



FUNERAL READINGS

Please select:

- A First Reading
- A Responsorial Psalm
- A Second Reading (optional)
- A Gospel

First Reading Option 1 - Job 19:1, 23-27

A reading from the book of Job.

Job said:

'Ah, would that these words of mine were written down,
inscribed on some monument
with iron chisel and engraving tool,
cut into the rock for ever.

This I know: that my Avenger lives,
and he, the Last, will take his stand on earth.
After my awaking, he will set me close to him,
and from my flesh I shall look on God.
He whom I shall see will take my part:
these eyes will gaze on him
and find him not aloof.'

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm Option 1 – Psalm 26

The response to the psalm is:
The Lord is my light and my help.

The Lord is my light and my help.

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?

The Lord is my light and my help.

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.

The Lord is my light and my help.

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.

The Lord is my light and my help.

I am sure that 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!

The Lord is my light and my help.

First Reading Option 2 – Wisdom 3:1-9

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 blessings be.

God has put them to the test
and proved them worthy to be with him;
he has tested them like gold in a furnace,
and accepted them as a holocaust.

When the time comes for his visitation they will shine out;
as sparks run through stubble, so will they.

They shall judge the nations, rule over peoples,
and the Lord will be their king for ever.

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.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm Option 2 – Psalms 114 & 115

The response to the Psalm is:

I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living.

I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living.

How gracious is the Lord, and just;

our God has compassion.

The Lord protects the simple hearts;

I was helpless so he saved me.

I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living.

I trusted, even when I said:

‘I am sorely afflicted,’

and when I said in my alarm:

‘No man can be trusted.

I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living.

O precious in the eyes of the Lord

is the death of his faithful.

Your servant, Lord, your servant am I;

you have loosened my bonds.

I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living.

First Reading Option 3 – Wisdom 4:7-15

A reading from the book of Wisdom.

The virtuous man, though he die before his time, will find rest.
Length of days is not what makes age honourable,
nor number of years the true 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 warp his understanding
or treachery seduce his soul;
for the fascination of evil throws good things into the shade,
and the whirlwind of desire corrupts a simple heart.
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.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm Option 3 – Psalm 22

The response to the psalm is:

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

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

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.

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

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.

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

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

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

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

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

First Reading Option 4 – Isaiah 25:6-9

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 for ever.

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 hope 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.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm Option 4 – Psalm 22

The response to the psalm is:

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

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

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.

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

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.

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

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

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

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

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

First Reading Option 5 – Lamentations 3:17-26

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 kindnesses are not exhausted;
every morning they are renewed;
great is his faithfulness.
'My portion and cup 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.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm Option 5 – Psalm 24

The response to the Psalm is:
To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

Remember your mercy, Lord,
and the love you have shown from of old.
In your love remember me,
because of your goodness, O Lord.

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

Relieve the anguish of my heart
and set me free from my distress.
See my affliction and my toil
and take all my sins away.

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

Preserve my life and rescue me.
Do not disappoint me, you are my refuge.
May innocence and uprightness protect me:
for my hope is in you, O Lord.

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

First Reading Option 6 – Daniel 12:1-3

A reading from the prophet Daniel.

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

‘At that time Michael will stand up, the great prince who mounts guard over your people. There is going to be a time of great distress, unparalleled since nations first 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, some to shame and everlasting disgrace. The learned will shine as brightly as the vault of the heaven, and those who have instructed many in virtue, as bright as stars for all eternity.’

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm Option 6 – Psalm 41

The response to the Psalm is:

My soul is thirsting for God, the God of my life.

My soul is thirsting for God, the God of my life.

Like the deer that yearns for running streams,
so my soul is yearning for you, my God.
My soul is thirsting for God, the God of my life;
when can I enter and see the face of God?

My soul is thirsting for God, the God of my life.

The things will I remember
as I pour out my soul:
how I would lead the rejoicing crowd
into the house of God,
amid cries of gladness and thanksgiving,
the throng wild with joy.

My soul is thirsting for God, the God of my life.

First Reading Option 7 – 2 Maccabees 12:43-45

A reading from the second book of Maccabees.

