

## Scripture Readings for Mass

*When making your choice of readings, you have an option: either 1 Old Testament reading (nos 1-16 – pages 1-8), 1 New Testament Reading (Nos 1-14 – pages 12-18) and 1 Gospel (nos. 1-11 – pages 19-23), or 1 Old or New Testament reading plus a gospel. You can choose a psalm after the first reading, but it is probably safer to have a hymn at this point, otherwise there is a very long sequence of words*

### Old Testament Readings:

#### 1. A reading from the book of Genesis 1:26-28.31.

God said, 'Let us make man in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves, and let them be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the cattle, all the wild beasts and all the reptiles that crawl upon the earth.'

God created man in the image of himself,  
in the image of God he created him,  
male and female he created them.

God blessed them, saying to them, 'Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and conquer it. be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all living animals on the earth.' God saw all he had made and indeed it was very good..

and no herb of the field had yet sprung up; for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth,  
and there was no one to till the ground;

but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground.

Then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life;  
and the man became a living being.

And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

Out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food,  
the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

A river flows out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four branches.

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner."

So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept;

then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh.

And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.

Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh;

this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken."

And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

**The word of the Lord.**

#### 2. A reading from the book of Genesis 2:18-24

The Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him a helpmate.' So from the soil the Lord God fashioned all the wild beasts and all the birds of heaven. These he brought to the man to see what he would call them; each one was to bear the name the man would give it. The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of heaven, and all the wild beasts. But no helpmate suitable for man was found for him. So the Lord God made the man fall into a deep sleep. And while he slept, he took one of his ribs and enclosed it in flesh. The Lord God built the rib he had taken from the man into a woman, and brought her to the man. The man exclaimed:

'This at last is bone from my bones, and flesh from my flesh!

This is to be called woman, for this was taken from man.'

This is why a man leaves his father and mother and joins himself to his wife, and they become one body.

**The word of the Lord.**

#### 3. A reading from the book of Genesis 14:48-51, 58-67.

Abraham's servant said to Laban, 'I blessed the Lord, God of my master Abraham, who had so graciously led me to choose the daughter of my master's brother for his son. Now tell me whether you are prepared to show kindness and goodness to my master, if not, say so, and I shall know what to do.'

Laban and Bethuel replied, 'This is from the Lord; it is not in our power to say yes or no to you. Rebekah is there before you. Take her and go; and let her become the wife of your master's son, as the Lord has decreed.' They called Rebekah and asked her,

'Do you want to leave with this man?' 'I do,' she replied. Accordingly they let their sister Rebekah go, with her nurse, and Abraham's servant and his men. They blessed Rebekah in these words:

'Sisters of ours, increase  
to thousands and tens of thousands!  
May your descendants gain possession  
of the gates of their enemies!'

Rebekah and her servants stood up, mounted the camels, and followed the man. The servant took Rebekah and departed.

Isaac, who lived in the Negeb, had meanwhile come into the wilderness of the well at Lahai Roi. Now Isaac went walking in the fields as evening fell, and looking up saw camels approaching. And Rebekah looked up and saw Isaac. She jumped down from her camel and asked the servant, 'Who is that man walking through the fields to meet us?' The servant replied, 'That is my master'; then she took her veil and hid her face. The servant told Isaac the whole story, and Isaac led Rebekah into his tent and made her his wife; and he loved her. And so Isaac was consoled for the loss of his mother.

**The word of the Lord.**

**4. A reading from the book of Deuteronomy**

7.6-11

Moses spoke to the people:

"You are a people holy to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you out of all people on earth to be his people, his treasured possession. It was not because you were more numerous than any other people that the Lord set his heart on you and chose you - for you were the fewest of all peoples. It was because the Lord loved you and kept the oath that he swore to your ancestors, that the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Know therefore that the Lord your God is God, the faithful God who maintains covenant loyalty with those who love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations, and who repays in their own persons those who reject him. Therefore, observe diligently the commandment - the statutes, and the ordinances -that I am commanding you today."

