

ST. JAMES PARISH CHURCH

Holetown, St. James, Barbados

TO BE A BEACON RADIATING GOD'S LOVE AMONG ALL PEOPLE

ASH WEDNESDAY LITURGY

MARCH 5, 2025

9:00 A.M.

ST. JAMES PRIMARY SCHOOL

9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Sermon

RECTOR: THE REV. CANON BEVERLEY SEALY-KNIGHT

ASST. PRIEST: GRAVENEY BANNISTER

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ASH WEDNESDAY

Today as the Church sets out on its Lenten journey to Easter the theme is penitence. Ashes are blessed and used as a symbol of repentance. Those who wish, go to the altar rails to be marked with a cross of ashes on the foreheads.

On this day the liturgy begins as follows:

INTROIT HYMN: 535

1. O for a heart to praise my God,
a heart from sin set free;
a heart that's sprinkled with the blood
so freely shed for me:
2. A heart resigned, submissive, meek,
my great Redeemer's throne;
where only Christ is heard to speak,
where Jesus reigns alone:
3. A humble, lowly, contrite heart,
believing, true, and clean,
which neither life nor death can part
from him that dwells within:
4. A heart in every thought renewed,
and full of love Divine;
perfect and right and pure and good;
a copy, Lord, of thine.
5. Thy nature, gracious Lord, impart,
come quickly from above;

write thy new name upon my heart,
thy new best name of Love.

PRESIDENT:

The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

ALL:

And blessed be His Kingdom, now and forever. Amen.

PRESIDENT: Let us pray

ALL:

**Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your Holy Name, through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

THE KYRIES

Lord, have mercy,

Lord, have mercy,

Christ have mercy,

Christ have mercy,

Lord, have mercy,

Lord, have mercy,

THE COLLECTS:

The following Collects should be said or sung by the President.

PRESIDENT:

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

ALL: Amen.

PRESIDENT:

Almighty and holy God, your Son, in obedience to the Spirit fasted forty days in the desert: Give us grace to discipline ourselves that we may press on towards Easter with eager faith and love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

ALL: Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD**THE FIRST LESSON: JOEL 2:1-2, 12-17**

The prophet Joel sees in a locust plague the ultimate judgment of God, the Day of the Lord. His call to repent is appropriately ours on Ash Wednesday.

A Reading from the Word of God, written in the Book of the prophet Joel, Chapter 2, beginning at the first verse.

Blow the trumpet in Zion;
 sound the alarm on my holy mountain!
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,
 for the day of the Lord is coming, it is near—
a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of clouds and thick darkness!
Like blackness spread upon the mountains
 a great and powerful army comes;
their like has never been from of old,
 nor will be again after them
 in ages to come.

Yet 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 he will not turn and relent,
 and leave a blessing behind him,
a grain-offering and a drink-offering
 for 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?" ' '

The Word of the Lord

The people: Thanks be to God.

OR...

THE FIRST LESSON: ISAIAH 58: 1-12

After return from the Exile, the people of Judah were discouraged. Life was hard, and it seemed that God was not listening to them. This passage speaks of fasting, but its implications are wider. It chastises the people, but there is hope.

A Reading from the Word of God, written in the Book of the prophet Isaiah, Chapter 58, beginning at the first verse.

Shout out, do not hold back!

Lift up your voice like a trumpet!

Announce to my people their rebellion,
 to the house of Jacob their sins.
 Yet day after day they seek me
 and delight to know my ways,
 as if they were a nation that practised
 righteousness
 and did not forsake the ordinance of their
 God;
 they ask of me righteous judgements,
 they delight to draw near to God.
 'Why do we fast, but you do not see?
 Why humble ourselves, but you do not
 notice?'
 Look, you serve your own interest on your fast-
 day,
 and oppress all your workers.
 Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight
 and to strike with a wicked fist.
 Such fasting as you do today
 will not make your voice heard on high.
 Is such the fast that I choose,
 a day to humble oneself?
 Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush,
 and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?
 Will you call this a fast,
 a day acceptable to the Lord?

Is not this the fast that I choose:

to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,

to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?

Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;

when you see the naked, to cover them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly;

your vindicator shall go before you,
the glory of the Lord shall be your rearguard.

Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;
you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I
am.

If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,

if you offer your food to the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,

then your light shall rise in the darkness
and your gloom be like the noonday.

The Lord will guide you continually,
and satisfy your needs in parched places,

and make your bones strong;
and you shall be like a watered garden,

like a spring of water,
 whose waters never fail.
 Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
 you shall raise up the foundations of many
 generations;
 you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
 the restorer of streets to live in.

The Word of the Lord

The people: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 103 OR 103:8-14

This psalm is a hymn of blessing in thanksgiving for healing forgiveness and for all the Lord's acts of compassion and justice

- 1 Bless the LORD, O my soul, *
and all that is within me, bless his holy
Name.
- 2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, *
and forget not all his benefits.
- 3 He forgives all your sins *
and heals all your infirmities;
- 4 He redeems your life from the grave *
and crowns you with mercy and loving-
kindness;
- 5 He satisfies you with good things, *
and your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

- 6 The LORD executes righteousness *
and judgment for all who are oppressed.
- 7 He made his ways known to Moses *
and his works to the children of Israel.]
- 8 *The LORD is full of compassion and mercy, *
slow to anger and of great kindness.*
- 9 *He will not always accuse us, *
nor will he keep his anger for ever.*
- 10 *He has not dealt with us according to our
sins, *
nor rewarded us according to our
wickedness.*
- 11 *For as the heavens are high above the earth,
*
so is his mercy great upon those who fear
him.*
- 12 *As far as the east is from the west, *
so far has he removed our sins from us.*
- 13 *As a father cares for his children, *
so does the LORD care for those who fear
him.*
- 14 *For he himself knows whereof we are made;
*
he remembers that we are but dust.*
- 15 Our days are like the grass; *
we flourish like a flower of the field;
- 16 When the wind goes over it, it is gone, *
and its place shall know it no more.