Judas, the leader of the Jews, took a collection from the people individually, amounting to nearly two thousand drachmae, and sent it to Jerusalem to have a sacrifice for sin offered, an altogether fine and noble action, in which he took full account of the resurrection. For if he had not expected the fallen to rise again it would have been superfluous and foolish to pray for the dead, whereas if he had in view the splendid recompense reserved for those who made a pious end, the thought was holy and devout. This was why he had this atonement sacrifice offered for the dead, so that they might be released from their sin.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm Option 7 – Psalm 102

The response to the Psalm is:
The Lord is compassion and love.

The Lord is compassion and love.

The Lord is compassion and love,
slow to anger and rich in mercy.
He does not treat us according to our sins
nor repay us according to our faults.

The Lord is compassion and love.

As a father has compassion on his sons,
the Lord has pity on those who fear him;
for he knows of what we are made,
he remembers that we are dust.

The Lord is compassion and love.

As for man, his days are like grass;
he flowers like the flowers of the field;
the wind blows and he is gone
and his place never sees him again.

The Lord is compassion and love.

But the love of the Lord is everlasting
upon those who hold him in fear;
his justice reaches out to children's children
when they keep his covenant in truth.

The Lord is compassion and love.

First Reading Option 8 (During Easter Season) – Acts 10:34-43

A reading from the Acts of Apostles.

Peter addressed Cornelius and his household:

‘The truth I have now come to realise,’ he said, ‘is that God does not have favourites, but that anybody of any nationality who fears God and does what is right is acceptable to him.

‘It is true, God sent his word to the people of Israel, and it was to them that the good news of peace was brought by Jesus Christ — but Jesus Christ is the Lord of all men. You must have heard about the recent happenings in Judaea; about Jesus of Nazareth and how he began in Galilee, after John had been preaching baptism. God had anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and because God was with him, Jesus went about doing good and curing all who had fallen into the power of the devil. Now I, and those with me, can witness to everything he did throughout the countryside of Judaea and in Jerusalem itself: and also to the fact that they killed him by hanging him on a tree, yet three days afterwards God raised him to life and allowed him to be seen, not by the whole people but only by certain witnesses God had chosen beforehand. Now we are those witnesses — we have eaten and drunk with him after his resurrection from the dead — and he has ordered us to proclaim this to his people and to tell them God has appointed him to judge everyone alive or dead. It is to him that all the prophets bear this witness: that all who believe in Jesus will have their sins forgiven through his name.’

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm Option 8 – Psalm 62

The response to the Psalm is:

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

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

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.

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

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.

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

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.

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

You have been my help;
in the shadow of your wings I rejoice.
My soul clings to you;
your right hand holds me fast.

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

First Reading Option 9 (During Easter Season) – Apocalypse 14:13

A reading from the book of the Apocalypse.

I, John, heard a voice from heaven say to me, ‘Write down: 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.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm Option 9 – Psalm 129

The response to the Psalm is:
Out of the depths, I cry to you, O Lord.

Out of the depths, I cry to you, O Lord.

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.

Out of the depths, I cry to you, O Lord.

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

Out of the depths, I cry to you, O Lord.

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.

Out of the depths, I cry to you, O Lord.

Because with the Lord there is mercy
and fullness of redemption,
Israel indeed he will redeem
from all its iniquity.

Out of the depths, I cry to you, O Lord.

First Reading Option 10 (Easter Season) – Apocalypse 20:11-21:1

A reading from the book of the Apocalypse.

I, John, saw a great white throne and the One who was sitting on it. In his presence, earth and sky vanished, leaving no trace. I saw the dead, both great and small, standing in front of his throne, while the book of life was opened, and other books opened which were the record of what they had done in their lives, by which the dead were judged.

The sea gave up all the dead who were in it; Death and Hades were emptied of the dead that were in them; and everyone was judged according to the way in which he had lived. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the burning lake. This burning lake is the second death; and anybody whose name could not be found written in the book of life was thrown into the burning lake.

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; the first heaven and the first earth had disappeared now, and there was no longer any sea.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm Option 10 – Psalm 142

The response to the Psalm is:
Lord, listen to my prayer.

Lord, listen to my prayer.

