

OLD TESTAMENT READINGS

(Choose One Old Testament Reading).

1. **A reading from the book of Wisdom 3:1-9**

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 disaster, their leaving us, like annihilation; but they are in peace. 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. When the time comes for his visitation they will shine out. 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.*

2. **A reading from the book of Sirach (38:16-17,23)**

My people, weep for the dead, lament to express your sorrow and bury the dead with fitting ceremonial, and do not fail to honour their grave. Weep bitterly, cry out with full voice, and observe the mourning period in accordance with the merits of the deceased. When the dead are laid to rest, let their memory be one of peace; be comforted on their account once their spirit has departed. *The word of the Lord.*

3. **A reading from the book of Ecclesiastes (3)**

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 healing, a time for tears, a time for laughter, a time for mourning, a time for speaking, a time for loving. All that God does is apt for its time. *The word of the Lord.*

4. **A reading from the prophet Isaiah (41:10, 44:22, 49:15-16)**

Fear not, I am with you; be not dismayed; I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you, and uphold you with my right hand of justice. For I am the Lord, your God, who grasps your right hand; it is I who say to you "Fear not, I will help you." I have brushed away your offences like a cloud, your sins like a mist; return to me, for I have redeemed you. Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child within her womb? Even should she forget, I will never forget you. See, upon the palm of my hand I have written your name. Yes, in joy you shall depart, in peace you shall be brought back. *The word of the Lord.*

5. **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 forever. The Lord will wipe away the tears from every cheek; he will take away his people's 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 rejoice that he has saved us. *The word of the Lord.*

6. ***A reading from the book of Lamentations***

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'. 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.' It is good to wait in silence for the Lord to save.
The word of the Lord.

NEW TESTAMENT READINGS

(Choose one New Testament Reading)

1. ***A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans. (14:7-12)***

The life and death of each one of us has its influence on others; if we live, we live for the Lord; if we die, we die for the Lord, so that alive or dead we belong to the Lord. This explains why Christ both died and came to life, it was so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

The word of the Lord.

2. ***A reading from the first letter of St. Paul to the Thessalonians***

We want you to be quite certain about those who have died, to make sure that you do not grieve about them, like the other people who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again, and that it will be the same for those who have died in Jesus: God will bring them with him. With thoughts such as these you should comfort one another.

The word of the Lord.

3. ***A reading from the first letter of St. John (3:1-2)***

Think of the love that the Father has lavished on us, by letting us be called God's children; and that is what we are. Because the world refused to acknowledge him, therefore it does not acknowledge us. My dear people we are already the children of God, but what we are to be in the future has not yet been revealed; all we know is, that when it is revealed we shall be like him because we shall see him as he really is.

The word of the Lord.

4. ***A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans 8:16-23)***

I think that what we suffer in this life can never be compared to the glory, as yet unrevealed, which is waiting for us. From the beginning till now the entire creation, as we know it, has been groaning in one great act of giving birth; and not only creation, but all of us who possess the first-fruits of the spirit, we too groan inwardly for our bodies to be set free.

The word of the Lord.

5. ***A reading from the second letter of St. Paul to Timothy***

As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

The word of the Lord.

6. ***A reading from the book of Revelation***

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.