

ASH WEDNESDAY

*"Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me."*

Psalm 51:11

PRELUDE

Meditation on "*Southwell*" (Lasky)

O Love That Will Not Let Me Go (Heastings)

THE PENITENTIAL RITE

PSALM 51 - read responsively (pastor/**congregation**)

¹Have mercy on me O God, according to your loving kindness;
in your great compassion blot out my offenses.

²**Wash me through and through from my wickedness,
and cleanse me from my sin.**

³For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.

⁴**Against you only have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight.**

⁵And so you are justified when you speak
and upright in your judgment.

⁶**Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth,
a sinner from my mother's womb.**

⁷For behold, you look for truth deep within me,
and will make me understand wisdom secretly.

⁸**Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure;
wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.**

⁹Make me hear of joy and gladness,
that the body you have broken may rejoice.

¹⁰**Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.**

¹¹Create in me a clean heart O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.

**¹²Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.**

¹³Give me the joy of your saving help again
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.

**¹⁴I shall teach your ways to the wicked,
and sinners shall return to you.**

¹⁵Deliver me from death O God,
and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness, O God of my salvation.

**¹⁶Open my lips, O Lord,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

¹⁷Had you desired it, I would have offered sacrifice,
but you take no delight in burnt-offerings.

**¹⁸The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit;
a broken and contrite heart O God, you will not despise.**

EXHORTATION

P Brothers and sisters: God created us to experience joy in communion with him, to love all humanity, and to live in harmony with all of his creation. But sin separates us from God, our neighbors, and creation, and so we do not enjoy the life our Creator intended for us. Also, by our sin we grieve our Father, who does not desire us to come under his judgment, but to turn to him and live.

As disciples of the Lord Jesus we are called to struggle against everything that leads us away from love of God and neighbor. Repentance, fasting, prayer, and works of love--the discipline of Lent--help us to wage our spiritual warfare. I invite you, therefore, to commit yourselves to this struggle and confess your sins, asking our Father for strength to persevere in your Lenten discipline.

CONFESSION

P Most holy and merciful Father:

C **We confess to you and to one another, and to the whole communion of saints in heaven and on earth, that we have sinned by our own fault in thought, word, and deed; by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others, as we have been forgiven.**

P Have mercy on us, Lord.

C **We have been deaf to your call to serve as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.**

P Have mercy on us, Lord.

C **We confess to you, Lord, all our past unfaithfulness. The pride, hypocrisy, and impatience in our lives,**

P we confess to you, Lord.

C **Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people,**

P We confess to you, Lord.

C **Our anger at our own frustration, and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,**

P We confess to you, Lord.

C **Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonesty in daily life and work,**

P We confess to you, Lord.

C **Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,**

P we confess to you, Lord.

C Accept our repentance, Lord, for the wrongs we have done.
For our blindness to human need and suffering, and our
indifference to injustice and cruelty,

P Accept our repentance, Lord.

C For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our
neighbors, and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who
differ from us,

P Accept our repentance, Lord.

C For our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of
concern for those who come after us,

P Accept our repentance, Lord.

C Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us.

P Hear us, Lord, for your mercy is great. Amen.

C Amen

Please be seated

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray. Almighty and ever-living God, you hate nothing you
have made and you forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in
us new and honest hearts, so that, truly repenting of our sins, we may
obtain from you, the God of all mercy, full pardon and forgiveness;
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with
you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen

+WORD+

FIRST READING: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

¹Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming, it is near-- ²a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness spread upon the mountains a great and powerful army comes; their like has never been from of old, nor will be again after them in ages to come.

¹²Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; ¹³rend 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, and relents from punishing. ¹⁴Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the LORD, your God?

¹⁵Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; ¹⁶gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her canopy. ¹⁷Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep. Let them say, "Spare your people, O LORD, and do not make your heritage a mockery, a byword among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'"

The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 5:20b--6: 10

^{20b}We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.^{6:1}As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. ²For he says, "At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you."

See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation!³We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, ⁴but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, ⁵beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; ⁶by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, ⁷truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; ⁸in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; ⁹as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see--we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; ¹⁰as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Please stand

HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Jesus said to the disciples: ¹"Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. ²"So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ³But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

⁵"And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ⁶But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

¹⁶"And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ¹⁷But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

¹⁹"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God!

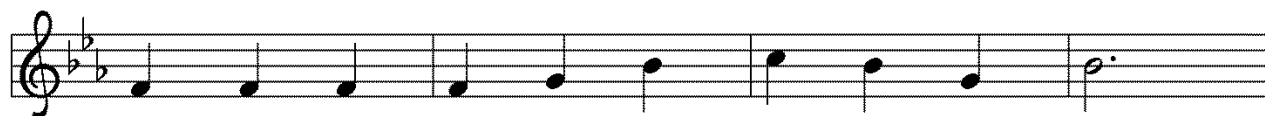
Please be seated.