Lord, listen to my prayer:
turn your ear to my appeal.
You are faithful, you are just; give answer.
Do not call your servant to judgement
for no one is just in your sight.

Lord, listen to my prayer.

I remember the days that are past:
I ponder all your works.
I muse on what your hand has wrought
and to you I stretch out my hands.
Like a parched land my soul thirst for you.

Lord, listen to my prayer.

Lord, make haste and give me answer:
for my spirit fails within me.
In the morning let me know your love
for I put my trust in you.

Lord, listen to my prayer.

Teach me to do your will
for you, O Lord, are my God.
Let your good spirit guide me
in ways that are level and smooth.

Lord, listen to my prayer.

First Reading Option II (Easter Season) – Apocalypse 21:1-7

A reading from the book of the Apocalypse.

I, John, saw a new heaven and a new earth; the first heaven and the first earth had disappeared now, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the holy city, and the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, as beautiful as a bride all dressed for her husband. Then I heard a loud voice call from the throne, ‘You see this city? Here God lives among men. He will make his home among them; they shall be his people, and he will be their God; his name is God-with-them. He will wipe away all tears from their eyes; there will be no more death, and no more mourning or sadness. The world of the past has gone.’

Then the One sitting on the throne spoke: ‘Now I am making the whole of creation new,’ he said. ‘I will give water from the well of life free to anybody who is thirsty; it is the rightful inheritance of the one who proves victorious; and I will be his God and he a son to me.’

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm Option II – Psalm 121

The response to the Psalm is:

I rejoiced when I heard them say: 'Let us go to God's house.'

I rejoiced when I heard them say: 'Let us go to God's house.'

I rejoiced when I heard them say:

'Let us go to God's house.'

And now our feet are standing
within your gates, O Jerusalem.

I rejoiced when I heard them say: 'Let us go to God's house.'

Jerusalem is built as a city
strongly compact.

It is there that the tribes go up,
the tribes of the Lord.

I rejoiced when I heard them say: 'Let us go to God's house.'

For Israel's law it is,
there to praise the Lord's name.
There were set the thrones of judgement
of the house of David.

I rejoiced when I heard them say: 'Let us go to God's house.'

For the peace of Jerusalem pray:

'Peace be to your homes!

May peace reign in your walls,
in your palaces, peace!'

I rejoiced when I heard them say: 'Let us go to God's house.'

For love of my brethren and friends I say:

'Peace upon you!'

For love of the house of the Lord
I will ask for your good.

I rejoiced when I heard them say: 'Let us go to God's house.'

Second Reading Option 1 – Romans 5:5-11

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans.

Hope is not deceptive, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given to us. We were still helpless when at his appointed moment Christ died for sinful men. It is not easy to die even for a good man — though of course for someone really worthy, a man might be prepared to die — but what proves that God loves us is that Christ died for us while we were still sinners. Having died to make us righteous, is it likely that he would not fail to save us from God's anger? When we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, we were still enemies; now that we have been reconciled, surely we may count on being saved by the life of his Son? Not merely because we have been reconciled but because we are filled with joyful trust in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have already gained our reconciliation.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading Option 2 – Romans 5:17-21

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans.

If it is certain that death reigned over everyone as the consequence of one man's fall, it is even more certain that one man, Jesus Christ, will cause everyone to reign in life who receives the free gift that he does not deserve, of being made righteous. Again, as one man's fall brought condemnation on everyone, so the good act of one man brings everyone life and makes them justified. As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous. When law came, it was to multiply the opportunities of falling, but however great the number of sins committed, grace was even greater; and so, just as sin reigned wherever there was death, so grace will reign to bring eternal life thanks to the righteousness that comes from Jesus Christ our Lord.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading Option 3 – Romans 6:3-9

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans.

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. We must realise that our former selves have been crucified with him to destroy this sinful body and to free us from the slavery of sin. When a man dies, of course, he has finished with sin.

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 power over him any more.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading Option 4 – Romans 8:14-23

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans.

Everyone moved by the Spirit is a son of God. The spirit you received is not the spirit of slaves bringing fear into your lives again; it is the spirit of sons, and it makes us cry out, 'Abba, Father!' The Spirit himself and our spirit bear witness that we are children of God. And if we are children we are heirs as well: heirs of God and coheirs with Christ, sharing his sufferings so as to share his glory.

