

A reading from the book of the prophet Joel

“Even now,” says the Lord,
“return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
rend 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.”

Who knows whether the Lord will not turn and relent,
and leave a blessing behind him:
a grain offering and a drink offering
to be presented to the Lord, your God?
Blow the trumpet in Zion;
sanctify a fast;
call a solemn assembly;
gather 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.

Between 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?'"

Then the Lord became jealous for his land,
and had pity on his people.

The Word of the Lord!

A reading from the second letter of Paul to the Corinthians

We are ambassadors for Christ,
since God is making his appeal through us;
we entreat you on behalf of Christ,
be reconciled to God.

For our sake God made Christ to be sin who knew no sin,
so that in Christ we might become the righteousness of God.

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

For the Lord says,

“At an acceptable time I have listened to you,
and on a day of salvation I have helped you.”

See, now is the acceptable time;
see, now is the day of salvation!

The Word of the Lord!

Gospel

[Mt 6:1-6, 16-18](#)

Jesus said to his disciples:

"Take care not to perform righteous deeds
in order that people may see them;
otherwise, you will have no recompense from your heavenly Father.

When you give alms,
do not blow a trumpet before you,
as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets
to win the praise of others.

Amen, I say to you,
they have received their reward.

But when you give alms,
do not let your left hand know what your right is doing,
so that your almsgiving may be secret.

And your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

"When you pray,
do not be like the hypocrites,
who love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on street corners
so that others may see them.

Amen, I say to you,
they have received their reward.

But when you pray, go to your inner room,
close the door, and pray to your Father in secret.

And your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

"When you fast,
do not look gloomy like the hypocrites.
They neglect their appearance,
so that they may appear to others to be fasting.
Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward.
But when you fast,
anoint your head and wash your face,
so that you may not appear to be fasting,
except to your Father who is hidden.
And your Father who sees what is hidden will repay you."