

OLD TESTAMENT READINGS

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUNERALS

St. Mary, Hyde Park

Updated May 2021



Proverbs 31: 10, 28-30

A reading from the Book of Proverbs

Who can find a woman of worth?
Far beyond jewels is her value.
Her children rise up and call her blessed;
her husband, too, praises her:
“Many are the women of proven worth,
but you have excelled them all.”
Charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting;
the woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.

The Word of the Lord.

Ecclesiastes 3: 1-11

A reading from the Book of Ecclesiastes

There is an appointed time for everything,
and a time for every affair under the heavens.

A time to give birth, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to uproot the plant.

A time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to tear down, and a time to build.

A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance.

A time to scatter stones, and a time to gather them;
a time to embrace, and a time to be far from embraces.

A time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to cast away.

A time to rend, and a time to sew;
a time to be silent, and a time to speak.

A time to love, and a time to hate;
a time of war, and a time of peace.

What profit have workers from their toil?

I have seen the business that God has given to mortals to be busied about.

God has made everything appropriate to its time,
but has put the timeless into their hearts so they cannot find out,
from beginning to end, the work which God has done.

The Word of the Lord.

A reading from the book of Wisdom

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 to others, indeed, they seem 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 judgement, they shall shine
and 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.

A reading from the Book of Wisdom

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.

Sirach 44: 1, 10-12, 14-15

A reading from the Book of Sirach

I will now praise the godly, our ancestors, in their own time, yet these also were godly;

 Their virtues have not been forgotten.

 Their wealth remains in their families, their heritage with their descendants.

Through God's covenant their family endures, and their offspring for their sake.

 Their bodies are buried in peace, but their name lives on and on.

At gatherings their wisdom is retold, and the assembly proclaims their praises.

The Word of the Lord.

Isaiah 25: 6a, 7-9

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

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.
He 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:
“Indeed, this is our God; we looked to him, and he saved us!
This is the LORD to whom we looked;
let us rejoice and be glad that he has saved us!”

The Word of the Lord.

Lamentations 3: 17-26

A reading from the book of Lamentations

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 this I will call to mind as my reason to 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 I will 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.

During the Easter season, one of the following four readings is used as a first reading instead of a passage from the Old Testament.

Acts of the Apostles 10: 34-36, 42-43

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

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.

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.

Revelation 14: 13

A reading from the Book of Revelation

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.

Revelation 20: 11-21: 1

A reading from the Book of Revelation

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 deeds, by what was written in the scrolls.

The sea gave up its dead; then Death and Hades gave up their dead.

All the dead were judged according to their deeds.

Then 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.

Revelation 21: 1-5a, 6b-7

A reading from the Book of Revelation

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, prepared 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.