I think that what we suffer in this life can never be compared to the glory, as yet unrevealed, which is waiting for us. The whole creation is eagerly waiting for God to reveal his sons. It was not for any fault on the part of creation that it was made unable to attain its purpose, it was made so by God; but creation still retains the hope of being freed, like us, from its slavery to decadence, to enjoy the same freedom and glory as the children of God. From the beginning till now the entire creation, as we know, has been groaning in one great act of giving birth; and not only creation, but all of us who possess the first-fruits of the Spirit, we too groan inwardly as we wait for our bodies to be set free.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading Option 5 – Romans 8:31-35, 37-39

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans.

With God on our side who can be against us? 'Since God did not spare his own Son, but gave him up to benefit us all, we may be certain, after such a gift, that he will not refuse anything he can give. Could anyone accuse those that God has chosen? When God acquits, could anyone condemn? Could Christ Jesus? No! He not only died for us - he rose from the dead, and there at God's right hand he stands and pleads for us.

Nothing therefore can come between us and the love of Christ, even if we are troubled or worried, or being persecuted, or lacking food or 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.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading Option 6 – Romans 14:7-12

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 so that he might be Lord both of the dead and of 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 to God, therefore, that each of us must give an account of himself.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading Option 7 – 1 Corinthians 15:20-28

A reading from the first letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians.

Christ has been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of all who have fallen asleep. Death came through one man and in the same way the resurrection of the dead has come through one man. Just as all men die in Adam, so all men will be brought to life in Christ; but all of them in their proper order: Christ as the first-fruits and then, after the coming of Christ, those who belong to him. After that will come the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father. For he must be king until he has put all his enemies under his feet and the last of the enemies to be destroyed is death, for everything is to be put under his feet. Though when it is said that everything is subjected, this clearly cannot include the One who subjected everything to him. And when everything is subjected to him, then the Son himself will be subject in his turn to the One who subjected all things to him, so that God may be all in all.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading Option 8 – 1 Corinthians 15:51-57

A reading from the first letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians.

I will tell you something that has been secret: that we are not all going to die, but we shall all be changed. This will be instantaneous, in the twinkling of an eye, when the last trumpet sounds. It will sound, and the dead will be raised, imperishable, and we shall put on imperishability and this mortal nature must put on immortality.

When this perishable nature has put on imperishability, and when this mortal nature has put on immortality, then the words of scripture will come true: Death is swallowed up in victory. Death, where is your victory? Death, where is your sting? Now the sting of death is sin, and sin gets its power from the Law. So let us thank God for giving us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading Option 9 – 2 Corinthians 4:14-5:1

A reading from the second letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians.

We know that he who raised the Lord Jesus to life will raise us with Jesus in our turn, and put us by his side and you with us. You see, all this is for your benefit, so that the more grace is multiplied among people, the more thanksgiving there will be, to the glory of God.

That is why there is no weakening on our part, and instead, though this outer man of ours may be falling into decay, the inner man is renewed day by day. Yes, the troubles which are soon over, though they weigh little, train us for the carrying of a weight of eternal glory which is out of all proportion to them. And so we have no eyes for things that are visible, but only for things that are invisible; for visible things last only for a time, and the invisible things are eternal.

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

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading Option 10 – 2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-10

A reading from the second letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians.

We know that when the tent that we live in on earth is folded up, there is a house built by God 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 he deserves for the things he did in the body, good or bad.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading Option II – Philippians 3:20-21

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

For us, our homeland is in heaven, and from heaven comes the saviour we are waiting for, the Lord Jesus Christ, and he will transfigure these wretched bodies of ours into copies of his glorious body. He will do that by the same power with which he can subdue the whole universe.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading Option 12 – 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians.

