

STA Suggested Readings for Funeral Masses (Choose One Old Testament and One New Testament Reading)

OLD TESTAMENT

O.T.: Ecclesiastes 3: 1-11 (*Faith – An Appointed Time for Everything*)

There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for everything 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.

O.T.: Ezekiel 34: 11-16 (*The Lord is My Shepherd*)

Thus says the Lord God: I myself will look after and tend my sheep. As a shepherd tends his flock when he finds himself among his scattered sheep, so will I tend my sheep. I will rescue them from every place where they were scattered when it was cloudy and dark. I will lead them out from among the peoples and gather them from the foreign lands; I will bring them back to their own country and pasture them upon the mountains of Israel in the land's ravines and all its inhabited places. In good pastures will I pasture them, and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing ground. There they shall lie down on good grazing ground, and in rich pastures shall they be pastured on the mountains of Israel. I myself will pasture my sheep; I myself will give them rest, says the Lord God. The lost I will seek out, the strayed I will bring back, the injured I will bind up, the sick I will heal, shepherding them rightly.

O.T.: Isaiah 25: 6a-9g (*Consolation*)

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!"

O.T.: Isaiah 40: 28b-31 (*Hope*)

Do you not know or have you not heard? The Lord is the eternal God, creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint nor grow weary and his knowledge is beyond scrutiny. He gives strength to the fainting; for the weak he makes vigor abound. 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 as with eagle's wings; they will run and not grow weary, walk and not grow faint.

O.T.: Isaiah 41: 9-10, 13 (Do Not Fear)

You whom I have taken from the ends of the earth and summoned from its far-off places, you whom I have called my servant, whom I have chosen and will not cast off – fear not, I am with you; be not dismayed I am your God. I will strengthen you, and help you and uphold you with my right hand of justice. For I am the Lord, your God, who grasps your right hand; it is I who say to you, “Fear not, I will help you.”

O.T.: Isaiah 58: 9-11 (God Will Give Us Strength)

Thus says the Lord: Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer, you shall cry for help and He will say: Here I am! If you remove from your midst oppression, false accusation and malicious speech; if you bestow your bread on the hungry and satisfy the afflicted; then light shall rise for you in the darkness and the gloom shall become for you like midday; then the Lord will guide you always and give you plenty even on the parched land. He will renew your strength, and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring whose water never fails.

O.T.: Lamentations 3: 17-26 (Hope)

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.

O.T.: Sirach 1: 11-13, 25 (For a Long Life or Lengthy Illness)

He who fears the Lord will have a happy end; even on the day of his death he will be blessed. The beginning of wisdom is fear of the Lord, which is formed with the faithful in the womb. With devoted men was she created from of old, and with their children her beneficence abides. Be not faithless to the fear of the Lord nor approach it with duplicity of heart.

O.T.: Sirach 6: 14-17 (For a Faithful Friend)

A faithful friend is a sturdy shelter; he who finds one finds a treasure. A faithful friend is beyond price, no sum can balance his worth. A faithful friend is a life-saving remedy, such as he who fears God finds; for he who fears God behaves accordingly, and his friend will be like himself.

O.T.: Sirach 38: 1-8 (For a Doctor)

Hold the physician in honor, for he/she is essential to you, and God it was who established his/her profession. From God the doctor has his/her wisdom, and the king provides for his sustenance. His/her knowledge makes the doctor distinguished, and gives him/her access to those in authority. God makes the earth yield healing herbs, which the prudent man should not neglect; was not the water sweetened by a twig that men might learn his power? He endows men with knowledge to glory in his mighty works, through which the doctor eases pain and the druggist prepares his/her medicines; Thus God’s creative work continues without cease in its efficacy on the surface of the earth.

O.T.: Proverbs 31: 10-13, 18-20, 25-28 (For a Wife)

When one finds a worthy wife, her value is far beyond pearls. Her husband entrusting his heart to her, has an unfailing prize. She brings him good, and not evil all the days of her life. She obtains wool and flax and makes cloth with skillful hands. She enjoys the success of her dealings; at night her lamp is undimmed. She puts her hands to the distaff, and her fingers ply the spindle. She reaches out her hands to the poor, and extends her arms to the needy.

She is clothed with strength and dignity, and she laughs at the days to come. She opens her mouth in wisdom, and on her tongue is kindly counsel. She watches the conduct of her household, and eats not her food in idleness. Her children rise up and praise her; her husband, too, extols her.

O.T.: Wisdom 3: 1-6,9 (Do Not Fear)

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. 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.

O.T.: Wisdom 4: 7-10,13 (Premature Death)

The just man, though he dies 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. Having become perfect in a short while, he reached the fullness of a long career.

NEW TESTAMENT

N.T.: 2 Corinthians 4: 14-5:1 (Hope)

We know that the One who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and place us with you in his presence. Everything indeed is for you, so that the grace bestowed in abundance on more and more people may cause the thanksgiving to overflow for the glory of God.

Therefore, we are not discouraged; rather, although our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to what is seen but to what is unseen; for what is seen is transitory, but what is unseen is eternal.

