

Readings from the Old Testament

You may wish to choose any one of the 7 readings from the Old Testament.

1. A Reading from the Book of Ecclesiasticus

Let us praise the illustrious,
our ancestors in their successive generations.

Here is a list of the generous
whose good works have not been forgotten.

In their descendants there remains
a rich inheritance born of them.

Their descendants stand by their covenants and
thanks to them, so do their children's children.

Their offspring will last forever,
their glory will not fade.

Their bodies have been buried in peace,
and their names live on for all generations.

The peoples will proclaim their wisdom,
the assembly will celebrate their praise.

The word of the Lord.

2. A Reading from the book of Wisdom

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 a disaster,

their leaving us, like annihilation;

but they are in peace.

If they experienced punishment as men see it,

their hope was rich with immortality;
 slight was their affliction, great will their blessing be.
 God has put them to the test
 and proved them worthy to be with him;
 he has tested like them like gold in a furnace,
 and accepted them as a holocaust.
 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.

3. A Reading from the Book of Wisdom

The virtuous person, though he die before his time, will find rest.
 Length of days is not what makes age honourable,
 nor number of years the measure of life;
 understanding, this is man's grey hairs, untarnished life, this is ripe old age.
 He has sought to please God, so God has loved him;
 as he was living among sinners, he has been taken up.
 He has been carried off so that evil may not wrap his understanding
 or treachery seduce his soul;
 Coming to perfection in so short a while, he achieved long life;
 his soul being pleasing to the Lord,
 he has taken him quickly from the wickedness around him.
 Yet people look on, uncomprehending;
 it does not enter their heads that grace and mercy await the chosen of the Lord,
 and protection, his holy ones.

The word of the Lord.

4. A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah:

Do not be afraid, for I have redeemed you;
 I have called you by your name, you are mine.
 Should you pass through the sea, I will be with you;
 Or through the rivers, they will not swallow you up.
 Should you walk through fire, you will not be scorched and the flames will not burn you.
 For I am Yahweh, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour.

The word of the Lord.

5. A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah

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 we 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.'
 Brooding on my anguish and affliction is gall and wormwood.
 My spirit ponders it continually and sinks within me.
 This is what I shall tell my heart, and so recover hope:
 the favours of the Lord are not all past,
 his kindness is not all 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.'

The Lord is good to those who trust him,

to the soul that searches for him.

It is good to wait in silence for the Lord to save.

The word of the Lord.

7. A reading from the book of Ecclesiastes:

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.

A time to be born, and a time to die;

A time to plant, and a time to root up what is planted;

A time to break down and a time to build up;

A time to weep and a time to laugh;

A time to mourn and a time to dance;

A time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing;

A time to seek, and a time to lose;

A time to keep and a time to discard;

A time to tear, and a time to sew;

A time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

God has made everything suitable for its time.

The word of the Lord.

8. A reading from the Prophet Daniel,

I Daniel, was doing penance when I received this message from the Lord:

'There is going to be a time of great distress, unparalleled since the nations came into existence.

When that time comes, your own people will be spared, all those whose names are found written in the Book. Of those who lie sleeping in the dust of the earth many will awake, some to

everlasting life. The learned will shine as brightly as the vault of Heaven, and those who have instructed many in virtue, as bright as stars for all eternity.’

The word of the Lord.

The Psalm

If the Psalm is not being sung you may choose one of the following for reading.

1st choice

® *The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.*

Or

® *If I should walk in the valley of darkness, no evil would I fear,
for you are there with me.*

1. The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures
where he gives me repose.
Near restful waters he leads me,
to revive my drooping spirit. ®

2. He guides me along the right path;
He is true to his name.
If I should walk in the valley of darkness,
no evil would I fear.
You are there with your crook and your staff;
with these you give me comfort. ®

3. You have prepared a banquet for me
in the sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing. ®

4. Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me
all the days of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell
forever and ever.

2nd choice

®*The Lord is my light and my help.*

OR

®*I am sure I shall see the Lord's goodness in the land of the living.*

1. The Lord is my light and my help;
whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
before whom shall I shrink? ®

2. There is one thing I ask of the Lord,
for this I long,
to live in the house of the Lord,
all the days of my life,
to savour the sweetness of the Lord,
to behold his temple. ®

3. O Lord, hear my voice when I call;
have mercy and answer.

It is your face, O Lord, that I seek;
hide not your face. ⑩

4. I am sure I shall see the Lord's goodness
in the land of the living.
Hope in him, hold firm and take heart.
hope in the Lord. ⑩

3rd choice

⑩ *I wait for the Lord, I count on his word.*

1. Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord,
Lord, hear my voice!
O let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my pleading. ⑩

2. If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt,
Lord, who would survive?
but with you is found forgiveness:
for this we revere you. ⑩