We want you to be quite certain, brothers, about those who have died, to make sure that you do not grieve about them, like the 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. We can tell you this from the Lord's own teaching, that any of us who are left alive until the Lord's coming will not have any advantage over those who have died. At the trumpet of God, the voice of the archangel will call out the command and the Lord himself will come down from heaven; those who have died in Christ will be the first to rise, and then those of us who are still alive will be taken up in the clouds, together with them, to meet the Lord in the air. So we shall stay with the Lord for ever. With such thoughts as these you should comfort one another.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading Option 13 – 2 Timothy 2:8-13

A reading from the second letter of St Paul to the Timothy.

Remember the Good News that 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 news. So I bear it all for the sake of those who are chosen so that in the end they may have the salvation that is in Christ Jesus and the eternal glory that comes with it.

Here is a saying that 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.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading Option 14 – 1 John 3:1-2

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.

Because the world refused to acknowledge him,
therefore it does not acknowledge us.

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.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading Option 15 – 1 John 3:14-16

A reading from the first letter of St John.

We have passed out of death and into life,
and of this we can be sure
because we love our brothers.
If you refuse to love, you must remain dead:
to hate your brother is to be a murderer,
and murderers, as you know, do not have eternal life in them.
This has taught us love – that he gave up his life for us;
and we, too, ought to give up our lives for our brothers.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Option 1 – Matthew 5:1-12

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

Come, you whom my Father has blessed,
says the Lord;
take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you
since the foundation of the world.

Alleluia!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up the hill. There he sat down and was joined by his disciples. Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them:

‘How happy are the poor in spirit;
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Happy the gentle:
they shall have the earth for their heritage.

Happy those who mourn:
they shall be comforted.

Happy those who hunger and thirst for what is right:
they shall be satisfied.

Happy the merciful:
they shall have mercy shown them.

Happy the pure in heart:
they shall see God.

Happy the peacemakers:
they shall be called sons of God.

Happy those who are persecuted in the cause of right:
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

‘Happy are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Option 2 – Matthew 11:25-30

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!
Blessed are you, Father,
Lord of Heaven and earth;
for revealing the mysteries of the kingdom
to mere children.
Alleluia!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.
Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus exclaimed, 'I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to mere children. Yes, Father, for that is what it pleased you to do. Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, just as no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

'Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest. Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Yes, my yoke is easy and my burden light.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Option 3 – Matthew 25:1-13

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

Our homeland is heaven,
and from heaven comes the Saviour we are waiting for,
the Lord Jesus Christ.

Alleluia!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus spoke this parable to his disciples:

‘The kingdom of heaven will be like this: Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were sensible: the foolish ones did take their lamps, but they brought no oil, whereas the sensible ones took flasks of oil as well as their lamps. The bridegroom was late and they all grew drowsy and fell asleep. But at midnight there was a cry. “The bridegroom is here! Go out and meet him.” At this, all those bridesmaids woke up and trimmed their lamps, and the foolish ones said to the sensible ones, “Give us some of your oil: our lamps are going out”. But they replied, “There may not be enough for us and for you; you had better go to those who sell it and buy some for yourselves”. They had gone off to buy it when the bridegroom arrived. Those who were ready went in with him to the wedding hall and the door was closed. The other bridesmaids arrived later. “Lord, Lord,” they said, “open the door for us.” But he replied, “I tell you solemnly, I do not know you”. So stay awake, because you do not know wither the day or the hour.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Option 4 – Matthew 25:31-46

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

Come, you whom my Father has blessed,
says the Lord;
take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you
since the foundation of the world.

Alleluia!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to his disciples: ‘When the Son of Man comes in his glory, escorted by all the angels, then he will take his seat on his throne of glory. All the nations will be assembled before him and he will separate men one from another as the shepherd separates sheep from goats. He will place the sheep on his right hand and the goats on his left. Then the King will say to those on his right hand, “Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome; naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me.” Then the virtuous will say to him in reply, “Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you; or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and make you welcome; named and clothe you; sick or in prison and go to see you?” And the King will answer, “I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did this to one of the least brothers of mine, you did it to me.” Next he will say to those on his left hand, “Go away from me, with your curse upon you, to the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you never gave me food; I was thirsty and you never gave me anything to drink; I was a stranger and you never made me welcome, naked and you never clothed me, sick and in prison and you never visited me.” Then it will be their turn to ask, “Lord when did we see you hungry or thirsty, a stranger or naked, sick or in prison, and did not come to your help?” Then he will answer, “I tell you solemnly, in so far as you neglected to do this to one of the least of these, you neglected to do it to me.” And they will go away to eternal punishment, and the virtuous to eternal life.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Option 5 – Mark 15:33-39; 16:1-6

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

If we have died with Christ, then we shall live with him;
if we hold firm, then we shall reign with him.