HOMILY

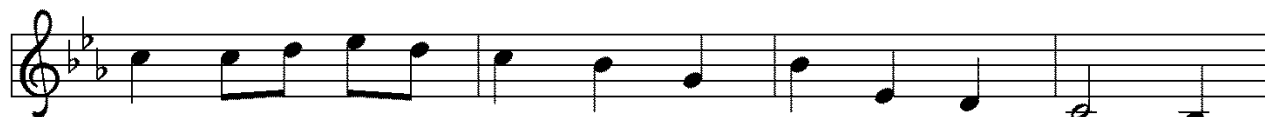
Silence for reflection



1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;
 2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;
 3 Rich - es I heed not, nor vain, emp - ty praise,
 4 Light of my soul, af - ter vic - to - ry won,



naught be all else to me, save that thou art:
 I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord.
 thou mine in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways:
 may I reach heav - en's joys, O heav - en's Sun!



thou my best thought both by day and by night,
 Thou my soul's shel - ter, and thou my high tow'r,
 thou and thou on - ly, the first in my heart,
 Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,



wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.
 raise thou me heav'n - ward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.
 great God of heav - en, my trea - sure thou art.
 still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

Text: Irish, 8th cent.; vers. Eleanor H. Hull, 1860–1935, alt.; tr. Mary E. Byrne, 1880–1931
 Music: SLANE, Irish traditional

APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again.

**He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen**

THE PRAYERS

A The Lenten journey leads us to repentance and new life. Let us turn our hearts to God, who is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.

A brief silence.

A Let us pray for the whole church, that strengthened by the disciplines of Lent we turn from sin to find joy and abundant new life in forgiveness. (*Silence for prayer.*) Lord, in your mercy,

C **Hear our prayer.**

- A Let us pray for the nations of the world, that leaders seek peace and justice for all people over desires for personal power or status.
(Silence for prayer.) Lord, in your mercy,
- C Hear our prayer.**
- A Let us pray for our sisters and brothers in need, that God would give healing and God's people would respond with mercy and compassion toward others. *(Silence for prayer.)* Lord, in your mercy,
- C Hear our prayer.**
- A Let us pray for those who are preparing for baptism, that they experience God's abundant grace in this season of enlightenment and renewal. *(Silence for prayer.)* Lord, in your mercy,
- C Hear our prayer.**
- Here other intercessions may be offered.*
- A Let us give thanks for the witness of the faithful departed, who encourage us until the day we join the great cloud of witnesses.
(Silence for prayer.) Lord, in your mercy,
- C Hear our prayer.**
- P Merciful and gracious God, hear our prayers, restore us to the joy of your salvation, and uphold us with your Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
- C Amen**

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

- P Through Christ, we have been reconciled to God, who has given us the ministry of reconciliation. Let us be reconciled with one another. The peace of the Lord be with you always.
- C And also with you.**
- (Greet one another with words of peace shared through the chat function.)*

VOLUNTARY

Sicilienne (Faure)

The offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.

<https://tinyurl.com/StPaulsGiveNow>

OFFERTORY *"Let the Vineyards be Fruitful"* (ELW 184)

C:

Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and
fill to the brim our cup of bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the
seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gath - er the hopes and dreams of all; u - nite them with the
prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble with your pres - ence, and
give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

P Praise and thanks to you, holy God, for by your Word you made all things: you spoke light into darkness, called forth beauty from chaos, and brought life into being. For your Word of life, O God,

C **we give you thanks and praise.**

P By your Word you called your people Israel to tell of your wonderful gifts: freedom from captivity, water on the desert journey, a pathway home from exile, wisdom for life with you. For your Word of life, O God,

C **we give you thanks and praise.**

P Through Jesus, your Word made flesh, you speak to us and call us to witness: forgiveness through the cross, life to those entombed by death, the way of your self-giving love. For your Word of life, O God,

C **we give you thanks and praise.**

P Send your Spirit of truth, O God; rekindle your gifts within us: renew our faith, increase our hope, and deepen our love, for the sake of a world in need. Faithful to your Word, O God, draw near to all who call on you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

C **Amen**

LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray,

C **Our Father in heaven,**
holy is your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.

BENEDICTION

P May you who share in Christ's sufferings also know the power of his resurrection.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.

C **Amen**