**The word of the Lord.**

**5. A reading from the book of Deuteronomy 10.12-13a; 11.18, 26-28,32.**

Moses spoke to the people and said: "So now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you? Only to fear the Lord your God to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the Lord your God, and his decrees that I am commanding you today, for your own well-being. You shall put these words of mine in your heart and soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and fix them as an emblem on your forehead. See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you today; and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn from the way that I am commanding you today, to follow other gods that you have not known. You must diligently observe all the statutes and ordinances that I am setting before you today."

**The word of the Lord.**

**6. A reading from the book of Tobit.**

7:6-14.

Raguel kissed Tobias and wept. then finding words, he said, 'Blessings on you, child! You are the son of a noble father. Ho sad it is that someone so virtuous and full of good deeds should have gone blind!' He fell on the neck of his kinsman Tobias and wept. And his wife Edna wept for him, and so did his daughter Sarah. Raguel killed a sheep from the flock, and they gave Tobias and Raphael a warm-hearted welcome.

They washed and bathed and sat down to table. Then Tobias said to Raphael, 'Brother Azarias, will you ask Raguel to give me my sister Sarah?' Raguel overheard the words and said to the young man, 'Eat and drink, and make the most of your evening; no-one else has the right to take my daughter Sarah - no-one but you, my brother. In any case, I, for my own part, am not at liberty to give her to anyone else, since you are her next of kin. However, my boy, I must be frank with you: I have tried to find a husband for her seven times among our kinsmen, and all of them have died the first evening, on going to her room. But for the present, my boy, eat and drink; the Lord will grant you his grace and peace.' Tobias spoke out, 'I will not hear of eating and drinking until you have come to a decision about me.' Raguel answered, 'Very well. Since, as prescribed by the book of Moses, she is given to you, heaven itself decrees she shall be yours. I shall therefore entrust your sister to you. From now you are her brother and she is your sister. She is given to you from today for ever. The Lord of heaven favour you tonight, my child, and grant you his grace and peace.' Raguel called for his daughter Sarah, took her by the hand and gave her to Tobias with these words, 'I entrust her to you; the law and the ruling recorded in the book of Moses assign her to you as your wife. Take her; take her home to your father's house with a good conscience. The God of heaven grant you a good journey in peace.' Then he turned to her mother and asked her to fetch him writing paper. He drew up the marriage contract, how he gave his daughter as bride to Tobias according to the ordinance in the law of Moses.

After this they began to eat and drink.

**The word of the Lord.**

**7. A reading from the book of Tobit**

8:4-8.

On the evening of their marriage, Tobias said to Sarah, 'You and I must pray and petition our Lord to win his grace and protection.' They began praying for protection, and this was how he began.

'You are blessed, O God of our fathers; blessed, too, is your name for ever and ever.

Let the heavens bless you and all things you have made for evermore. It was you who created Adam, you who created Eve his wife to be his help and support; and from these two the human race was born. It was you who said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; let us make him a helpmate like himself.' And so I do not take my sister for any

lustful motive; I do it in singleness of heart. Be kind enough to have pity on her and on me and bring us to old age together.'

And together they said, 'Amen, amen'.

**The word of the Lord**

**8. A reading from the Song of Songs**

2:8-10, 14, 16; 8:6-7

I hear my Beloved.

See how he comes leaping on the mountains, bounding over the hills.

My beloved is like a gazelle, like a young stag. See where he stands behind our wall. He looks in at the window, he peers through the lattice.

My beloved lifts up his voice, he says to me,

'Come then, my love, my lovely one, come. My dove, hiding in the clefts of the rock. In the coverts of the cliff, show me your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet and your face is beautiful. My beloved is mine and I am his. Set me like a seal on your heart, like a seal on your arm. For love is strong as Death, jealousy relentless as Sheol.

The flash of it is a flash of fire, a flame of the Lord himself. Love no flood can quench, no torrents drown.

**The word of the Lord.**

**9. A reading from the book of Wisdom**

11.22-12.2

The whole world before you, O Lord, is like a speck that tips the scales, and like a drop of morning dew that falls on the ground. But you are merciful to all, for you can do all things, and you overlook people's sins, so that they may repent.

