

OLD TESTAMENT - FIRST READING (Please choose one)

1. A reading from the Second Book of Macabees: 12:43-46

Judas then took up a collection among all his soldiers, amounting to two thousand silver drachmas, which he sent to Jerusalem to provide for an expiatory sacrifice. In doing this he acted in a very excellent and noble way, inasmuch as he had the resurrection of the dead in view; for if he were not expecting the fallen to rise again, it would have been useless and foolish to pray for them in death. But if he

did this with a view to the splendid reward that awaits those who had gone to rest in godliness, it was a holy and pious thought. Thus he made atonement for the dead that they might be freed from this sin.

The Word of the Lord.

2. A reading from the Book of Job: 19:1, 23-27

Job answered Bildad and Shuhite and said: Oh, would that my words were written down! Would that they were inscribed in a record: That with an iron chisel and with lead they were cut in the rock forever! But as for me, I know that my Vindicator lives, and that he will at last stand forth upon the dust; And from my flesh I shall see God; my inmost being is consumed with longing. Whom I myself shall see: my own eyes, not another's, shall behold him.

The Word of the Lord.

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

But the souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them. They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead; and their passing away was thought an affliction and their going forth from us, utter destruction. But they are in peace. For if before men and women, indeed, they be punished, yet is their hope full of immortality; chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed, because God tried them and found them worthy of himself. As gold in the furnace, he proved them, and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself. In the time of their visitation they shall shine, and shall dart about as sparks through stubble; They shall judge nations and rule over peoples, and the LORD shall be their King forever. Those who trust in him shall understand truth, and the faithful shall abide with him in love: Because grace and mercy are with his holy ones, and his care is with the elect.

The Word of the Lord.

3b. A Reading from the Book of Wisdom (shorter form) 3: 1-6, 9

But the souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them. They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead; and their passing away was thought an affliction and their going forth from us, utter destruction. But they are in peace. For if before men and women, indeed, they be punished, yet is their hope full of immortality; Chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed, because God tried them and found them worthy of himself. As gold in the furnace, he proved them, and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself. Those who trust in him shall understand truth, and the faithful shall abide with him in love: Because grace and mercy are with his holy ones, and his care is with the elect.

The Word of the Lord.

4. A Reading from the Book of Wisdom: 4: 7-15

But the just man, though he die early, shall be at rest. For the age that is honorable comes not with the passing of time, nor can it be measured in terms of years. Rather, understanding is the hoary crown for men, and an unsullied life, the attainment of old age. He who pleased God was loved; he who lived among sinners was transported-Snatched away, lest wickedness pervert his mind or deceit beguile his soul; For the witchery of paltry things obscures what is right and the whirl of desire transforms the innocent mind. Having become perfect in a short while, he reached the fullness of a long career; For his soul was pleasing to the LORD, therefore he sped him out of the midst of wickedness. But the people saw and did not understand, nor did they take this into account.

The Word of the Lord.

5. A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah: 25: 6, 7-9

On this mountain the LORD of hosts will provide for all peoples. On this mountain he will destroy the veil that veils all peoples, The web that is woven over all nations; God will destroy death forever. The Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces; The reproach of his people he will remove from the whole earth; for the LORD has spoken. On that day it will be said: "Behold our God, to whom we

looked to save us! This is the LORD for whom we looked; let us rejoice and be glad that he has saved us!"

The Word of the Lord.

6. A Reading from the Book of Lamentations: 3: 17-26

My soul is deprived of peace, I have forgotten what happiness is; I tell myself my future is lost, all that I hoped for from the LORD. The thought of my homeless poverty is wormwood and gall; Remembering it over and over leaves my soul downcast within me. But I will call this to mind, as my reason to have hope: The favors of the LORD are not exhausted, his mercies are not spent; They are renewed each morning, so great is his faithfulness. My portion is the LORD, says my soul; therefore will I hope in him.

Good is the LORD to one who waits for him, to the soul that seeks him; It is good to hope in silence for the saving help of the Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

7. A Reading from the Prophet Daniel: 12: 1-3

At that time there shall arise Michael, the great prince, guardian of your people; It shall be a time unsurpassed in distress since nations began until that time. At that time your people shall escape, everyone who is found written in the book. Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some shall live forever, others shall be an everlasting horror and disgrace. But the wise shall shine brightly like the splendor of the firmament, And those who lead the many to justice shall be like the stars forever.

