Office of Readings

Friday, January 21, 2005

Saint Agnes, Virgin 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 the Lord and bow down before him.

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 the Lord and bow down before him.

HYMN

O Splendor of God's Glory Bright

O Splendor of God's glory bright,
O thou that bringest light from light,
O Light of light, light's living spring,
O Day, all days illumining!

O thou true Sun, on us thy glance
let fall in royal radiance;
the Spirit's sanctifying beam
upon our earthly senses stream.

The Father, too, our prayers implore,
Father of glory evermore;
the Father of all grace and might,
to banish sin from our delight.

All laud to God the Father be;
all praise, eternal Son, to thee;
all glory, as is ever meet,
to God the holy Paraclete.

Psalm 78 *Lament Over the Destruction of Jerusalem (Part I)*

> *Ant. Praise to you, Lord God, now and forever.*

O God, the Gentiles have entered into your inheritance; they have defiled your holy temple; they have placed Jerusalem in the place of fruit trees.

They have placed the dead bodies of your servants as food for the birds of the heavens, the flesh of your holy ones for the beasts of the earth.

They have poured out their blood like water all around Jerusalem; and there was no one to bury them.

We have been made a reproach to our neighbors; a mockery and a derision to those who are around us.

How long, O Lord, will you be angry? Forever? Will your jealousy burn like fire?

Pour out your wrath upon the nations that have not known you, and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon your name.

For they have devoured Jacob, and have made his place desolate.

Do not remember our former iniquities; let your mercies prevent us quickly, for we have been greatly impoverished.

Help us, O God our Savior, and for the honor of your name, O Lord, deliver us; and forgive us our sins for the sake of your name.

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. Praise to you, Lord God, now and forever.*

Psalm 78 *Lament Over the Destruction of Jerusalem (Part II)*

> *Ant. Praise to you, Lord God, now and forever.*

Lest they should say among the Gentiles: "Where is their God?" And let there be made known among the nations, before our eyes, the avenging of the blood of your servants which has been poured out.

Let the groaning of the prisoners come in before you.

According to the greatness of your arm, take possession of the sons of those who have been put to death.

And repay to our neighbors sevenfold into their bosom; their reproach with which they have reproached you, O Lord.

But we, your people and the sheep of your pasture, will confess to you forever.

From generation to generation we will declare your praise.

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. Praise to you, Lord God, now and forever.*

Psalm 79 *A Prayer for Restoration*

> *Ant. Praise to you, Lord God, now and forever.*

You who lead Joseph like a sheep, give ear; you who sit upon the cherubim, shine forth.

Before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up your power and come to save us.

Convert us, O God; and show us your face, and we will be saved.

O Lord God of hosts, how long will you be angry against the prayer of your servants?

How long will you feed us with the bread of tears, and give us tears to drink in abundance?

You have set us in contradiction for our neighbors, and our enemies have mocked us.

O God of hosts, convert us; and show us your face, and we will be saved.

You have brought a vine from Egypt; you have expelled the Gentiles and planted it.

You have led its journey in its sight; and you planted its roots and it filled the earth.

Its shadow covered the mountains, and its branches the cedars of God.

It extended its branches even to the sea, and its shoots even to the river.

Why then have you broken down its hedge, so that all who pass along the way may pluck its grapes?

The boar from the forest has laid it waste, and a solitary wild beast has devoured it.

O God of hosts, turn toward us; look down from heaven and see, and visit this vineyard.

And restore it, which your right hand has planted, and upon the son of man whom you have confirmed for yourself.

Things set on fire and dug up will perish at the rebuke of your countenance.

Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand and upon the son of man whom you have confirmed for yourself.

And we have departed from you; you will enliven us and call upon your name.

O Lord God of hosts, convert us; and show us your face, and we will be saved.

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. Praise to you, Lord God, now and forever.*

FIRST READING: SCRIPTURE

ISAIAH 55:10-11

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty.

RESPONSORY

V. Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on us.

R. Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on us.

V. You who rose from the dead,

R. have mercy on us.

SECOND READING: PATRISTIC OR HAGIOGRAPHIC

Thomas a Kempis

The Imitation of Christ, Book 3

Interior Conversation of the Soul with God

> Blessed is the soul which heareth the Lord speaking within her, and receiveth from his mouth the word of consolation. Blessed are the ears which receive the pulses of the divine whisper, and give no heed to the many whisperings of this world. Blessed indeed are those ears which listen not after the voice which is sounding without, but for the Truth teaching inwardly. Blessed are the eyes which are shut to outward things, but intent on things within. Blessed are they who enter far into things within, and endeavor to prepare themselves more and more, by daily exercises, for the receiving of heavenly secrets. Blessed are they who are glad to have time to spare for God, and who shake off all worldly impediments. Consider these things, O my soul, and shut the door of thy sensual desires, so that thou mayest hear what the Lord thy God will speak in thee. Thus saith thy Beloved, "I am thy salvation, thy peace, and thy life: keep thyself with Me, and thou shalt find peace."

CONCLUDING PRAYER

God of all wisdom, as we pray the Office of Readings, grant us understanding that goes beyond mere knowledge, and faith that acts on what it believes; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Let us praise the Lord.

And give him thanks.