Office of Readings

Monday, March 18, 2058

Saint Cyril of Jerusalem, Bishop and Doctor

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 46 *The Great King Over All the Earth*

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

All you nations clap your hands; shout to God with a voice of jubilation.

For the Lord Most High is terrible; he is a great king over all the earth.

He has subdued peoples under us and nations under our feet.

He has chosen for us his inheritance, the beauty of Jacob which he has loved.

God has ascended with jubilation and the Lord with the voice of the trumpet.

Sing praises to our God, sing praises; sing praises to our king, sing praises.

For God is the king of all the earth; sing wisely.

God will reign over the nations; God sits on his holy throne.

The rulers of the people have gathered together with the God of Abraham.

For the mighty ones of the earth have been greatly exalted; he is the shield of 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. Have mercy on me, O God, in your great kindness.*

Psalm 47 *The City of the Great King*

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

Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised, in the city of our God, on his holy mountain.

With the joy of the whole earth, Mount Zion will be founded, on the sides of the north, the city of the great king.

In her houses God will be known, when he takes her under his protection.

For behold, kings of the earth assembled together; they gathered as one.

They saw and were astonished; they were troubled and were moved.

Trembling took hold of them; there were pains like those of a woman in labor.

By a violent wind you will break the ships of Tarshish.

As we have heard, so we have seen, in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God.

God has founded it forever.

We have received your mercy, O God, in the midst of your temple.

According to your name, O God, so also is your praise unto the ends of the earth; your right hand is full of justice.

Let Mount Zion rejoice and the daughters of Judah be glad, because of your judgments, O Lord.

Surround Zion and embrace her; speak in her towers.

Set your hearts on her strength and distribute her houses, so that you may tell it in another generation.

For this is God, our God, unto eternity and beyond eternity; he will govern us 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.*

Psalm 48 *The Folly of Trusting in Riches*

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

Hear these things, all you nations; give ear, all you inhabitants of the world.

All sons of earth and sons of man, rich and poor together.

My mouth will speak wisdom, and the meditation of my heart will speak understanding.

I will incline my ear to a parable; I will open my proposition on the harp.

Why should I fear in the evil day? The iniquity of my heel will surround me.

Those who trust in their own strength and who glory in the multitude of their riches:

a brother does not redeem, will a man redeem? He will not give God his expiation,

nor the price of the redemption of his soul; and he will labor continually

and will still live to the end.

He will not see destruction, when he sees the wise dying.

The fool and the senseless will perish together, and they will leave their riches to strangers.

And their sepulchres will be their houses forever, their tabernacles throughout all generations.

They have called their lands by their own names.

And man, when he was in honor, did not understand; he has been compared to senseless beasts, and made like them.

This way of theirs has been a scandal to them, and afterward they will praise with their mouth.

Like sheep they have been placed in hell; death will feed on them.

And the just will have power over them in the morning, and their help will grow old in hell for their glory.

Yet truly God will redeem my soul from the hand of hell, when he receives me.

Do not fear when a man will have been made rich and when the glory of his house will be multiplied.

For when he dies, he will take nothing with him, and his glory will not descend with him.

For his soul will be blessed in his life; he will confess to you when you have done well for him.

He will enter into the generations of his fathers; he will never see light.

Man, when he was in honor, did not understand; he has been compared to senseless beasts, and made like them.

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.