



# MINI-RETREAT FOR ASH WEDNESDAY

## Spending time with the God Who Speaks

17 FEBRUARY 2021

FROM MORNING PRAYER - PSALM 145(146)

*The blessedness of those who hope in the Lord*

“Let us praise the Lord all our days: that is, in all our conduct.” (Arnobius)

*I will praise my God all my days.*

My soul, give praise to the Lord;  
I will praise the Lord all my days,  
make music to my God while I live.

Put no trust in princes,  
in mortal men in whom there is no help.  
Take their breath, they return to clay  
and their plans that day come to nothing.

He is happy who is helped by Jacob's God,  
whose hope is in the Lord his God,  
who alone made heaven and earth,  
the seas and all they contain.

It is he who keeps faith for ever,  
who is just to those who are oppressed.  
It is he who gives bread to the hungry,  
the Lord, who sets prisoners free,

the Lord who gives sight to the blind,  
who raises up those who are bowed down,  
the Lord, who protects the stranger  
and upholds the widow and orphan.

It is the Lord who loves the just  
but thwarts the path of the wicked.  
The Lord will reign for ever,  
Zion's God, from age to age.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,  
as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,  
world without out.

Amen

*I will praise my God all my days.*

Intercessions – praying for those in need today.  
Our Father...

FIRST READING OF THE DAY –

A reading from the prophet Joel

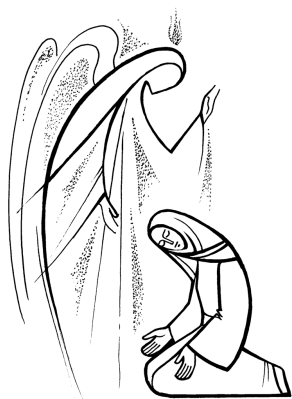
2:12-18

‘Now, now – it is the Lord who speaks –  
come back to me with all your heart,  
fasting, weeping, mourning.’  
Let your hearts be broken not your garments torn,  
turn to the Lord your God again,  
for he is all tenderness and compassion,  
slow to anger, rich in graciousness,  
and ready to relent.  
Who knows if he will not turn again, will not relent,  
will not leave a blessing as he passes,  
oblation and libation  
for the Lord your God?  
Sound the trumpet in Zion!  
Order a fast,  
proclaim a solemn assembly,  
call the people together,  
summon the community,  
assemble the elders,  
gather the children,  
even the infants at the breast.  
Let the bridegroom leave his bedroom  
and the bride her alcove.  
Between vestibule and altar let the priests,  
the ministers of the Lord, lament.  
Let them say,  
‘Spare your people, Lord!  
Do not make your heritage a thing of shame,  
a byword for the nations.  
Why should it be said among the nations,  
“Where is their God?” ’  
Then the Lord, jealous on behalf of his land,  
took pity on his people.

Read the passage slowly – as if hearing Isaiah speaking the words directly to you. Then use the prompts for reflection if they are helpful to you.

- Which word or phrase seems to resonate most deeply with you – for yourself or someone you know? Jot them down – or repeat them several time to memorise them.
- How might you respond to God’s call to “come back to me with all your heart” this Lent?
- Who are those who are weeping and mourning and who need you to bring them to the Lord in your heart?
- Use your word or phrase as a mantra as you go through the morning.

## NOON – THE ANGELUS



The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary,  
and she conceived by the Holy Spirit.

*Hail Mary...*

Behold the handmaid of the Lord,  
Be it done unto me according to your word.

*Hail Mary...*

And the Word was made flesh,  
and dwelt amongst us.

*Hail Mary...*

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord, your grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son was made known by the message of an angel, may, by his Passion and Cross, be brought to the glory of his Resurrection.

Through the same Christ our Lord,

Amen

Intercessions – praying for those in need today.

Our Father

## THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY – MATTHEW 6: 1-6. 16-18

Jesus said to his disciples:

‘Be careful not to parade your good deeds before men to attract their notice; by doing this you will lose all reward from your Father in heaven. So when you give alms, do not have it trumpeted before you; this is what the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win men’s admiration. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you give alms, your left hand must not know what your right is doing; your almsgiving must be secret, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.

‘And when you pray, do not imitate the hypocrites: they love to say their prayers standing up in the synagogues and at the street corners for people to see them. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you pray go to your private room and, when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in that secret place, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.

‘When you fast do not put on a gloomy look as the hypocrites do: they pull long faces to let men know they are fasting. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that no one will know you are fasting except your Father who sees all that is done in secret; and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.’

- Spend a few minutes praying this Gospel account in your mind and heart.
- Jesus begins with almsgiving – how do you feel called to respond to this call to give – either of your money or your time this Lent?
- Jesus’ second statement concerns prayer. How might you build in time for prayer? What are likely to be the obstacles and how you can you arrange things so that they do not get in the way?
- Finally, fasting. How will you restrict food – drink – or something else that it feels right to limit in your life at the moment?
- Pray for the grace to follow Jesus’ teaching this Lent.