The Word of the Lord.

NEW TESTAMENT - SECOND READING (Choose one)

(Read after choir/cantor sings responsorial Psalm)

1. A Reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans: 5:5-11

Brothers and sisters: Hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the holy Spirit that has been given to us. For Christ, while we were still helpless, yet died at the appointed time for the ungodly. Indeed, only with difficulty does one die for a just person,

though perhaps for a good person one might even find courage to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us. How much more then, since we are now justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath. Indeed, if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, how much more, once reconciled, will we be saved by his life. Not only that, but we also boast of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

The Word of the Lord.

2. A Reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans: 5: 17-21

For if, by the transgression of one person, death came to reign through that one, how much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of justification come to reign in life through the one person Jesus Christ. In conclusion, just as through one transgression condemnation came upon all, so through one righteous act acquittal and life came to all. For just as through the disobedience of one person the many were made sinners, so through the obedience of one the many will be made righteous. The law entered in so that transgression might increase but, where sin increased, grace overflowed all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through justification for etemallife

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

3. A Reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans: 6: 3-9

Brothers and Sisters: Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life. For if we have grown into union with him through a death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection.

We know that our old self was crucified with him, so that our sinful body might be done away with, that we might no longer be in slavery to sin. For a dead person has been absolved from sin. If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has power over him. **The Word of the Lord.**

3b. A Reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans: 6:3-4; 8-9

(Shorter Form)

Brothers and Sisters: Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life. If, then we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has power over him. **The Word of the Lord.**

4. A Reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans: 8: 14-23

Brothers and Sisters: Those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.

For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a spirit of adoption, through which we cry, "Abba, Father!" The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him. I consider that the sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us. For creation awaits with eager expectation the revelation of the children of God; for creation was made subject to futility, not of its own accord but because of the one who subjected it, in hope that creation itself would be set free from slavery to corruption and share in the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that all creation is groaning in labor pains even until now; and not only that, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, we also groan within ourselves as we wait for adoption, therefore redemption of our bodies.

The Word of the Lord.

5. A Reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans: 8:31b-35, 37-39

Brothers and Sisters: If God is for us, who can be against us? God who did not spare his own Son but handed him over for us all, how will God not also give us everything else along with him? Who will bring a charge against God's chosen ones? It is God who acquits us. Who will condemn? It is Christ Jesus who died, rather, was raised, who also is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present

things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

6. A Reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans: 14:7-9, 10b-12

Brothers and Sisters: None of us lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself. For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. For this is why Christ died and came to life, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God; for it is written: *"As I live, say the Lord, every knee shall bend before me, and every tongue shall give praise to God."* So then each of us shall give an account of himself to God.

The Word of the Lord.

7. A Reading from the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians: 15: 20-23, 24b-28

Brothers and Sisters: Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead came also as a man. For just as in Adam all die, so too in Christ shall all be brought to life, but each one in proper order: Christ the first fruits; then, at his coming, those who belong to Christ; then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to his God and Father. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. But when it says that everything has been subjected, it is clear that it excludes the One who subjected everything. The last enemy to be destroyed is death, for he subjected everything to him. When everything is subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to the One who subjected everything to him, so that God may be all in all.

The Word of the Lord.

7b. A Reading from the First Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians: 15:20-23 (Shorter Form)

Brothers and Sisters: Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead came also through a man. For

just as in Adam all die, so too in Christ shall all be brought to life, but each one in proper order: Christ the first fruits; then, at his coming, those who belong to Christ.

The Word of the Lord.

8. A Reading from the First Letter of st. Paul to the Corinthians: 15:51-57

Brothers and Sisters: Behold, I tell you a mystery. We shall not all fall asleep, but we will all be changed, in an instant, in the blink of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For that which is corruptible must clothe itself with incorruptibility, and that which is mortal must clothe itself with immortality. And when that which is

corruptible clothes itself in incorruptibility and that which is mortal clothes itself with immortality, then the word that is written shall come about:

"Death is swallowed up in victory.

Where, O death, is your victory.

Where, O death, is your sting?"

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Word of the Lord.

9. A Reading from the Second Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians:4:14-5:1

Brothers and Sisters: We know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and place us with you in God's presence. Everything indeed is for you, so that the grace bestowed in abundance on more and more people may cause the thanksgiving to overflow for the glory of God. Therefore, we are not discouraged; rather, although our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day . For this momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to what is seen but what is unseen; for what is seen is transitory, but what is unseen is eternal. For we know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven.