Lord, you love all things that exist, and detest none of the things that you have made, for you would not have made anything if you had hated it. How would anything have endured if you had not willed it? Or how would anything not called forth by you have been preserved? You spare all things, for they are yours, O Lord, you who love the living.

For your immortal spirit is in all things. therefore you correct little by little those who trespass, and you remind and warn them of the things through which they sin, so that they may be freed from wickedness and put their trust in you, O Lord.

**The word of the Lord.**

**9a A reading from the Book of Ecclesiastes**

4.8-12

There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother. There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth. 'For whom am I toiling,' he asked, 'and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?' This too is meaningless – a miserable business! Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work. If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no-one to help him up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

**The word of the Lord.**

**10. A reading from the book of Ecclesiasticus**

26:1-4, 13-16

Happy the husband of a really good wife; the number of his days will be doubled. A perfect wife is the joy of her husband, he will live out the years of his life in peace. A good wife is the best of portions, reserved for those who fear the Lord; rich or poor, they will be glad of heart; cheerful of face, whatever the season. The grace of a wife will charm her husband, her accomplishments will make him stronger. A silent wife is a gift from the Lord, no price can be put on a well-trained character. A modest wife is a boon twice over, a chaste character cannot be weighed on scales. Like the sun rising over the mountains of the Lord is the beauty of a good wife in a well-kept house.

**The word of the Lord.**

**11. A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah**

55.1-11

Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nation that do not know you shall run to you, because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you. Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

**The word of the Lord.**

**12. A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah** 61.1-2a, 10-11

The servant of the Lord said:

"The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me;

he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations."

**The word of the Lord.**

**13. A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah** 62.1-5

The Lord says this:

"For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch. The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by your new name that the mouth of the Lord will give. You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. You shall no more be termed 'Forsaken,' and your land shall no more be termed 'Desolate'; but you shall be called 'My Delight Is in Her,' and your land 'Married'; for the Lord delights in you, and your land shall be married. For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your builder marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you."

**The word of the Lord**

**14. A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.** 66.10-14

Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her, all you who love her; rejoice with her in joy, all you who mourn over her - that you may nurse and be satisfied from her consoling breast; that you may drink deeply with delight from her glorious bosom. For thus says the Lord: "I will extend prosperity to her like a river, and the wealth of the nations like an overflowing stream; and you shall nurse and be carried on her arm, and dandled on her knees. As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you; you shall be comforted in Jerusalem. You shall see, and your heart shall rejoice; your bodies shall flourish like the grass; and it shall be known that the hand of the Lord is with his servants."

**The word of the Lord.**

**15. A reading from the prophet Jeremiah** 31:31-34

See, the days are coming - it is the Lord who speaks - when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, but not a covenant like the one I made with their ancestors on the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. No, this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel when those days arrive - it is the Lord who speaks. Deep within them I will plant my Law, writing it on their hearts. Then I will be their God and they shall be my people. There will be no further need for neighbour to try to teach neighbour, or brother to say to brother, 'Learn to know the Lord!' No, they will all know me, the least no less than the greatest - it is the Lord who speaks.

**The word of the Lord.**

*It is appropriate to use the following reading in the Easter season.*

**16. A reading from the book of the Apocalypse (or Revelation)**

I, John, seemed to hear the great sound of a huge crowd in heaven, singing, 'Alleluia! Victory and glory and power to our God!' Then a voice came from the throne; it said, 'Praise our God, you servants of his and all who, great or small, revere him'. And I seemed to hear the voices of a huge crowd, like the sound of the ocean or the great roar of thunder, answering, 'Alleluia! The reign of the Lord our God Almighty has begun; let us be glad and joyful and give praise to God, because this is the time for the marriage of the Lamb. His bride is ready, and she has been able to dress herself in dazzling white linen, because her linen is made of the good deeds of the saints.' The angel said, 'Write this: Happy are those who are invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb.'