3. My soul is waiting for the Lord,
I count on his word.
My soul is longing for the Lord
more than the watchman for daybreak. ⑩

4. Because with the Lord there is mercy
and fullness of redemption,
Israel indeed he will redeem

from all its iniquity. ®

4th Choice

® *For you my soul is thirsting, O Lord, my God.*

1. O God, you are my God, for you I long;
for you my soul is thirsting.

My body pines for you
like a dry weary land without water. ®

2. So I gaze on you in the sanctuary
to see your strength and your glory.

For your love is better than life,
my lips will speak your praise. ®

3. So I will bless you all my life,
in your name I will lift up my hands.
My soul shall be filled as with a banquet,
my mouth shall praise you with joy. ®

4. You have been my help;
in the shadow of your wings I rejoice.

My soul clings to you;
your right hand holds me fast. ®

Readings from the New Testament

You may wish to choose any one of the 13 readings from the New Testament

1. A Reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans

You have been taught that when we were baptised in Christ Jesus we were baptised in his death. In other words, when we were baptised we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too might live a new life. If in union with Christ we have imitated his death, we shall also imitate him in his resurrection. But we believe that having died with Christ we shall return to life with him: Christ, as we know, having been raised from the dead will never die again. Death has no more power over him any more.

The word of the Lord.

2. A Reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans

The life and death of each of us has its influence on others; if we live, we live for the Lord; and 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 that he might be both Lord of the dead and the living. We shall all have to stand before the judgement seat of God; as scripture says; By my life – it is the Lord who speaks – every knee shall bend before me, and every tongue shall praise God. It is God, therefore, that each of us must give an account of himself.

The word of the Lord.

3. A Reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans

Nothing can come between us and the love of Christ, even if we are troubled or worried, or being persecuted, or lacking food and clothes, or being threatened or even attacked. These are the trials through which we triumph, by the power of him who loved us.

For I am certain of this: neither death nor life, no angel, no prince, nothing that exists, nothing still to come, not any power, or height or depth, nor any created thing, can ever come between us and the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The word of the Lord.

4. A Reading from the Second Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians

For we know that when the tent we live in on earth is folded up, there is a house built for us, an everlasting home not made by human hands, in the heavens.

We are always full of confidence, then, when we remember that to live in the body means to be exiled from the Lord, going as we do by faith and not by sight - we are full of confidence, I say, and actually want to be exiled from the body and make our home with the Lord. Whether we are living in the body or exiled from it, we are intent on pleasing him. For all the truth about us will be brought out in the law court of Christ, and each of us will get what we deserve for the things we did in the body, good and bad.

The word of the Lord.

5. A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Colossians 3:1-4

Since you have been brought back to true life with Christ, you must look for the things that are in heaven, where Christ is, sitting at God's right hand. Let your thoughts be on heavenly things, not on the things that are on the earth, because you have died, and now the life you have is hidden with Christ in God. But when Christ is revealed - and he is your life - you too will be revealed in all your glory with him.

The word of the Lord

6. A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Philippians

I believe nothing can happen that will outweigh the supreme advantage of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. All I want is to know is Christ and the power of his Resurrection and to share his sufferings by reproducing the pattern of his death. That is the way I can hope to take my place in the resurrection of the dead. Not that I have become perfect yet: I have not yet won, but I am still running, trying to capture the prize for which Christ Jesus captured me. I can assure you, I am far from thinking I have already won. All I can say is that I forget the past and I strain ahead for what is to come; I am racing for the finish, for the prize to which God calls us upwards to receive in Christ Jesus.

The word of the Lord.

7. A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Philippians

I want you to be happy, always happy in the Lord; I repeat, what I want is your happiness. Let your tolerance be evident for everyone: the Lord is very near. There is no need to worry; but if there is anything you need, pray for it, asking God for it with prayer and thanksgiving, and that peace of God, which is so much greater than we can understand, will guard your hearts and your thoughts, in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers fill your minds with everything that is true, everything that is noble, everything that is good and pure, everything that we love and honour, everything that can be thought virtuous or worthy of praise.

The word of the Lord.

8. 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 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 such thoughts as these we will comfort one another.

The word of the Lord.

9. A Reading from the Letter of St. Paul to Timothy

Remember the Good News I carry, 'Jesus Christ risen from the dead, sprung from the race of David'; it is on account of this that I have my own hardships to bear, even to being chained like a criminal – but they cannot chain up God's new. So I hear it all for the sake of those who are chosen so that in the end they may hear the salvation that is in Christ Jesus and eternal glory that comes with it. Here is a saying you can rely on:

If we have died with him, then we shall live with him.

If we hold firm, then we shall reign with him.

If we disown him, then he will disown us.

We may be unfaithful, but he is always faithful,
for he cannot disown his own self.

The word of the Lord.