The Word of the Lord.

10. A Reading from the Second Letter of st. Paul to the Corinthians: 5:1,6-10

Brothers and Sisters: We know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hand, eternal in heaven. So, we are always courageous, although we know that while we are athome in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yet we are courageous, and we would rather leave the body and go home to the Lord. Therefore, we aspire to please the Lord, whether we are at home or away. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive recompense, according to what he or she did in the body, whether good or evil.

The Word of the Lord.

11. A Reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Philippians: 3:20-21

Brothers and Sisters: Our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we also await a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will change our lowly body to conform with is glorified body by the power that enables him also to bring all things into subjection to himself.

The Word of the Lord.

12. A Reading from the First Letter of St. Paul to the Thessalonians: 4: 13-18

We do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, about those who have fallen asleep, so that you may not grieve like the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose, so too will God, through Jesus, bring with him those who have fallen asleep. Indeed, we tell you this, on the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will surely not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord, with a word of command, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God, will come down from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Thus we

shall always be with the Lord. Therefore, console one another with these words.

The Word of the Lord.

13. A Reading from the Second Letter of St. Paul to Timothy: 2: 8-13

Beloved: Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David: such is my gospel, for which I am suffering, even to the point of chains, like a criminal. But the word of God is not chained. Therefore, I bear with everything for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, together with eternal glory. This saying is trustworthy: If we have

died with Christ we shall also live with Christ; if we persevere we shall also reign with him. But if we deny Christ he will deny us. If we are unfaithful he remains faithful, for Jesus cannot deny himself.

The Word of the Lord.

14. A Reading from the First Letter of St. John: 3: 1-2

Beloved: See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God. Yet so we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we shall be has not yet been revealed. We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

The Word of the Lord.

15. A Reading from the First Letter of John: 3: 14-16

We know that we have passed from death to life because we love our brothers and sister. Whoever does not love remains in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life remaining in him. The way we come to know love was that Jesus laid down his life for us; so we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.

The Word of the Lord.

Optional First Readings from the New Testament for use during the Easter Season:

1. A Reading from the Acts of the Apostle: 10: 34-43

Peter proceeded to speak saying: " In truth, I see that God shows no partiality. Rather in every nation whoever fears him and acts uprightly is acceptable to him. You know the word that he sent to the children of Israel as he proclaimed peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all, as he proclaimed all over Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached, how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power. He went about doing good and healing all those oppressed by the Devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree. This man God raised on the third day and granted that he be visible, not to all the people, but to us, the witnesses chosen by God in advance, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commissioned us to preach to the people and testify that he is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness, that everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins through his name." **The Word of the Lord.**

1 b. A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles: (Shorter Form) 10: 34-36,42-43

Peter proceeded to speak saying: "In truth, I see that God shows no partiality. Rather in every nation who- ever fears him and acts uprightly is acceptable to him. You know the word that he sent to the children of Israel as he proclaimed peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. He commissioned us to preach to the people and testify that he is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness, that everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins through his name." **The Word of the Lord.**

2. A Reading from the Book of Revelation: 14: 13

I, John, heard a voice from heaven say, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. " "Yes, said the Spirit, "let them find rest from their labors, for their works accompany them."

The Word of the Lord.

3. A Reading from the Book of Revelation: 20: 11-21:1 pg. 1158

I, John, saw a large white throne and the one who was sitting on it. The earth and the sky fled from his presence and there was no place for them. I saw the dead, the great and the lowly, standing before the throne, and scrolls were opened. Then another scroll was opened, the Book of Life. The dead were judged according to their deed, by what was written in the scrolls. The sea gave up its dead; then Death and Ha- des gave up their dead. All the dead were judged according to their deeds. Than Death and Hades were thrown into the pool of fire. (This pool of fire is the second death). Anyone whose name was not found written in the Book of Life was thrown into the pool of fire. Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

The Word of the Lord.

4. A Reading from the Book of Revelation: 21: 1-5a, 6b-7 pg. 1159

I, John saw a new heaven and a new earth. The former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. I also saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from god, pre- pared as a bride adorned for her husband. I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, God's dwelling is with the human race. He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will always be with them as their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain, for the old order has passed away." The One who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the

beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give a gift from the spring of life-giving water. The victor will inherit

these gifts, and I shall be his God, and he will be my son."

The Word of the Lord.