For we know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven.

N.T.: 2 Corinthians 5: 1, 6-10 (We Walk in Faith)

Brothers and sisters: We know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven.

We are always courageous, although we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yet we are courageous, and we would rather leave the body and go home to the Lord. Therefore, we aspire to please him, whether we are at home or

away. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense, according to what he did in the body, whether good or evil.

N.T.: Ephesians 1: 17-20 (Hope; Faith)

Brothers and sisters: May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a Spirit of wisdom and revelation resulting in knowledge of him. May the eyes of your hearts be enlightened, that you may know what is the hope that belongs to his call, what are the riches of glory in his inheritance among the holy ones, and what is the surpassing greatness of his power for us who believe, in accord with the exercise of his great might which he worked in Christ, raising him from the dead and seating him at his right hand in the heavens.

N.T.: Ephesians 3: 14-21 (God Will Give Us Strength)

Brothers and sisters: I kneel before the Father from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named; that he may grant you gifts in keeping with the riches of his glory. May he strengthen you inwardly through the work of his Spirit. May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith, and may charity be the root and foundation of your life. Thus you will be able to grasp fully, with all the holy ones, the breadth, and length and height and depth of Christ's love and experience this love which surpasses all knowledge, so that you may attain to the fullness of God himself. To him whose power now at work in us can do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine – to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations, world without end. Amen.

N.T.: 1 John 3: 1-2 (We Are Children of God)

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

N.T.: 1 John 4: 7-16 (God is Love)

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love. In this way the love of God was revealed to us: God sent his only-begotten Son into the world so that we might have life through him. In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also must love one another. No one has ever seen God. Yet, if we love one another, God remains in us, and his love is brought to perfection in us. This is how we know that we remain in him and he is in us, that he has given us of his Spirit. Moreover, we have seen and testify that the Father sent his Son as savior of the world. Whoever acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains in him and he in God. We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us. God is love and whoever remains in love, remains in God and God in him.

N.T.: 1 Peter 1:3-9 (Hope; Faith)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy gave us a new birth to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you who by the power of God are safeguarded through faith, to a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the final time. In this you rejoice, although now for a little while you may have to suffer through various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that is perishable even though tested by fire, may prove to be for praise, glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Although you have not seen

him you love him; even though you do not see him now yet believe in him, you rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, as you attain the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

N.T.: Revelation 7: 9,13-17 (Consolation)

I, John, had a vision of a great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation, race, people and tongue. They stood before the throne and before the Lamb, wearing white robes and holding palm branches in their hands. Then one of the elder said to me, "These are the ones who have survived the time of great distress; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

"For this reason they stand before God's throne and worship him day and night in his temple. The one who sits on the throne will shelter them. They will not hunger or thirst anymore, nor will the sun or any heat strike them. For the Lamb who is in the center of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to springs of life-giving water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

N.T.: Revelation 14: 13 (Hope; Faith)

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."

N.T.: Revelation 21: 1-7 (Hope; Faith; Consolation)

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. 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." Then he said, "Write these words down, for they are trustworthy and true." He said to me, "They are accomplished. 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."

N.T.: Romans 8: 14-23 (Do Not Fear; Faith)

Brothers and sisters: those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a Spirit of adoption, through which we cry, "Abba, Father!" The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

I consider the sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us. For creation awaits with eager expectation the revelation of the children of God; for creation was made subject to futility, not of its own accord but because of the one who subjected it, in hope that creation itself would be set free from slavery to corruption and share in the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that all creation is groaning in labor pains even until now; and not only that, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, we also groan within ourselves as we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

N.T.: Romans 8: 31b-35, 37-39 (Do Not Fear)

Brothers and sisters: If God is for us, who can be against us? He did not spare his own Son but handed him over for us all, will he not also give us everything else along with him? Who will bring a charge against God's Chosen ones? It is God who acquits us. Who will condemn? It is Christ Jesus who died, rather, was raised, who also is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword?

No, in all these things, we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

N.T.: Romans 14: 7-9 (Hope; Faith)

Brothers and sisters: None of us lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself. For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. For this is why Christ died and came to life, that he might be Lord of both the living and the dead.

N.T.: 1 Thes. 4: 13-18 (Hope; Consolation)

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

Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore, console one another with these words.

N.T.: 2 Timothy 2: 8-13 (The Lord is My Shepherd)

Beloved: Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendent of David: such is my gospel, for which I am suffering, even to the point of chains, like a criminal. But the word of God is not chained. Therefore, I bear with everything for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, together with eternal glory. This saying is trustworthy: If we have died with him, we shall also live with him; if we persevere, we shall also reign with him. But if we deny him, he will deny us. If we are unfaithful, he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself.

N.T.: 2 Timothy 4: 6-8 (For a Long Life or Lengthy Illness)

Beloved: I am already being poured out like a libation, and the time of my departure is near. I have competed well; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith. From now on the crown of righteousness awaits me, which the Lord, the just judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me, but to all who have longed for his appearance.