**The word of the Lord.**

**Responsorial Psalms** - choose one of these, or a hymn, if you prefer.

**1 Psalm 33**

**R.** *The Lord fills the earth with his love.*

They are happy, whose God is the Lord,  
the people he has chosen as his own.  
The Lord looks on those who revere him,  
on those who hope in his love. **R.**

Our soul is waiting for the Lord.  
The Lord is our help and shield.  
In him do our hearts find joy.  
We trust in his holy name. **R.**

May your love be upon us, O Lord,  
as we place all our hope in you. **R.**

**2. Psalm 34**

**R.** *I will bless the Lord at all times.*

I will bless the Lord at all times,  
his praise always on my lips;  
in the Lord my soul shall make its boast.  
The humble shall hear and be glad. **R.**

Glorify the Lord with me.  
Together let us praise his name.  
I sought the Lord and he answered me;  
from all my terrors he set me free. **R.**

Look toward him and be radiant;  
let your faces not be abashed.  
This poor man called; the Lord heard him  
and rescued him from all his distress. **R.**

The angel of the Lord is encamped  
around those who revere him, to rescue them.  
Taste and see that the Lord is good.  
He is happy who seeks refuge in him. **R.**

**3. Psalm 103**

**R.** *The Lord is compassion and love.*

*Or:* *The love of the Lord is everlasting  
upon those who hold him in fear.*

My soul give thanks to the Lord,  
all my being, bless his holy name.  
My soul, give thanks to the Lord  
and never forget all his blessings. **R.**

The Lord is compassion and love,  
slow to anger and rich in mercy.  
As a father has compassion on his sons,  
the Lord has pity on those who fear him. **R.**

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. **R**

**4. Psalm 112**

**R.** *Happy the man who takes delight  
in the Lord's commands.*

*Or: Alleluia.*

Happy the man who fears the Lord,  
who takes delight in all his commands.  
His sons will be powerful on earth;  
the children of the upright are blessed. **R.**

Riches and wealth are in his house;  
his justice stands firm for ever.  
He is a light in the darkness for the upright;  
he is generous, merciful and just. **R.**

The good man takes pity and lends,  
he conducts his affairs with honour.  
The just man will never waver:  
he will be remembered for ever. **R.**

He has no fear of evil news;  
with a firm heart he trusts in the Lord.  
With a steadfast heart he will not fear;  
he will see the downfall of his foes. **R.**

Open-handed, he gives to the poor;  
his justice stands firm for ever.  
His head will be raised in glory. **R.**

**5. Psalm 128**

**R.** *Indeed thus shall be blessed  
the man who fears the Lord.*

O blessed are those who fear the Lord  
and walk in his ways!  
By the labour of your hands you shall eat.  
You will be happy and prosper. **R.**

Your wife will be like a fruitful vine  
in the heart of your house;  
your children like shoots of the olive,  
around your table. **R.**

Indeed thus shall be blessed  
the man who fears the Lord.  
May the Lord bless you from Zion  
all the days of your life! **R.**

**6. Psalm 145**

**R.** *How good is the Lord to all.*

The Lord is kind and full of compassion,  
slow to anger, abounding in love.  
How good is the Lord to all,  
compassionate to his creatures. **R.**

All your creatures shall thank you, O Lord,  
and your friends shall repeat their blessing.  
The eyes of all creatures look to you  
and you give them their food in due time. **R.**

The Lord is just in his ways

and loving in all his deeds.  
He is close to all who call him,  
who call on him from their hearts. **R.**

**7. Psalm 148**

**R.** *Let them praise the name of the Lord.*

*Or: Alleluia.*

Praise the Lord from the heavens,  
praise him in the heights.  
Praise him, all his angels,  
praise him, all his host. **R.**

Praise him, sun and moon,  
praise him, shining stars.  
Praise him, highest heavens  
and the waters above the heavens. **R.**

Praise him, all mountains and hills,  
all fruit trees and cedars,  
beasts, wild and tame,  
reptiles and birds on the wing. **R.**

All earth's kings and peoples, praise him,  
earth's princes and rulers;  
young men and maidens,  
old men together with children. **R.**

Let them praise the name of the Lord  
for he alone is exalted.  
The splendour of his name  
reaches beyond heaven and earth. **R**

**New Testament Readings**

**1. A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans: 8:31-35, 37-39**

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.**

**2. A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans 12:1-2, 9-18.**

Think of God's mercy, my brothers, and worship him, I beg you, in a way that it worthy of thinking beings, by offering your living bodies as a holy sacrifice, truly pleasing to God. Do not model yourselves on the behaviour of the world around you, but let your behaviour change, modelled by your new mind. This is the only way to discover the will of God and know what is good, what it is that God wants, what is the perfect thing to do.

