Office of Readings

Saturday, February 23, 2002

Saint Polycarp, Bishop and Martyr

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 40 *Prayer in Sickness*

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

Blessed is he who considers the poor and the needy; the Lord will rescue him in an evil day.

May the Lord preserve him and give him life, and make him blessed upon the earth, and may he not deliver him to the will of his enemies.

May the Lord bring him help on the bed of his sorrow; you have turned all his couch in his infirmity.

I said: "O Lord, have mercy on me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against you."

My enemies have spoken evil against me: "When will he die and his name perish?"

And if he entered to see me, he spoke with vanity; his heart gathered together iniquity to itself.

He went out and spoke in the same way.

All my enemies whispered against me; they devised evils for me.

They have imposed on me a wicked word: "When he sleeps, will he rise no more?"

For even the man of my peace, in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has greatly supplanted me.

But you, O Lord, have mercy on me and raise me up, and I will repay them.

By this I know that you have willed me: because my enemy will not rejoice over me.

But as for me, you have upheld me through my innocence, and you have confirmed me in your sight forever.

Blessed is the Lord, the God of Israel, from eternity to eternity. So be it. So be it.

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 41 *Longing for God's House*

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

As the deer longs for fountains of water, so my soul longs for you, O God.

My soul has thirsted for God, the living fountain; when will I come and appear before the face of God?

My tears have been my bread day and night, while they say to me daily, "Where is your God?"

These things I remembered, and I poured out my soul in me; for I will pass into the place of the wonderful tabernacle, even to the house of God,

amid the voice of joy and praise, the sound of one feasting.

Why are you sad, O my soul? And why do you trouble me?

Hope in God, for I will still confess to him: the salvation of my countenance and my God.

My soul has been troubled within myself; therefore I will remember you from the land of Jordan and Hermon, from the little hill.

Deep calls to deep at the sound of your floodgates.

All your heights and your waves have passed over me.

In the daytime the Lord has commanded his mercy, and in the night his canticle.

With me is a prayer to the God of my life.

I will say to God: "You are my supporter. Why have you forgotten me? And why do I go about in sadness, while the enemy afflicts me?"

While my bones are being broken, my enemies who trouble me have reproached me.

While they say to me daily: "Where is your God?"

Why are you sad, O my soul? And why do you trouble me?

Hope in God, for I will still give praise to him: the salvation of my countenance and my God.

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 42 *Send Forth Your Light*

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

Judge me, O God, and separate my cause from the nation that is not holy; deliver me from the unjust and deceitful man.

For you are my strength, O God; why have you rejected me? And why do I go about in sadness, while the enemy afflicts me?

Send forth your light and your truth; they have led me and brought me to your holy mountain and into your tabernacles.

And I will go to the altar of God, to God who gladdens my youth.

I will praise you on the harp, O God, my God.

Why are you sad, O my soul? And why do you trouble me?

Hope in God, for I will still give praise to him: the salvation of my countenance and my God.

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.