Office of Readings

Saturday, March 20, 2004

Lent, Week 3 — Saturday

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 80 *Sing to God Our Strength*

> *Ant. Do not forsake me, O Lord; be not far from me, O my God.*

Rejoice to God our helper; shout with jubilation to the God of Jacob.

Take up a psalm and give a drum, a pleasant psaltery with a harp.

Blow the trumpet at the new moon, on the notable day of your solemnity.

For it is a precept in Israel, and a judgment for the God of Jacob.

He established it as a testimony in Joseph, when he went out from the land of Egypt.

He heard a tongue which he did not know; he removed his back from burdens.

His hands were serving in baskets.

You called out in tribulation, and I freed you; I heard you in the hidden place of the storm.

I tested you at the waters of contradiction.

Hear, my people, and I will testify against you; O Israel, if you will hear me,

there will be no new god among you, and you will not adore a foreign god.

For I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt; open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.

But my people did not hear my voice, and Israel was not obedient to me.

And so I dismissed them according to the desires of their heart; they will walk in their own inventions.

If only my people had heard me; if only Israel had walked in my ways!

I would have humbled their enemies as almost nothing, and upon those who troubled them I would have sent my hand.

The enemies of the Lord have lied to him, and their time will be forever.

And he fed them from the fat of the wheat, and filled them with honey from the rock.

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. Do not forsake me, O Lord; be not far from me, O my God.*

Psalm 81 *The Judge of the Gods*

> *Ant. Do not forsake me, O Lord; be not far from me, O my God.*

God has stood in the assembly of gods, and, being in their midst, he judges gods.

"How long will you judge unjustly and accept the persons of the wicked?"

"Judge for the poor and the orphan; give justice to the humble and the poor."

"Rescue the poor and the needy; free him from the hand of the sinner."

They have not known and have not understood; they walk about in darkness; all the foundations of the earth will be shaken.

I said: "You are gods, and all of you are sons of the Most High."

"But you will die like men, and you will fall like one of the princes."

Rise up, O God, judge the earth; for you will inherit among all the nations.

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. Do not forsake me, O Lord; be not far from me, O my God.*

Psalm 82 *A Prayer Against Enemies*

> *Ant. Do not forsake me, O Lord; be not far from me, O my God.*

O God, who will be like you? Do not be silent, and do not be appeased, O God.

For behold, your enemies have made a noise, and those who hate you have lifted up the head.

They have acted with malice in counsel against your people, and they have deliberated against your holy ones.

They have said: "Come, let us dissipate them from the nations, and let the name of Israel no longer be remembered."

For they have deliberated unanimously; they have made a covenant together against you:

the tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; Moab and the Hagarenes,

Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek; the foreigners together with the inhabitants of Tyre.

For Assur also has come with them; they have become a support for the sons of Lot.

Do to them as you have done to Midian and Sisera, as to Jabin at the brook of Kishon.

They perished at En-dor; they became like the dung of the earth.

Place their rulers as Oreb and Zeeb, and Zebah and Zalmunna; all their leaders,

who have said: "Let us gain possession of the sanctuary of God for an inheritance."

My God, make them like a wheel, and like stubble before the wind.

Like a fire that burns a wood, and like a flame burning mountains:

so will you pursue them with your tempest, and disturb them in your wrath.

Fill their faces with shame, and they will seek your name, O Lord.

Let them be ashamed and troubled forever and ever; and let them be confounded and perish.

And let them know that the Lord is your name; you alone are the Most High over all the earth.

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. Do not forsake me, O Lord; be not far from me, O my God.*

FIRST READING: SCRIPTURE

EZEKIEL 36:26

A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

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 Augustine of Hippo

Confessions, Book 1

Our Heart Is Restless

> You made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you. Grant me, Lord, to know and understand which of these two is the first: to call on you or to praise you; and, again, first to know you or to call on you. But who calls on you when he does not know you? For, not knowing you, he might call on another instead of you. Or are you called on in order that you may be known? But how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe without a preacher? And those who seek the Lord shall praise him: for those who seek shall find him, and those who find shall praise him. I will seek you, Lord, and call upon your name. And if I am wrong in what I seek, do you, Lord, correct me; if I am right, grant me what I seek. For you yourself are my life, my light, my strength, my food, my rest, my joy, my all. I will seek you, and my seeking shall be to you, O Lord, a prayer; for you call on us to seek you.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

O Lord, the way of the cross is the way of life. May this Office of Readings prepare our hearts to walk that way in union with your Son; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Let us praise the Lord.
And give him thanks.