Do not let your love be a pretence, but sincerely prefer good to evil. Love each other as brothers should, and have a profound respect for each other. Work for the Lord with untiring effort and with great earnestness of spirit. If you have hope, this will make you cheerful. Do not give up if trials come; and keep on praying. If any of the saints are in need you must share with them; and you should make hospitality your special care.

Bless those who persecute you: never curse them, bless them. Rejoice with those who rejoice and be sad with those in sorrow. Treat everyone with equal kindness; never be condescending but make real friends with the poor. Do not allow yourself to become self-satisfied. Never repay evil with evil but let everyone see that you are interested only in the highest ideals. Do all you can to live at peace with everyone.

**The word of the Lord.**

*Shorter form*

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

12:1-2, 9-18.

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**The word of the Lord.**

**3. A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans** 15.4-9

Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. Grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, "Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles, and sing praises to your name."

**The word of the Lord.**

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

6:13-15,17-20.

The body is not meant for fornication; it is for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body. God, who raised the Lord from the dead, will, by his power, raise us up too. You know, surely, that your bodies are members making up the body of Christ. But anyone who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him.

Keep away from fornication. All the other sins are committed outside the body; but to fornicate is to sin against your own body. Your body, you know, is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you since you received him from God. You are not your own property; you have been bought and paid for. That is why you should use your body for the glory of God.

**The word of the Lord.**

**5. A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians**

12.12-30

Just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body - Jews or Greeks, slaves or free - and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. Indeed, the body does not consider of one member but of many. If the foot would say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear would say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honourable we clothe with greater honour, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?

**The word of the Lord.**

**6. A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians** 12:21-13:8.

Be ambitious for the higher gifts. And I am going to show you a way that is better than any of them.

If I have all the eloquence of men or of angels, but speak without love, I am simply a gong booming or a cymbal clashing. If I have the gift of prophecy, understanding all the mysteries there are, and knowing everything, and if I have faith in all its fullness, to move mountains, but without love, then I am nothing at all. If I give away all that I possess, piece by piece, and if I even let them take my body to burn it, but am without love, it will do me no good whatever.

Love is always patient and kind; it is never jealous; love is never boastful or conceited; it is never rude or selfish; it does not take offence, and is not resentful. Love takes no pleasure in other people's sins but delights in the truth; it is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope, and to endure whatever comes.

**The word of the Lord.**

**7. A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians** 4.1-6

I, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

**The word of the Lord.**

**8. A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians** 5:2, 21-33.

Follow Christ by loving as he loved you, giving himself up in our place. Give way to one another in obedience to Christ. Wives should regard their husbands as they regard the Lord, since as Christ is head of the Church and saves the whole body, so is a husband the head of his wife; and as the Church submits to Christ, so should wives to their husbands, in everything. Husbands should love their wives just as Christ loved the Church and sacrificed himself for her to make her holy. He made her clean by washing her in water with a form of words, so that when he took her to himself she would be glorious, with no speck or wrinkle or anything like that, but holy and faultless. In the same way, husbands must love their wives as they love their own bodies; for a man to love his wife is for him to love himself. A man never hates his own body, but he feeds it and looks after it; and that is the way that Christ treats the Church, because it is his body - and we are its living parts. For this reason, a man must leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one body. This mystery has many implications; but I am saying that it applies to Christ and the Church. To sum up, you too, each one of you, must love his wife as he loves himself; and let every wife respect her husband.