Alleluia!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

When the sixth hour came there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, 'Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachtani?' which means, 'My God, my God, why have you deserted me?' When some of those who stood by heard this, they said, 'Listen, he is calling on Elijah.' Someone ran and soaked a sponge in vinegar and, putting it on a reed, gave it to him to drink saying, 'Wait and see if Elijah will come to take him down.' But Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. And the veil of the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The centurion, who was standing in front of him, had seen how he had died and said, 'In truth this man was a son of God.'

When the sabbath was over, Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, brought spices with which to go and anoint him. And very early in the morning on the first day of the week they went to the tomb, just as the sun was rising.

They had been saying to one another, 'Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?' But when they looked they could see that the stone – which was very big – had already been rolled back. On entering the tomb, they saw a young man in a white robe seated on the right-hand side, and they were struck with amazement. But he said to them, 'There is no need for alarm. You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified: he has risen, he is not here. See, here is the place where they laid him.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Option 6 – Luke 7:11-17

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord:

Whoever believes in me will never die.

Alleluia!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus went to a town called Nain, accompanied by his disciples and a great number of people. When he was near the gate of the town it happened that a dead man was being carried out for burial, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. When the Lord saw her, he felt sorry for her. 'Do not cry,' he said. Then he went up and put his hand on the bier and the bearers stood still, and he said, 'Young man, I tell you to get up.' And the dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him to his mother. Everyone was filled with awe and praised God saying, 'A great prophet has appeared among us; God has visited his people.' And this opinion of him spread throughout Judaea and all over the countryside.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Option 7 – Luke 12:35-40

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

Our homeland is in heaven,

And from heaven comes the Saviour we are waiting for,
the Lord Jesus Christ.

Alleluia!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to his disciples: ‘See that you are dressed for action and have your lamps lit. Be like men waiting for their master to return from the wedding feast, ready to open the door as soon as he comes and knocks. I tell you solemnly, he will put on an apron, sit them down at the table and wait on them. It may be in the second watch that he comes, or in the third, but happy those servants if he finds them ready. You may be quite sure of this, that if the householder had known at what hour the burglar would come, he would not have let anyone break through the wall of his house. You too must stand ready, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Option 8 – Luke 23:33, 39-43

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

Happy are those who die in the Lord!
Now they can rest forever after their work,
Since their good deeds go with them.
Alleluia!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.
Glory to you, O Lord.

When the soldiers reached the place called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there and the two criminals also, one on the right, the other on the left.

One of the criminals hanging there abused him. “Are you not the Christ?” he said. ‘Save yourself and us as well.’ But the other spoke up and rebuked him. ‘Have you no fear of God at all?’ he said. You got the same sentence as he did, but in our case we deserved it: we are paying for what we did. But this man has done nothing wrong. Jesus,’ he said, ‘remember me when you come into your kingdom.’ ‘Indeed, I promise you,’ he replied, ‘today you will be with me in paradise.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Option 9 – Luke 23:44-46, 50. 52-53

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

Happy are those who die in the Lord!
Now they can rest forever after their work,
Since their good deeds go with them.
Alleluia!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.
Glory to you, O Lord.

It was about the sixth hour and with the sun eclipsed, a darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. The veil of the Temple was torn right down the middle, and when Jesus had cried out in a loud voice, he said, 'Father into your hands I commend my spirit'. With these words he breathed his last.

Then a member of the council arrived, an upright and virtuous man named Joseph. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

He then took it down, wrapped it in a shroud and put him in a tomb which was hewn in stone in which no one had yet been laid.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Option 10 – Luke 23:44-46, 50. 52-53

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

God loved the world so much
that he gave his only Son;
everyone who believes in him has eternal life.
Alleluia!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.
Glory to you, O Lord.