10. A Reading from the letter of St. John

God's love for us was revealed when God sent into the world his only Son so that we could have life through him; this is the love I mean: not our love for God but God's loves for us when he sent his Son to be the sacrifice that takes our sins away. My dear people, since God has loved us so much, we too should love one another.

The word of the Lord.

11. A Reading from the first letter of St. Peter

Blessed be the God the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy has given us a new birth by raising up Jesus Christ from the dead, so that we have a sure hope and the promise of an inheritance that can never be spoilt and never fade away, because it is being kept for you in the heavens. Through your faith, God's power will guard you until the salvation which has been prepared for you has been revealed at the end of time. This is a cause of great joy for you, even though you may for a short time have to bear being plagued by all sorts of trials; so that, when Jesus Christ is revealed, your faith will have been tested and proved like gold – only it is more precious than gold, which is corruptible even though it bears testing by fire – and then you will have praise and glory and honour. You did not see him, yet you love him; and still without seeing him, you are already filled with a joy so glorious that it cannot be described, because you believe; and you are sure of the end to which your faith looks forward, that is, the salvation of your souls.

The word of the Lord.

12. A Reading from the first letter of St. John

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.

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.

13. A Reading from the Book of Revelations

I, John, heard a voice from heaven say to me, 'Write own: Happy are those who die in the Lord! 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.

Prayers of Intercession

You may like to choose 4 or 5 prayers from the list below. The priest begins with an introduction to the prayers and the reader(s) read(s) the chosen prayers. The priest then concludes the prayers with a closing prayer.

Celebrant: God, the almighty Father, raised Christ his Son from the dead; with confidence we ask him to save all his people, living and dead:

An intention in Irish:

1. A phobal Dé, guímid le chéile ar son ár ndearthár (ndeirféar) atá marbh. Guímis freisin ar son na hEaglaise, as son síochána sa domhan agus ar ár son féin. **A Thiarna, éist linn.**

A General Intention (choose one):

2. For all of us assembled here to worship in faith, that we may be gathered together again in God's Kingdom. **Lord, hear us.**

3. We pray for all gathered here in worship. May our lives bear witness to the generous love of the Lord. **Lord, hear us**

For the Sick (choose one):

4. We pray for the sick at home and hospital, that they may experience Christ's presence with them. **Lord, hear us.**
5. We pray for those who have a life threatening illness; that medical research will find ways to combat disease. **Lord, hear us.**
6. We remember those who are terminally ill. May the Lord be close to them as they enter the last stage of their journey towards their homeland. **Lord, hear us**

For Carers (choose one):

7. For those who were at the service of N in his/her illness (doctors, nurses, carers); that they may receive God's grace and assistance. **Lord, hear us.**
8. Let us pray for all those who minister to the sick and the dying; that they may care with gentle hearts and hands. **Lord, hear us.**

For mourners: (Choose one)

9. Let us pray for all who mourn our sister/our brother N's death. Comfort them in sorrow. Fill the emptiness and the sadness in their hearts with the presence of your love. **Lord, hear us.**
10. We pray for all who mourn N; that they may be assured that Christ is with them in their sorrow and may they find strength and comfort through faith in Jesus Christ. **Lord, hear us.**
11. For the family and friends of N, that they may be consoled in their grief by the Lord who wept at the death of his friend Lazarus. **Lord, hear us.**

For our own needs:

12. Let us make our own personal petitions in the silence of our heart (pause for 30 seconds)
Lord, hear us.

For the one who has died (choose one):

13. We pray in thanksgiving for all the blessings that came to so many people through the life of N. May she/he receive the fullness of God's blessings in eternity. **Lord, hear us**

14. Let us remember N. with affection as we thank God for N. contribution to his/her family, friends and the wider community. Help us to keep alive the values and the ideals she/he put before us. **Lord, hear us.**

15. We pray for N. who leaves us in death, that God the Father will lead N. safely home and share with him/her the joys of the Kingdom – light, happiness and peace. **Lord, hear us.**

16. As we remember N, a good and generous person created in the image and likeness of God, may we always know and recognise God in every person we meet. **Lord, hear us.**

17. Let us pray in thanksgiving for the life of N., for all the love s/he gave and for all the many good ways through which s/he touched the lives of others. May N. be found worthy of the gift of eternal life. **Lord, hear us.**

For all the dead

18. We pray for N. and for all the deceased, those we have loved and cherished and others with no one to remember them.

Let us also pray for his/her

- deceased parents (Ns)
- sons and daughters (Ns)
- brothers and sister (Ns)
- others (Ns)

May God welcome them into the radiant light of his presence. **Lord, hear us**

Celebrant: God, our shelter and our strength, you listen in love to the cry of your people: hear the prayers we offer for our departed brothers and sisters. Grant them eternal life. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.