**Ash Wednesday Readings**

**2nd March 2022**

**First reading**

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.

**The Word of the Lord**

**Responsorial Psalm**

Psalm 50(51):3-6,12-14,17

*Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.*

Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.

 In your compassion blot out my offence.

O wash me more and more from my guilt

 and cleanse me from my sin.

*Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.*

My offences truly I know them;

 my sin is always before me

Against you, you alone, have I sinned;

 what is evil in your sight I have done.

*Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.*

A pure heart create for me, O God,

 put a steadfast spirit within me.

Do not cast me away from your presence,

 nor deprive me of your holy spirit.

*Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.*

Give me again the joy of your help;

 with a spirit of fervour sustain me,

O Lord, open my lips

 and my mouth shall declare your praise.

*Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.*

**Second reading**

2 Corinthians 5:20-6:2

We are ambassadors for Christ; it is as though God were appealing through us, and the appeal that we make in Christ’s name is: be reconciled to God. For our sake God made the sinless one into sin, so that in him we might become the goodness of God. As his fellow workers, we beg you once again not to neglect the grace of God that you have received. For he says: At the favourable time, I have listened to you; on the day of salvation I came to your help. Well, now is the favourable time; this is the day of salvation.

**The Word of the Lord**

**Gospel Acclamation**

Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!

A pure heart create for me, O God,

and give me again the joy of your help.

Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!

***Or:***

Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!

Harden not your hearts today,

but listen to the voice of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!