Office of Readings

Thursday, February 26, 2004

After Ash Wednesday — Thursday

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.

PSALMODY

Psalm 13 *The Fool Who Denies God*

> *Ant. Turn to me, O Lord, and have mercy on me.*

The fool has said in his heart: "There is no God." They are corrupt and have become abominable in their ways; there is no one who does good, not even one.

The Lord has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men, to see if there is anyone who understands or seeks God.

They have all turned aside; together they have become useless; there is no one who does good, not even one.

Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have acted deceitfully; the poison of asps is under their lips.

Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood.

Destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace they have not known; there is no fear of God before their eyes.

Will all those who work iniquity not come to know it? They consume my people like food.

They have not called upon the Lord; therefore they trembled there with fear, where there was no fear.

For the Lord is in the just generation; you have confounded the counsel of the poor man, because the Lord is his hope.

Who will give from Zion the salvation of Israel? When the Lord will have brought back the captivity of his people, Jacob will rejoice, and Israel will be glad.

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. Turn to me, O Lord, and have mercy on me.*

Psalm 14 *The Guest of God*

> *Ant. Turn to me, O Lord, and have mercy on me.*

O Lord, who will dwell in your tabernacle? Or who will rest in your holy mountain?

He who enters without blemish and who works justice.

He who speaks truth in his heart, who has not acted deceitfully with his tongue, nor has done evil to his neighbor, nor has accepted a reproach against his neighbors.

In his sight the malign is brought to nothing, but he glorifies those who fear the Lord.

He who swears to his neighbor and does not deceive him;

he who has not given his money out at interest, and has not accepted bribes against the innocent.

Whoever does these things will not be moved 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. Turn to me, O Lord, and have mercy on me.*

Psalm 15 *God Is My Inheritance*

> *Ant. Turn to me, O Lord, and have mercy on me.*

Preserve me, O Lord, for I have hoped in you.

I have said to the Lord: "You are my God, for you have no need of my good things."

But for the saints who are in his land, he has made all my desires wonderful in them.

Their infirmities have been multiplied; afterward they hastened.

I will not gather together their convocations of blood, nor will I be mindful of their names through my lips.

The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and my cup; it is you who will restore my inheritance to me.

The boundaries have fallen to me in excellent places; for my inheritance is excellent to me.

I will bless the Lord who has given me understanding; moreover my reins have also corrected me, even until night.

I had foresight of the Lord in my sight always; for he is at my right hand, so that I will not be moved.

Because of this, my heart has rejoiced, and my tongue has exulted, and moreover, my flesh will rest in hope.

For you will not abandon my soul to hell, nor will you allow your holy one to see corruption.

You have made known to me the ways of life; you will fill me with joy with your face; at your right hand are delights even to the end.

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. Turn to me, O Lord, and have mercy on me.*

FIRST READING: SCRIPTURE

PSALM 34:18

The Lord is near to the brokenhearted, and saves the crushed in spirit.

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 Leo the Great

Sermon 6 on Lent

The Works of Lent

> The paschal feast is at hand, dearly beloved, calling us to renewed observance. The fasting of Lent prepares us for the holy days of our redemption. There are three things, dearly beloved, which principally belong to religious devotion, namely prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, in the exercise of which while every time is accepted, yet that ought more especially to be kept which we have received as handed down to us by apostolic institution. For we are summoned to more fervent observance of these things by the sacredness of this season. Now we must give more time to prayer, be more ready to fast, more generous in almsgiving. Let not him who has more spare time in prayer fail to intercede for others. Let not him who is well-bodied fail to afflict his body. Let not him who has wealth withhold charity. Let Lent be a time of genuine conversion, not merely a performance of exterior acts but a deep turning of the heart to God.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Lord, as we read and pray today, soften our hearts. Where we are proud, make us humble; where we are hard, make us tender; where we are cold, set us on fire with your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Let us praise the Lord.
And give him thanks.