On the first day of the week, two of the disciples were on their way to a village called Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking together about all that had happened. Now as they talked this over, Jesus himself came up and walked by their side; but something prevented them from recognizing him.

When they drew near to the village to which they were going, he made as if to go on; but they pressed him to stay with them. 'It is nearly evening', they said, 'and the day is almost over.' So he went in to stay with them. Now while he was with them at table, he took the bread and said the blessing; then he broke it and handed it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognized him; but he had vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, 'Did not our hearts burn within us as he talked to us on the road and explained the scriptures to us?'

They set out that instant and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the eleven assembled together with their companions, who said to them, 'Yes it is true. The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.' Then they told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognized him in the breaking of the bread.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Option II – John 5:24-29

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

Come, you who my Father has blessed,

Says the Lord;

Take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you

Since the foundation of the world.

Alleluia!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

I tell you most solemnly,

Whoever listens to my words,

And believes in the one who sent me,

has eternal life;

Without being brought to judgement

he has passed from death to life.

I tell you most solemnly,

the hour will come – in fact it is here already –

When the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God,

And all who hear it will live.

For the Father, who is the source of life,

has made the Son the source of life;

And, because he is the son of Man,

Has appointed him supreme judge.

Do not be surprised at this,

For the hour is coming

When the dead will leave their graves

At the sound of his voice;

Those who did good

Will rise again to life;

and those who did evil, to condemnation.

I can do nothing by myself;

I can only judge as I am told to judge,

and my judging is just,

because my aim is not to do my own will,

but the will of him who sent me.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Option 12 – John 6: 37- 40

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

It is my Father's will, says the Lord,
that I should lose nothing
of all that he has given to me,
and that I should raise it up on the last day.

Alleluia!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to the crowd:

'All that the Father gives to me will come to me,
And whoever comes to me
I shall not turn him away;
Because I have come from heaven, not to do my own will,
But to do the will of the one who sent me.

Now the will of him who sent me
Is that I should lose nothing
of all that he has given to me,
and that I should raise it up on the last day.

Yes, it is my Father's will
That whoever sees the Son and believes in him
Shall have eternal life,
And that I shall raise him up on the last day.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Option 13 – John 6: 51-58

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!
I am the living bread
which has come down from heaven,
says the Lord.
Anyone who eats this bread
will live forever.
Alleluia!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.
Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to the crowd:

‘I am the living bread which has come down from heaven.
Anyone who eats this bread will live forever;
and the bread that I shall give is my flesh for the life of the world.’

Then the Jews started arguing with one another: ‘How can this man give us his flesh to eat?’ they said. Jesus replied:

‘I tell you most solemnly,
if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man
and drink his blood,
you will not have life in you.
Anyone who does eat my flesh and drink my blood
has eternal life,
and I shall raise him up on the last day.
For my flesh is real food
and my blood is real drink.
He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood
lives in me and I in him.
As I, who am sent by the living Father, myself draw life from the Father,
so whoever eats me will draw life from me.
This is the bread come down from heaven;
not like the bread our ancestors ate:
they are dead,
but anyone who eats this bread will live forever.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Option 14 – John 11: 21 - 27

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

I am the resurrection and the life,
says the Lord,
whoever believes in me will never die.

Alleluia!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Martha said to Jesus, 'If you had been here, my brother would not have died, but I know that, even now, whatever you ask of God, he will grant you.' 'Your brother,' said Jesus to her, 'will rise again.' Martha said, 'I know that he will rise again at the resurrection on the last day.'

Jesus said:

'I am the resurrection and the life.
If anyone believes in me, even though he dies he will live,
and whoever lives and believes in me
will never die.
Do you believe this?'

'Yes Lord,' she said, 'I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God,
the one who is to come into this world.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Option 15 – John 11: 32 - 45

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

God loved the world so much
that he gave his only Son;
everyone who believes in him has eternal life.
Alleluia!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.
Glory to you, O Lord.

