  
my sin is always before me.  
Against you, you alone, have I sinned:  
what is evil in your sight I have done. (R.)

3. A pure heart create for me, O God,  
put a steadfast spirit within me.  
Do not cast me away from your presence,  
nor deprive me of your holy spirit. (R.)
4. Give me again the joy of your help;  
with a spirit of fervour sustain me.  
O Lord, open my lips  
and my mouth shall declare your praise. (R.)

### SECOND READING

A reading from the second letter of St. Paul to the  
Corinthians 5:20-6:2  
Be reconciled to God.....now is the favourable time.

We are ambassadors for Christ; it is as though God were  
appealing through us, and the appeal that we make in  
Christ's name is: be reconciled to God. For our sake  
God made the sinless one into sin, so that in him we  
might become the goodness of God. As his fellow  
workers, we beg you once again not to neglect the grace  
of God that you have received. For he says: At the  
favourable time, I have listened to you; on the day of  
salvation I came to your help. Well, now is the  
favourable time; this is the day of salvation.

The word of the Lord.

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Ps 50:12. 14

Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!  
A pure heart create for me, O God,  
and give me again the joy of your help.  
Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!

### GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew  
6:1-6, 16-18  
Your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.

Jesus said to his disciples:

'Be careful not to parade your good deeds before  
men to attract their notice; by doing this you will lose all  
reward from your Father in heaven. So when you give  
alms, do not have it trumpeted before you; this is what  
the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to  
win men's admiration. I tell you solemnly, they have had  
their reward. But when you give alms, your left hand  
must not know what your right is doing; your almsgiving  
must be secret, and your Father who sees all that is  
done in secret will reward you.

'And when you pray, do not imitate the hypocrites:  
they love to say their prayers standing up in the  
synagogues and at the street corners for people to see  
them. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward.  
But when you pray go to your private room and, when  
you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in  
that secret place, and your Father who sees all that is  
done in secret will reward you.

'When you fast do not put on a gloomy look as the  
hypocrites do: they pull long faces to let men know they  
are fasting. I tell you solemnly, they have had their  
reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and  
wash your face, so that no one will know you are fasting  
except your Father who sees all that is done in secret;  
and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will  
reward you.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

