

Ash Wednesday | Year B

February 14, 2024 (Joel 2:12-18 | 2 Cor 5:20-6:2 | Mt 6:1-6, 16-18)

The Prophet Joel exhorts that we rend our hearts, not our garments, and return to God. Let us present our needs to God, who is gracious and merciful.

1/ Psalm 51 is asking the Lord to be merciful on the people, for they have sinned. For Pope Francis, pastors, and deacons. We pray that they may discern the guidance of the Holy Spirit, as they continue to seek God's will in shepherding the faithful. Let us pray.

2/ Paul reminds the Corinthians that, for the sake of humanity, God made Jesus to be sin who knew no sin. This is because through the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus, we might be made righteous before God. For lawmakers and world leaders. We pray that the grace of God through Jesus may inspire their minds in preparing their policies. Let us pray.

3/ Jesus warns against the pretentiousness of those who are self-righteous and deceivers. This Lent marks the third anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. We pray that the Spirit of God deter the blindness and evil acts of Vladimir Putin from further bloodshed. Let us pray.

4/ Paul also states that "Behold, now is an acceptable time. Now is the day of salvation." We believe in God who raised Jesus from the dead. Jesus's resurrection becomes the firstfruits of those who died and were raised to eternal life. Today we remember [at 6:30 Mass] Maria Paulus; [at 6:00 PM] all the faithfully departed in our parish. Let us pray.

God and Father in heaven, the light of your truth bestows sight to the darkness of sinful eyes. May this season of repentance bring us the blessing of your forgiveness and the gift of your light. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.