

## Ash Wednesday Readings

### Psalm

*Psalm 51:1–13*

#### **Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God**

- <sup>1</sup>Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your | steadfast love,\*  
according to your abundant mercy  
blot out my trans- | gressions.
- <sup>2</sup>Wash me thoroughly from my in- | iquity,\*  
and cleanse me | from my sin!
- <sup>3</sup>For I know my trans- | gressions,\*  
and my sin is ever be- | fore me.
- <sup>4</sup>Against you, you only, have I sinned  
and done what is evil | in your sight,\*  
so that you may be justified in your words  
and blameless in your | judgment.
- <sup>5</sup>Behold, I was brought forth in in- | iquity,\*  
and in sin did my mother con- | ceive me.
- <sup>6</sup>Behold, you delight in truth in the inward | being,\*  
and you teach me wisdom in the | secret heart.
- <sup>7</sup>Purge me with hyssop, and I | shall be clean;\*  
wash me, and I shall be whit- | er than snow.
- <sup>8</sup>Let me hear joy and | gladness,\*  
let the bones that you have bro- | ken rejoice.
- <sup>9</sup>Hide your face | from my sins,\*  
and blot out all my in- | iquities.
- <sup>10</sup>Create in me a clean heart, | O God,\*  
and renew a right spirit with- | in me.
- <sup>11</sup>Cast me not away from your | presence,\*  
and take not your Holy Spirit | from me.
- <sup>12</sup>Restore to me the joy of your sal- | vation,\*  
and uphold me with a willing | spirit.

<sup>13</sup>Then I will teach transgressors | your ways,\*  
and sinners will re- | turn to you.

## Reading

*Jonah 3*

### Jonah Goes to Nineveh

<sup>1</sup>Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, <sup>2</sup>“Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you.” <sup>3</sup>So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days’ journey in breadth. <sup>4</sup>Jonah began to go into the city, going a day’s journey. And he called out, “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!” <sup>5</sup>And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them.

### The People of Nineveh Repent

<sup>6</sup>The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. <sup>7</sup>And he issued a proclamation and published through Nineveh, “By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed or drink water, <sup>8</sup>but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to God. Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. <sup>9</sup>Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish.”

<sup>10</sup>When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

## Reading

*2 Peter 1:2–11*

<sup>2</sup>May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

### Make Your Calling and Election Sure

<sup>3</sup>His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, <sup>4</sup>by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through

them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. <sup>5</sup>For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, <sup>6</sup>and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, <sup>7</sup>and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. <sup>8</sup>For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup>For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. <sup>10</sup>Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. <sup>11</sup>For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

## Reading

*Matthew 6:16–21*

### Fasting

<sup>16</sup>[Jesus said:] “And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. <sup>17</sup>But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup>that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

### Lay Up Treasures in Heaven

<sup>19</sup>“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, <sup>20</sup>but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup>For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

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