Office of Readings

Monday, February 23, 2043

Saint Polycarp, Bishop and Martyr

OPENING

O God, come to my assistance.

Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

INVITATORY

Ant. Come, let us adore Christ, who for our sake bore the cross and conquered death.

Come, let us exult in the Lord; let us shout with joy to God our salvation.

Let us come before his face with praise and exult in him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God and a great king above all gods.

For the Lord does not cast off his people; for in his hand are all the ends of the earth.

And the heights of the mountains belong to him.

For the sea is his, and he made it; and his hands formed the dry land.

Come, let us adore and fall down before God; let us weep before the Lord who made us.

For he is the Lord our God; and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.

Today, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

As in the provocation, according to the day of temptation in the wilderness,

where your fathers tempted me; they tried me and saw my works.

For forty years I was close to this generation, and I said: "They always err in heart."

And these people have not known my ways, so I swore in my wrath that they will not enter into my rest.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Ant. Come, let us adore Christ, who for our sake bore the cross and conquered death.

HYMN

Again We Keep This Solemn Fast

> Again we keep this solemn fast,
> a gift of faith from ages past,
> this Lent which binds us lovingly
> to faith and hope and charity.

Psalm 25 *A Prayer of Trust*

> *Ant. Have mercy on me, O God, in your great kindness.*

To you, O Lord, I have lifted up my soul. My God, I trust in you; let me not be confounded.

Let not my enemies laugh at me; for all those who endure you will not be confounded.

Let all who act iniquity without cause be confounded.

O Lord, show your ways to me, and teach me your paths.

Direct me in your truth and teach me; for you are the God of my salvation, and for you I have waited all day long.

Remember, O Lord, your compassion and your mercies, which have been from the beginning.

Do not remember the sins of my youth and my ignorances.

Remember me according to your mercy, for the sake of your goodness, O Lord.

The Lord is sweet and righteous; therefore he will give a law to those who are sinning on the way.

He will direct the mild in judgment; he will teach the meek his ways.

All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth for those who seek his covenant and his testimonies.

For the sake of your name, O Lord, you will pardon my sin, for it is great.

Who is the man who fears the Lord? He has appointed him a law in the way he has chosen.

His soul will dwell in good things, and his seed will inherit the earth.

The Lord is a firmament to those who fear him, and his covenant will be revealed to them.

My eyes are always toward the Lord; for he will pluck my feet from the snare.

Look upon me and have mercy on me; for I am alone and poor.

The troubles of my heart have been multiplied; deliver me from my necessities.

See my humility and my labor, and release all my offenses.

Consider my enemies, for they have been multiplied and they have hated me with an unjust hatred.

Guard my soul and rescue me; let me not be confounded, for I have hoped in you.

The innocent and the upright have adhered to me, because I have waited for you.

Deliver Israel, O God, from all his tribulations.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

> *Ant. Have mercy on me, O God, in your great kindness.*

Psalm 26 *The Lord Is My Light*

> *Ant. Have mercy on me, O God, in your great kindness.*

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom will I fear? The Lord is the protector of my life; from whom will I tremble?

While the wicked approach me to eat my flesh: those who trouble me, my enemies, they themselves have been weakened and have fallen.

If armies stand against me, my heart will not fear. If battle rises up against me, in this I will hope.

One thing have I asked of the Lord, this will I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.

That I may see the delight of the Lord and may visit his temple.

For he has hidden me in his tabernacle in the day of evils; he has protected me in the hidden place of his tabernacle.

He has exalted me on a rock, and now he has lifted up my head above my enemies.

I have gone around and I have immolated in his tabernacle a sacrifice of jubilation; I will sing and play a psalm to the Lord.

Hear, O Lord, my voice with which I have cried out; have mercy on me and hear me.

My heart has said to you: "My face has sought you." Your face, O Lord, I will seek.

Do not turn your face away from me; do not decline in anger from your servant.

Be my helper; do not forsake me and do not despise me, O God my Savior.

For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the Lord has taken me up.

O Lord, appoint me a law in your way and guide me along the right path, because of my enemies.

Do not hand me over to the souls of those who trouble me; for unjust witnesses have risen up against me, and iniquity has lied to itself.

I believe that I will see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living.

Wait for the Lord, act manfully, and let your heart be strengthened, and wait for the Lord.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

> *Ant. Have mercy on me, O God, in your great kindness.*

Psalm 27 *Confidence in God*

> *Ant. Have mercy on me, O God, in your great kindness.*

To you, O Lord, I will cry out; O my God, do not be silent before me. Lest you be silent before me, and I become like those who descend into the pit.

Hear, O Lord, the voice of my supplication, as I pray to you, as I lift up my hands toward your holy temple.

Do not draw me away together with sinners and with those who work iniquity; who speak peace with their neighbors, but evils are in their hearts.

Give them according to their works and according to the wickedness of their inventions.

According to the works of their hands, give to them; repay them what they deserve.

For they have not understood the works of the Lord and the works of his hands.

You will destroy them and will not build them up.

Blessed is the Lord, for he has heard the voice of my supplication.

The Lord is my helper and my protector; in him my heart has hoped, and I have been helped.

And my flesh has flourished again; and with my will I will confess to him.

The Lord is the strength of his people and the protector of the salvation of his Christ.

Save your people, O Lord, and bless your inheritance, and govern them and exalt them forever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

> *Ant. Have mercy on me, O God, in your great kindness.*

FIRST READING: SCRIPTURE

JOEL 2:12-13

Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.

RESPONSORY

V. Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love.
R. Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love.
V. According to the multitude of your tender mercies,
R. blot out my transgressions.

SECOND READING: PATRISTIC OR HAGIOGRAPHIC

Saint John Chrysostom

On Fasting, Sermon 1

The Purpose of Fasting

> Do you want to honor the fast? Then do not merely abstain from food, but purify your soul from sin. Leave off doing evil; cease from anger; put away wrath; tear up false accusations; do not deliver yourself to envy. Do not eat flesh only, but eat not the flesh of your brother by means of calumny; do not drink wine, but drink not the blood of your neighbor by means of outrage and unjust judgment. Do these things and you will have truly fasted with a fast acceptable to God. Fasting is for this reason: to humiliate the body, to bridle lust, to tame passion, to set the mind free for prayer. For nothing sharpens the mind for the understanding of spiritual things as much as fasting. Fasting is a physician; it heals diseases of the soul; it puts to flight the spirit of pride; it purges us of the dross of earthly affections. With fasting, prayer reaches heaven more readily; fasting and prayer together are as two wings that lift up the soul.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Lord, in this holy season grant us the grace to hear your word with penitent hearts and to be transformed by what we hear; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Let us praise the Lord.
And give him thanks.