

# 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.



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.)

## FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Joel 2:12-18  
*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.)

## 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!

## 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



