

## CHOICES FOR THE FIRST READING

### Reading #1

A reading from the book of Job

(19:1, 23-27)

Then Job answered,  
"O that my words were written  
down! O that they were inscribed  
in a book! O that with an iron pen  
and with lead they were engraved  
on a rock forever! For I know that  
my Redeemer lives,  
and that at the last he will stand upon the  
earth; and after my skin has been thus  
destroyed, then in my flesh I shall see God,  
whom I shall see on my side, and  
my eyes shall behold, and not another.

The Word of the Lord.

## Reading #2

A reading from the book of Wisdom (3:1-9)

The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God, and no torment will ever touch them.

In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be a disaster, and their going from us to be their destruction. but they are at peace.

For though in the sight of others they were punished, their hope is full of immortality.

Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good,

because God tested them and found them worthy of himself; like gold in the furnace, he tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering he accepted them. In the time of their visitation, they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble.

They will govern nations and rule over peoples, and the Lord will reign over them forever.

Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his holy ones, and he watches over his elect.

The Word of the Lord.

### Reading #3

A reading from the book of Wisdom

(4:7-15)

The righteous, though they die early, will be at rest. For old age is not honored for length of time,  
or measured by number of years.  
but understanding is grey hair for anyone, and a blameless life is ripe old age.

There were some who pleased God and were loved by him, and while living among sinners were taken up. They were caught up so that evil might not change their understanding or guile deceive their souls. For the fascination of wickedness obscures what is good, and roving desire perverts the innocent mind. Being perfected in a short time, they fulfilled long years, for their souls were pleasing to the Lord, therefore, he took them quickly from the midst of wickedness. Yet the peoples saw and did not understand, or take such a thing to heart, that God's grace and mercy are with his elect, and that he watches over his holy ones.

The Word of the Lord.

## Reading #4

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

(25:6-9)

On this mountain the Lord of hosts  
will make for all peoples a feast of rich  
food, a feast of well-aged wines,  
of rich food filled with  
marrow, of well-aged wines  
strained clear.

And he will destroy on this  
mountain the shroud that is cast over  
all peoples, the sheet that is spread  
over all nations; he will swallow up  
death forever.

Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all  
faces, and the disgrace of his people  
he will take away from all the  
earth, for the Lord has spoken.

It will be said on that  
day, Lo this is our God;  
we have waited for him, so that he might save  
us. This is the Lord for whom we have  
waited; let us be glad and rejoice in his  
salvation.

The Word of the Lord.

## Reading #5

A reading from the book of Lamentations

(3:17-26)

My soul is bereft of peace;  
I have forgotten what happiness  
is; so I say, "Gone is my glory,  
and all that I had hoped for from the Lord."  
The thought of my affliction and my  
homelessness is wormwood and gall!  
My soul continually thinks of  
it and is bowed down within  
me.

But this I call to mind, and therefore I have  
hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never  
ceases,  
his mercies never come to an  
end; they are new every  
morning; great is your  
faithfulness.

"The Lord is my portion," says my soul,  
"therefore I will hope in him."

The Lord is good to those who wait for  
him, to the soul that seeks him.  
It is good that one should wait  
quietly for the salvation of the  
Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

## Reading #6

A reading from the book of the prophet Daniel

(12:1-3)

"At that time Michael, the great prince, the protector of your people, shall arise. There shall be a time of anguish, such as has never occurred since nations first came into existence. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book. Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars, forever and ever.

The Word of the Lord.

## Reading #7

A reading from the second book of Maccabees

(12:43-46)

The noble Judas Maccabeus took up a collection, man by man, to the amount of two thousand drachmas of silver, and sent it to Jerusalem to provide for a sin offering. In doing this he acted very well and honorably, taking account of the resurrection. For if he were not expecting that those who had fallen asleep would rise again, it would have been superfluous and foolish to pray for the dead. But if he was looking to the splendid reward that is laid up for those who fall asleep in godliness, it was a holy and pious thought. Therefore he made atonement for the dead, so that they might be delivered from their sin.

The Word of the Lord.