

FIRST READING OPTIONS

A reading from the book of Job 19:1.23-27

Job said: 'Ah, would that these words of mine were written down,
inscribed on some monument

with iron chisel and engraving tool, cut into the rock for ever.

This I know: that my Avenger lives,

and he, the Last, will take his stand on earth.

After my awaking, he will set me close to him, and from my flesh I
shall look on God.

He whom I shall see will take my part:

these eyes will gaze on him and find him not aloof.

The word of the Lord

A reading from the book of Wisdom 3:1-6.9

The souls of the virtuous are in the hands of God,
no torment shall ever touch them.

In the eyes of the unwise, they did appear to die,

their going looked like a disaster,

their leaving us, like annihilation;

but they are in peace.

If they experienced punishment as men see it,

their hope was rich with immortality;

slight was their affliction, great will their blessing be.

God has put them to the test and proved them worthy to be with
him;

he has tested them like gold in a furnace,

and accepted them as a holocaust.

They who trust in him will understand the truth,

those who are faithful will live with him in love;

for grace and mercy await those he has chosen.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the book of Wisdom 4:7-15

The virtuous man, though he die before his time, will find rest.
Length of days is not what makes age honourable,
nor number of years the true measure of life;
understanding, this is man's grey hairs,
untarnished life, this is ripe old age.
He has sought to please God, so God has loved him;
as he was living among sinners, he has been taken up.
He has been carried off so that evil may not warp his understanding
or treachery seduce his soul;
for the fascination of evil throws good things into the shade,
and the whirlwind of desire corrupts a simple heart.
Coming to perfection in so short a while, he achieved long life;
His soul being pleasing to the Lord,
he has taken them quickly from the wickedness around him.
Yet people look on, uncomprehending; it does not enter their heads
that grace and mercy await the chosen of the Lord,
and protection, his holy ones.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the prophet Isaiah 25:6-9

On this mountain, the Lord of hosts will prepare for all peoples a
banquet of rich food.
On this mountain he will remove
the mourning veil covering all peoples,
and the shroud enwrapping all nations,
he will destroy death for ever.
The Lord will wipe away the tears from every cheek;
he will take away his peoples shame
everywhere on earth, for the Lord has said so.
That day, it will be said: See, this is our God
in whom we hoped for salvation;
The Lord is the one in whom we hoped.
We exult and we rejoice that he has saved us.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the book of Lamentations 3:17-26

My soul is shut out from peace;
I have forgotten happiness.
And now I say, 'My strength is gone,
that hope which came from the Lord'.
Brooding on my anguish and affliction
is gall and wormwood.
My spirit ponders it continually
and sinks within me
This is what I shall tell my heart,
and so recover hope:
the favours of the Lord are not all past,
his kindnesses are not exhausted;
every morning they are renewed;
great is his faithfulness.
'My portion is the Lord' says my soul
'and so I will hope in him.'
The Lord is good to those who trust him,
to the soul that searches for him.
It is good to wait in silence for the Lord to save.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the prophet Isaiah 49:13-16

Shout for joy, you heavens; exult, you earth!
You mountains, break into happy cries!
For the Lord consoles his people
and takes pity on those who are afflicted.
For Zion was saying, 'the Lord has abandoned me,
the Lord has forgotten me'.
Does a woman forget her baby at the breast,
or fail to cherish the son of her womb?
Yet even if these forget, I will never forget you.
See I have carved you on the palm of my hands.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the book of the Apocalypse 14:13

I, John, heard a voice from heaven say to me,
'Write down: Happy are those who die in the Lord! Happy indeed,
the Spirit says; now they can rest for ever after their work,
since their good deeds go with them.'

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the book of the Apocalypse 21:1-7

I, John, saw a new heaven and a new earth;
the first heaven and the first earth had disappeared now, and there
was no longer any sea.

I saw the holy city, and the new Jerusalem, coming down from God
out of heaven, as beautiful as a bride all dressed for her husband.
Then I heard a loud voice call from the throne, 'You see this city?
Here God lives among men. He will make his home among them;
they shall be his people, and he will be their God; his name is God-
with-them. He will wipe away all tears from their eyes; there will be
no more death, and no more mourning or sadness. The world of the
past has gone.

'Then the One sitting on the throne spoke:

'Now I am making the whole of creation new,' he said. 'I will give
water from the well of life free to anybody who is thirsty; it is the
rightful inheritance of the one who proves victorious; and I will be
his God and he a son to me.'

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the book of Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

There is a season for everything, a time for every occupation under heaven:

A time for giving birth,

a time for dying;

a time for planting;

a time for uprooting what has been planted.

A time for killing,

a time for healing;

a time for knocking down.

a time for building.

A time for tears,

a time for laughter;

a time for mourning,

a time for dancing.

A time for throwing stones away,

a time for gathering them up;

a time for embracing,

a time to refrain from embracing.

A time for searching,

a time for losing;

a time for keeping,

a time for throwing away.

A time for tearing,

a time for sewing;

a time for keeping silent,

a time for speaking.

A time for loving,

a time for hating;

a time for war,

a time for peace.

The word of the Lord.