

MASSES FOR THE DEAD

FIRST READING (FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT)

A-1: 2 Maccabees 12:43-46

A reading from the second Book of Maccabees

Judas, the ruler of Israel,

**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.

A-2: Job 19:1, 23-27a

A reading from the Book of Job

Job answered Bildad the 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;

Whom I myself shall see:

my own eyes, not another's, shall behold him;

And from my flesh I shall see God;

my inmost being is consumed with longing.

The word of the Lord.

A-3: Proverbs 4:20-27

A reading from the Book of Proverbs

**My son, to my words be attentive,
to my sayings incline your ear;
Let them not slip from your sight,
keep them within your heart;
For they are life to those who find them,
bringing health to one's whole being.
With all vigilance guard your heart,
for in it are the sources of life.
Dishonest mouth put away from you,
deceitful lips put far from you.
Let your eyes look straight ahead
and your gaze be focused forward.
Survey the path for your feet,
and all your ways will be sure.
Turn neither to right nor to left,
keep your foot far from evil.**

The word of the Lord.

A-4: Ecclesiastes 3:1-11

A reading from the Book of Ecclesiastes

**There is an appointed time for everything,
and a time for every thing under the heavens.
A time to be born, 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 advantage has the worker from his toil?
I have considered the task that God has appointed
for the sons of men to be busied about.
He has made everything appropriate to its time,
and has put the timeless into their hearts,
without man's ever discovering,
from beginning to end, the work which God has done.**

The word of the Lord.

A-5: Ecclesiastes 3:1-15

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 be born, 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 advantage has the worker from his toil?
I have considered the task
which God has appointed for men to be busied about.
He has made everything appropriate to its time,
and has put the timeless into their hearts,
without men's ever discovering, from beginning to end,
the work which God has done.
I recognized that there is nothing better
than to be glad and to do well during life.
For every man, moreover,
to eat and drink and enjoy the fruit of all his labor is a gift of God.
I recognized that whatever God does will endure forever;
there is no adding to it, or taking from it.
Thus has God done that he may be revered.
What now is has already been;
what is to be, already is;
and God restores what would otherwise be displaced.**

The word of the Lord.

A-6: (Long form) Wisdom 3:1-9

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 before men, 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 his elect.**

The word of the Lord.

A-7: (Short form) Wisdom 3:1-6, 9

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 in the eyes of men, 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 his elect.**

The word of the Lord.

A-8: Wisdom 4:7-15

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.

A-9: 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:

“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.

A-10: Isaiah 35:3-6a, 10

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

**Strengthen the hands that are feeble,
make firm the knees that are weak,
Say to those whose hearts are frightened:
Be strong, fear not!
Here is your God, he comes with vindication;
With divine recompense he comes to save you.
Then will the eyes of the blind be opened,
the ears of the deaf be cleared;
Then will the lame leap like a stag,
then the tongue of the dumb will sing.
Those whom the LORD has ransomed
will return and enter Zion singing,
crowned with everlasting joy;
They will meet with joy and gladness,
sorrow and mourning will flee.**

The word of the Lord.

A-11: Isaiah 40:28-31

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

Do you not know?

Have you not heard?

The LORD is God from of old, creator of the ends of the earth.

He does not faint or grow weary,

and his knowledge is beyond scrutiny.

He gives power to the faint, abundant strength to the weak.

Though young men faint and grow weary,

and youths stagger and fall,

they that hope in the LORD will renew their strength,

they will soar on eagles' wings;

They will run and not grow weary,

walk and not grow faint.

The word of the Lord.

A-12: 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 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.

A-13: Daniel 12:1-3

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Daniel

In those days, I, Daniel, mourned

and heard this word of the Lord:

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.

FIRST READING (DURING THE EASTER SEASON)

AA-1: (Long form) Acts 10:34-43

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,
what has happened 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.

FIRST READING (DURING THE EASTER SEASON)

AA-2: (Short form) Acts 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.

FIRST READING (DURING THE EASTER SEASON)

AA-3: 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.

FIRST READING (DURING THE EASTER SEASON)

AA-4: 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.

FIRST READING (DURING THE EASTER SEASON)

AA-5: 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.