

First Reader: **A READING FROM JOEL**

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?’”

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Leader: **Our Responsorial Psalm is Psalm 103:8-14.**

We will respond by half verse.

- 1 Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven,
and whose sin is put away!
- 2 **Happy are they to whom the Lord imputes no guilt,
and in whose spirit there is no guile!**
- 3 While I held my tongue, my bones withered away,
because of my groaning all day long.
- 4 **For your hand was heavy upon me day and night;
my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.**
- 5 Then I acknowledged my sin to you,
and did not conceal my guilt.
- 6 **I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord."
Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.**
- 7 Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of
trouble;
when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.
- 8 **You are my hiding-place;
you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with shouts of deliverance.**
- 9 "I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go;
I will guide you with my eye.
- 10 **Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding;
who must be fitted with bit and bridle,
or else they will not stay near you."**
- 11 Great are the tribulations of the wicked;
but mercy embraces those who trust in the Lord.
- 12 **Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the Lord;
shout for joy, all who are true of heart.**

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, labors, 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 honor and dishonor, 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.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.
People: **Thanks be to God.**