## REVIEW OF THE DAY

When have you been aware of God during the day?

Which of God's words have carried you through today? Thank God for them.

When you sensed that your work – your care of others – has felt like serving the Lord?

When have you made selfish choices that have crushed or hurt others? Ask God for forgiveness and ideas on how to put things right.

Join in the prayer that will enfold the world tonight...

## NIGHT PRAYER OF THE CHURCH - COMPLINE

O God, come to our aid.

*O Lord, make haste to help us.*

Glory be to the Father and to the Son

and to the Holy Spirit,

as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,

world without end. Amen.

### **Psalm 30 (31): 206 Trustful prayer in the time of adversity**

"Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." (Luke 23: 46)

*O God, be my protector and my refuge.*

In you, O Lord, I take refuge.

Let me never be put to shame.

In your justice, set me free,

hear me and speedily rescue me.

Be a rock of refuge for me,

a mighty stronghold to save me,

for you are my rock, my stronghold.

For your name's sake, lead me and guide me.

Release me from the snares they have hidden  
for you are my refuge, Lord.

Into your hands I commend my spirit.

It is you who will redeem me, Lord.

*O God, be my protector and my refuge*

### **Psalm 129(130) Out of the depths**

"He will save his people from their sins."

*Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.*

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord,

Lord, hear my voice!

O let your ears be attentive

to the voice of my pleading.

If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt,

Lord, who would survive?

But with you is found forgiveness:

for this we revere you.

My soul is waiting for the Lord,

I count on his word.

My soul is longing for the Lord  
more than watchman for daybreak.  
(Let the watchman count on daybreak  
and Israel on the Lord.)

Because with the Lord there is mercy  
and fullness of redemption,  
Israel indeed he will redeem  
from all its iniquity.  
*Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.*

**Short Reading – Ephesians 4: 26-27**

Do not let resentment lead you into sin; the sunset must not find you still angry. Do not give the devil his opportunity.

**Short Responsory**

Into your hands, Lord, I commend my spirit.  
– *Into your hands, Lord, I commend my spirit.*  
You have redeemed us, Lord God of truth.  
– *Into your hands, Lord, I commend my spirit.*  
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.  
– *Into your hands, Lord, I commend my spirit.*

**Canticle - Nunc Dimittis**

*Save us, Lord, while we are awake; protect us while we sleep; that we may keep watch with Christ and rest with him in peace.*

At last, all-powerful Master,  
you give leave to your servant go in peace.  
according to your promise.

For my eyes have seen your salvation,  
which you have prepared in the sight of all nations,  
the light to enlighten the Gentiles  
and give glory to Israel, your people.  
Glory be ...

*Save us, Lord, while we are awake; protect us while we sleep; that we may keep watch with Christ and rest with him in peace.*

**Let us pray.**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
meek and humble of heart,  
you offer to those who follow you  
a yoke that is good to bear,  
a burden that its light.  
Accept, we beg you, our prayer and work of this day,  
and grant us the rest we need  
that we may be ever more willing to serve you,  
who live and reign for ever and ever.  
**Amen.**

**Marian Anthem**

## **Ave Regina Caelorum**

Hail, Queen of the heavens,  
hail, Lady of the angels.  
Root of our salvation  
and our gateway to heaven,  
the light of the world was born to you.  
Be joyful, Virgin of glory,  
most beautiful of all in heaven.  
We greet you now, true beauty –  
pray for us to Christ.

Ave, Regína cælórum,  
ave, Dómina angelórum,  
salve, radix, salve, porta,  
ex qua mundo lux est orta.  
Gaude, Virgo gloriósa,  
super omnes speciósa;  
vale, o valde decóra,  
et pro nobis Christum exóra.

**Intercessions** – placing those for whom you wish to pray into the hands and heart of God.

### *Prayer of St Augustine*

Watch, O Lord, with those who wake,  
or watch, or weep tonight,  
and give your angels and saints  
charge over those who sleep.  
Tend your sick ones, O Lord Christ.  
Rest your weary ones.  
Bless your dying ones.  
Soothe your suffering ones.  
Pity your afflicted ones.  
Shield your joyous ones,  
and all for your love's sake.  
Amen.

Scripture Readings from *The Jerusalem Bible* © 1966 by Darton Longman & Todd Ltd and Doubleday and Company Ltd.

Text from The Psalms, a new translation © 1963 The Grail (England) administered by HarperCollins.

*Excerpts from The Divine Office* © 1974, hierarchies of Australia, England and Wales, Ireland. All rights reserved.

Images: © McCrimmons

Layout and Content prepared by Spirituality Committee of the Bishops' Conference © 2020 Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales [www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/Flu](http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/Flu)