**The word of the Lord.**

*Shorter form*

**A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians** 5:2, 25-32

Follow Christ by loving as he loved you, giving himself up in our place. Husbands should love their wives just as Christ loved the Church and sacrificed himself for her to make her holy. He made her clean by washing her in water with a form of words, so that when he took her to himself she would be glorious, with no speck or wrinkle or anything like that, but holy and faultless. In the same way, husbands must love their wives as they love their own bodies; for a man to love his wife is for him to love himself. A man never hates his own body, but he feeds it and looks after it; and that is the way that Christ treats the Church, because it is his body - and we are its living parts. For this reason, a man must leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one body. This mystery has many implications; but I am saying that it applies to Christ and the Church. To sum up, you too, each one of you, must love his wife as he loves himself; and let every wife respect her husband.

**The word of the Lord.**

**9. A reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians.** 2.1-11

If there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, and compassion and sympathy, then make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves.

Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others.

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death - even death on a cross.

Therefore God highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

**The word of the Lord.**

**10. A reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians** 4:6-9

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything let your requests be made known to God by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

**The word of the Lord.**

**11. A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Colossians** 3:12-17.

You are God's chosen race, his saints; he loves you, and you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same. Over all these clothes, to keep them together and complete them, put on love. And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were called together as parts of one body. Always be thankful.

Let the message of Christ, in all its richness, find a home with you. Teach each other, and advise each other, in all wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God and never say or do anything except in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

**The word of the Lord.**

**12. A reading from the first letter of St Peter** 3:1-9.

Wives should be obedient to their husbands. Then, if there are some husbands who have not yet obeyed the word, they may find themselves won over, without a word spoken, by the way their wives behave, when they see how faithful and conscientious they are. Do not dress up for show: doing up your hair, wearing gold bracelets and fine clothes; all this should be inside, in a person's heart, imperishable: the ornament of a sweet and gentle disposition - this is what is precious in the sight of God. That was how the holy women of the past dressed themselves attractively - they hoped in God and were tender and obedient to their husbands; like Sarah, who was obedient to Abraham, and called him her lord. You are now her children, as long as you live good lives and do not give way to fear or worry.

In the same way, husbands must always treat their wives with consideration in their life together, respecting a woman as one who, though she may be the weaker partner, is equally an heir to the life of grace. This will stop anything coming in the way of your prayers.

Finally: you should all agree among yourselves and be sympathetic; love the brothers, have compassion and be self-effacing. Never pay back one wrong with another; instead, pay back with a blessing. That is what you are called to do, so that you inherit a blessing yourself.

**The word of the Lord.**

**13. A reading from the first letter of St John** 3:18-24

My children, our love is not to be just words or mere talk, but something real and active; only by this can we be certain that we are children of the truth and be able to quieten our conscience in his presence, whatever accusations it may raise against us, because God is greater than our conscience and he knows everything.

My dear people, if we cannot be condemned by our own conscience, we need not be afraid in God's presence, and whatever we ask him, we shall receive, because we keep his commandments and live the kind of life that he wants.

His commandments are these: that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and that we love one another as he told us to. Whoever keeps his commandments lives in God and God lives in him. We know that he lives in us by the spirit he has given us.

**The word of the Lord.**

**14. A reading from the first letter of St John** 4:7-16

My dear people, let us love one another since love comes from God and everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Anyone who fails to love can never have known God, because God is love. 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 love 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. No-one has ever seen God; but as long as we love one another God will live in us and his love will be complete in us. By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.

And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God.

So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

**The word of the Lord.**

## Gospel Readings

### 1. A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew 5:1-12.

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.

**The Gospel of the Lord.**

### 2. A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew 5:13-16

Jesus said to his disciples: 'You are the salt of the earth. But if salt becomes tasteless, what can make it salty again? It is good for nothing, and can only be thrown out to be trampled underfoot by men.

'You are the light of the world. A city built on a hilltop cannot be hidden. No-one lights a lamp to put it under a tub; they put it on the lamp-stand where it shines for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine in the sight of men, so that, seeing your good works, they may give the praise to your Father in heaven.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

### 3. A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew 7:21-27

Jesus went up the mountain with his disciples. He sat down and began to teach them:

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many deeds of power in your name?' Then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; go away from me, you evildoers.'

Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock.

And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell - and great was its fall!"