- 17 But the merciful goodness of
the LORD endures for ever on those who fear
him, *
and his righteousness on children's children;
- 18 On those who keep his covenant *
and remember his commandments and do
them.
- 19 The LORD has set his throne in heaven, *
and his kingship has dominion over all.
- 20 Bless the LORD, you angels of his,
you mighty ones who do his bidding, *
and hearken to the voice of his word.
- 21 Bless the LORD, all you his hosts, *
you ministers of his who do his will.
- 22 Bless the LORD, all you works of his,
in all places of his dominion; *
bless the LORD, O my soul.]
- Glory to the Father, and to the Son:*
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now:*
and shall be forever. *Amen.*

THE SECOND LESSON:

2 CORINTHIANS 5:20B - 6:10

Paul, using himself as an example, explains to Corinthian Christians the discipline of life and the endurance of suffering which being a follower of Christ entails.

A reading from the second epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, Chapter 5, beginning at the twentieth verse

So 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 he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he 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! We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labours, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honour and dishonour, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see - we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

The Word of the Lord

The people: Thanks be to God.

GRADUAL HYMN 490

1. Lord, teach us how to pray aright,
With reverence and with fear;
Though dust and ashes in Thy sight,
We may, we must draw near.
2. We perish if we cease from prayer;
O grant us power to pray;
And when to meet Thee we prepare,
Lord, meet us by the way.
3. God of all grace, we come to Thee
a broken, contrite heart;
Give what Thine eye delights to see,
Truth in the inward part.
4. Faith is the only sacrifice
That can for sin atone;
To cast our hopes, to fix our eyes,
On Christ, on Christ alone.
5. Patience to watch, and wait, and weep,
Though mercy long delay;
Courage our fainting souls to keep,
And trust Thee though Thou slay.
6. Give these, and then Thy will be done,
Thus, strengthened with all might,
We, through Thy Spirit and Thy Son,
Shall pray, and pray aright.

THE GOSPEL: MATTHEW 6:1-6, 16-21

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus teaches his followers the way in which their practice of piety will be acceptable to God.

Gospeler: *The Lord be with you*

All: *And also with you*

Gospeler: *A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.*

All: *Glory to Christ Our Saviour.*

'Beware of practising your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

'So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

'And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. 'And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show

others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

'Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.'

THE SERMON

THE PRESIDENT

Dear friends in Christ,
every year at the time of the Christian Passover
we celebrate our redemption
through the life, death and resurrection
of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Lent is a time to prepare for this celebration
and to renew our life in the paschal mystery.
We begin this holy season by remembering
our need for repentance, and for the mercy,
forgiveness and grace proclaimed in the Gospel
of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

If ashes are used, the following may be said.

We begin our journey to Easter with the sign of ashes, an ancient sign, speaking of the frailty and uncertainty of human life, and marking the penitence of the community as a whole.

Let us ask God our Father to bless these ashes to become a symbol of our intention. They have been made from the palms with which we greeted Christ our King with joy last Palm Sunday. They are a sign that we intend to prepare ourselves with penitence for Easter.

Let us pray

Lord, bless these ashes to our use
and grant that they may remind us of our mortality
and of our need of repentance
so that we may keep Lent faithfully
in preparation for the victory and joy of Easter.
We ask this in the name of Christ our Lord.

ALL: Amen.

The President addresses the congregation.

Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

The President places ashes on those who come forward, saying to each:

Repent and believe the Gospel.

And each answers:

Amen

When all have received ashes, the President facing the congregation says:

Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

Having washed his hands, the President says:

Return to the Lord with all your heart; leave the past in ashes and turn to God with tears and fasting, for He is slow to anger and ready to forgive.

THE BLESSING

LENT:

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness, to deny yourselves, take up your cross, and follow Him; and the Blessings of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always

All: Amen

RECESSIONAL HYMN: 114

1. Forty days and forty nights
 thou wast fasting in the wild;
 forty days and forty nights
 tempted, and yet undefiled.

2. Sunbeams scorching all the day;
chilly dew-drops nightly shed;
prowling beasts about thy way;
stones thy pillow; earth thy bed.
3. Shall not we thy sorrow share
and from earthly joys abstain,
fasting with unceasing prayer,
glad with thee to suffer pain?
4. And if Satan, vexing sore,
flesh or spirit should assail,
thou, his Vanquisher before,
grant we may not faint nor fail.
5. So shall we have peace divine:
holier gladness ours shall be;
round us too shall angels shine,
such as ministered to thee.
6. Keep, O keep us, Saviour dear,
ever constant by thy side;
that with thee we may appear
at th' eternal Eastertide.

THE DISMISSAL

PRESIDENT: Go in peace and serve the Lord

ALL: In the name of Christ. *Amen*

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