

ARCH Group's aim: *"To show our love for God and You"*

Ash Wednesday 2018



Today's Collect

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing that you have made and forgive the sins of all those who are penitent: create and make in us new and contrite hearts that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may receive from you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

Today's 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?"**

Today's Psalm: *Psalms 51:1-18*

- 1 Have mercy on me, O God, in your great goodness; according to the abundance of your compassion blot out my offences.
- 2 Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness and cleanse me from my sin.
- 3 For I acknowledge my faults and my sin is ever before me.
- 4 Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight,
- 5 So that you are justified in your sentence and righteous in your judgement.

Psalm 51:1-18 continued

- 6 I have been wicked even from my birth, a sinner when my mother conceived me.
- 7 Behold, you desire truth deep within me and shall make me understand wisdom in the depths of my heart.
- 8 Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean; wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.
- 9 Make me hear of joy and gladness, that the bones you have broken may rejoice.
- 10 Turn your face from my sins and blot out all my misdeeds.
- 11 Make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.
- 12 Cast me not away from your presence and take not your holy spirit from me.
- 13 Give me again the joy of your salvation and sustain me with your gracious spirit;
- 14 Then shall I teach your ways to the wicked and sinners shall return to you.
- 15 Deliver me from my guilt, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness.
- 16 O Lord, open my lips and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.
- 17 For you desire no sacrifice, else I would give it; you take no delight in burnt offerings.
- 18 The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Today's Second Reading: *2 Corinthians 5:20b-16:10*

²⁰We 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.

¹As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. ²**For 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

2 Corinthians 5:20b-16:10 continued

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, labours, 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 honour and dishonour, 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.

Today's Gospel Reading: *John 8:1-11*

¹Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. ²Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him and he sat down and began to teach them. ³The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery; and making her stand before all the people, ⁴**they said to Jesus, 'Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?'** ⁵They said this to test Jesus, so that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. ⁷**When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, 'Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.'** ⁸And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. ⁹When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders; and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. ¹⁰**Jesus straightened up and said to her, 'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?'** ¹¹She said, 'No one, sir.' And Jesus said, 'Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.'