Mary the sister of Lazarus went to Jesus, and as soon as she saw him she threw herself at his feet, saying, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' At the sight of her tears, and those of the Jews who followed her, Jesus said in great distress, with a sigh that came straight from the heart, 'Where have you put him?' They said, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus wept; and the Jews said, 'See how much he loved him!' But there were some who remarked, 'He opened the eyes of the blind man, could he not have prevented this man's death?' Still sighing, Jesus reached the tomb: it was a cave with a stone close to the opening. Jesus said, 'Take the stone away.' Martha said to him. 'Lord, by now he will smell; this is the fourth day.' Jesus replied, 'Have I not told you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. Then Jesus lifted up his eyes and said:

'Father, I thank you for hearing my prayer.
I knew indeed that you always hear me,
but I speak
for the sake of all of those who stand round me,
so that they may believe it was you who sent me.'

When he had said this, he cried in a loud voice, 'Lazarus, here! Come out!' The dead man came out, his feet and hands bound with bands of stuff and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, let him go free.'

Many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary and had seen what he did believed in him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Option 16 – John 12: 23 - 26

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

God loved the world so much
that he gave his only Son;
everyone who believes in him has eternal life.
Alleluia!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.
Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to his disciples:

Now the hour has come
For the Son of Man to be glorified.
I tell you, most solemnly,
Unless a wheat grain falls on the ground and dies,
it remains only a single grain;
but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest.
Anyone who loves his life loses it;
Anyone who hates his life in this world
Will keep it for eternal life.
If a man serves me, he must follow me,
Wherever I am, my servant will be there too.
If anyone serves me, my Father will honour him.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Option 17 – John 14: 1 - 6

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

It is my Father's will, says the Lord
that whoever believes in the Son
shall have eternal life,
and that I shall raise him up on the last day.

Alleluia!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

'Do not let your hearts be troubled
trust in God still, and trust in me.
There are many rooms in my Father's house;
if there were not, I should have told you.
I am going now to prepare a place for you,
and after I have gone and prepared you a place,
I shall return to take you with me;
so that where I am
you may be too.
You know the way to the place where I am going.'

Thomas said, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how can we know the way?' Jesus said:

'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.
No one can come to the Father except through me.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Option 18 – John 17: 24 - 26

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

It is my Father's will, says the Lord
that I should lose nothing
of all that he has given me,
and that I shall raise him up on the last day.
Alleluia!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.
Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said:

'Father.

I want those you have given me
to be with me where I am,
so that they may always see the glory
you have given me
because you loved me
before the foundation of the world.
Father, Righteous One,
the world has not known you,
but I have known you,
and these have known
that you have sent me.
I have made your name known to them
and will continue to make it known
so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them,
and so that I may be in them.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Option 19 – John 19: 17–18, 25-30

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

I am the resurrection and the life,
says the Lord,
whoever believes in me will never die.
Alleluia!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Carrying his own cross, Jesus went out of the city to the place of the skull or, as it was called in Hebrew, Golgotha, where they crucified him with two others, one on either side with Jesus in the middle.

Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleopas, and Mary of Magdala. Seeing his mother and the disciple he loved standing near her, Jesus said to his mother, 'Woman, this is your son'. Then to the disciple he said, 'This is your mother.'

After this Jesus knew that everything had been completed, and to fulfil the scripture perfectly he said:

'I am thirsty.'

A jar full of vinegar stood there, so putting a sponge soaked in the vinegar on a hyssop stick they held it up to his mouth. After Jesus had taken the vinegar he said, 'It is accomplished'; and bowing his head he gave up his spirit.

It was Preparation Day, and to prevent the bodies remaining on the cross during Sabbath – since that day of Sabbath was a day of special solemnity – the Jews asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken away. Consequently the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with him and then of the other. When they came to Jesus, they found that he was already dead, and so instead of breaking his legs, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a lance; and immediately there came out blood and water. This is the evidence of one who saw it – trustworthy evidence, and he knows he speaks the truth – and gives it so that you may believe as well. Because all this happened to fulfil the words of scripture:

Not one of his bones will be broken.

And again, in another place scripture says:

They will look on the one whom they have pierced.

After this, Joseph of Arimathaea, who was a disciple of Jesus – though a secret one because he was afraid of the Jews – asked Pilate to let him remove the body of Jesus. Pilate gave permission, so they came and took it away. Nicodemus came as well – the same one who had first come to Jesus at night-time – and he brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes weighing about a hundred pounds.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.