Office of Readings

Tuesday, March 7, 2006

Saints Perpetua and Felicity, Martyrs

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 7 *Plea for Divine Justice*

> *Ant. Create a clean heart in me, O God.*

O Lord my God, in you I have hoped; save me from all who pursue me, and deliver me.

Lest at any time he seize my soul like a lion, while there is no one to redeem me or to save me.

O Lord my God, if I have done this thing, if there is iniquity in my hands,

if I have repaid with evils those who repaid me good, let me deservedly fall empty before my enemies.

Let the enemy pursue my soul and seize it, and trample my life into the earth, and bring down my glory into the dust.

Rise up, O Lord, in your wrath, and be exalted at the borders of my enemies.

And arise, O Lord my God, in the precept that you have commanded, and the congregation of people will surround you.

And because of this, return on high; the Lord judges the peoples.

Judge me, O Lord, according to my justice and according to my innocence in me.

The wickedness of sinners will be brought to nothing, and you will direct the just; the searcher of hearts and reins is God.

My help is from God, who saves the upright of heart.

God is a just judge, strong and patient; is he angry every day?

Unless you will have been converted, he will brandish his sword; he has bent his bow and made it ready.

And in it he has prepared the instruments of death; he has made ready his arrows for those who burn.

Behold, he has been in labor with injustice; he has conceived toil and given birth to iniquity.

He has opened a pit and dug it out, and he has fallen into the hole he made.

His toil will be turned back onto his own head, and his iniquity will descend onto his crown.

I will give thanks to the Lord according to his justice, and I will sing to the name of the Lord Most High.

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. Create a clean heart in me, O God.*

Psalm 8 *The Glory of God and the Dignity of Man*

> *Ant. Create a clean heart in me, O God.*

O Lord, our Lord, how admirable is your name in all the earth!

For your magnificence has been elevated above the heavens.

Out of the mouth of infants and of sucklings, you have perfected praise, because of your enemies, so that you may destroy the enemy and the defender.

For I will see your heavens, the works of your fingers: the moon and the stars, which you have founded.

What is man, that you are mindful of him? Or the son of man, that you visit him?

You have made him a little less than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor.

And you have set him over the works of your hands.

You have subjected all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, moreover, even the beasts of the field,

the birds of the air and the fish of the sea, who pass through the paths of the sea.

O Lord, our Lord, how admirable is your name throughout all 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. Create a clean heart in me, O God.*

Psalm 9 *Praise for God's Justice*

> *Ant. Create a clean heart in me, O God.*

I will confess to you, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will narrate all your wonders.

I will be glad and rejoice in you; I will sing to your name, O Most High.

For my enemy is turned back; they will be weakened and perish from before your face.

For you have maintained my judgment and my cause; you sat on the throne, judging justly.

You have rebuked the Gentiles and the impious has perished; you have blotted out their name for ever and ever.

The swords of the enemy have failed to the end, and you have destroyed their cities; their memory has perished with a resounding noise.

And the Lord remains for eternity; he has prepared his throne for judgment.

And he will judge the world with equity; he will judge the peoples with justice.

And the Lord has become a refuge for the poor: a helper in tribulation.

And let those who know your name hope in you; for you have not forsaken those who seek you, O Lord.

Sing psalms to the Lord who dwells in Zion; declare his pursuits among the Gentiles.

For he remembers them, seeking the blood of the poor; he has not forgotten the cry of the poor.

Have mercy on me, O Lord; see my humiliation from my enemies.

You who exalt me from the gates of death, so that I may declare all your praises at the gates of the daughter of Zion.

I will rejoice in your salvation; the Gentiles have been stuck in the destruction they have made.

Their foot has been snared in the very trap they have hidden.

The Lord will be known by executing judgments; the sinner has been caught in the works of his own hands.

The wicked will be turned toward hell, and all the nations that have forgotten God.

For the poor will not be forgotten in the end; the patience of the poor will not perish forever.

Rise up, O Lord; do not let man be strengthened; let the Gentiles be judged in your sight.

Appoint a lawgiver over them, O Lord, that the Gentiles may know themselves to be only human.

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. Create a clean heart in me, O God.*

FIRST READING: SCRIPTURE

ISAIAH 1:16-17

Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow.

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 Basil the Great

On Fasting, Sermon 1

Fasting Practiced Since the Beginning

> Fasting was established in paradise. The first commandment was given to Adam: You shall not eat. This not eating is a fast of sorts, a restraint from pleasure for the good of the soul. Had Eve fasted from the forbidden fruit, we would not now have need of this fast of ours. Those who are ill use medicine because they did not keep a healthy regimen to begin with. Likewise we undertake fasting as a medicine, because we have not observed the fast in paradise. Fasting is the angel's food; it is the nourishment of immortality; it is the renewal of the soul. Fasting did not die with Moses or with Elijah; the one fasted forty days, the other forty days also. When the time was fulfilled, the Lord himself fasted forty days, not because he needed it, but to instruct us and leave us an example. Let us then imitate him with reverence and earnestness. Let us give our bodies the discipline they need, our souls the freedom they desire.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

O God, you spoke through the prophets calling your people back to you. Speak to us today through this Office of Readings, and turn our hearts to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Let us praise the Lord.
And give him thanks.