**The gospel of the Lord**

### 4. A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew 7:21, 24-29

Jesus said to his disciples: 'It is not those who say to me, 'Lord, Lord', who will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the person who does the will of my Father in heaven. Therefore, everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a sensible man who built his house on rock. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and hurled themselves against the house, and it did not fall: it was founded on rock. But everyone who listens to these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a stupid man who built his house on sand. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and struck that house, and it fell; and what a fall it had!'

Jesus had now finished what he wanted to say, and his teaching made a deep impression on the people, because he taught them with authority, not like their own scribes.

**The Gospel of the Lord.**

**5. A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew 19:3-6**

Some Pharisees approached Jesus, and to test him they said, 'Is it against the Law for a man to divorce his wife on any pretext whatever?' He answered, 'Have you not read that the creator from the beginning made them male and female and that he said: This is why a man must leave father and mother, and cling to his wife, and the two become one body? They are no longer two, therefore, but one body. So then, what God has united, man must not divide.'

**The Gospel of the Lord.**

**6. A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew. 22:34-40**

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, a lawyer, to disconcert Jesus, put a question, 'Master, which is the greatest commandment of the Law?' Jesus said, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second resembles it. You must love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang the whole Law, and the Prophets also.'

**The Gospel of the Lord**

**7. A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark 10:6-9**

Jesus said, 'From the beginning of creation God made them male and female. This is why a man must leave father and mother, and the two become one body. They are no longer two, therefore, but one body. So then, what God has united, man must not divide.'

**The Gospel of the Lord**

**8. A reading from the holy Gospel according to John 2:1-12**

There was a wedding at Cana in Galilee. The mother of Jesus was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited. When they ran out of wine, since the wine provided for the wedding was all finished, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' Jesus said, 'Woman, why turn to me? My hour has not come yet.' His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' There were six stone water jars standing there, meant for the ablutions that are customary among the Jews: each could hold twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, 'Fill the jars with water.' and they filled them to the brim. 'Draw some out now,' he told them, 'and take it to the steward.' They did this; the steward tasted the water, and it had turned into wine. Having no idea where it came from - only the servants who had drawn the water knew - the steward called the bridegroom and said, 'People generally serve the best wine first, and keep the cheaper sort till the guests have had plenty to drink, but you have kept the best wine till now.'

This was the first of the signs given by Jesus: it was given at Cana in Galilee. He let his glory be seen, and his disciples believed in him. After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother, his brothers, and his disciples; and they remained there a few days.

**The Gospel of the Lord.**

**9. A reading from the holy Gospel according to John 15:9-12**

Jesus said to his disciples:

'As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Remain in my love.

If you keep my commandments you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my own joy may be in you and your joy be complete.

This is my commandment: love one another, as I loved you.'

**The Gospel of the Lord.**

**10. A reading from the holy Gospel according to John 15:12-17**

Jesus said to his disciples: 'This is my commandment: love one another, as I have loved you.

A man can have no greater love than to lay down his life for his friends.

You are my friends, if you do what I command you. I shall not call you servants any more, because a servant does not know his master's business; I call you friends, because I have made known to you

everything I have learnt from my Father. You did not choose me, no, I chose you; and I commissioned you to go out and bear fruit, fruit that will last; and then the Father will give you anything you ask him in my name.'

I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another."

**The Gospel of the Lord.**

**11. A reading from the holy Gospel according to John**

17:20-26

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said:

'Holy Father, I pray not only for these, but for those also who through their words will believe in me.

May they all be one. Father, may they be one in us, as you are in me and I am in you, so that the world may believe it was you who sent me.

I have given them the glory you gave to me, that they may be one as we are one.

With me in them and you in me, may they be so completely one that the world will realise that it was you who sent me and that I have love them as much as you loved me. 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 loved me may be in them, and so that I may be in them.'

**The Gospel of the Lord.**

*Shorter Form*

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to John**

17:20-26

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said:

'Holy Father,

I pray not only for these,

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May they all be one.

Father, may they be one in us,

as you are in me and I am in you,

so that the world may believe it was you who sent me.

I have given them the glory you gave to me,

that they may be one as we are one.

With me in them and you in me,

may they be so completely one

that the world will realise that it was you who sent me

and that I have love them as much as you loved me.

**The Gospel of the Lord.**