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ST. MARY'S PARISH, NUTLEY · FUNERAL MASS

First Reading Choices

Old Testament · Please choose one

We are so sorry for your loss. Choosing the Scripture for your loved one's funeral is a beautiful way to let their life and faith speak once more. Take your time with these 10 readings, and read them aloud if you can.

Choosing: Each reading is numbered. When you have made your choice, simply let the parish staff know the number and title.

Reading at Mass: Each reading is printed on its own page, so the person proclaiming it can print that page and bring it with them.

1	Trust in the Lord with all your heart	Proverbs 3:1–8
2	A woman clothed with strength and dignity	Proverbs 31:10–12, 20, 25–31
3	I will write my law on their hearts	Jeremiah 31:31–34
4	I will never forget you	Isaiah 49:8–16
5	I have called you by name; you are mine	Isaiah 43:1–5; 49:15–16
6	God will wipe away the tears from all faces	Isaiah 25:6–9
7	The just, though they die early, shall be at rest	Wisdom 4:7–8; 3:1–3
8	A time for everything under heaven	Ecclesiastes 3:1–14
9	The souls of the just are in the hand of God	Wisdom 3:1–6, 9
10	Be strong; do not be afraid	Isaiah 35:3–4, 8–10

1 FIRST READING 1 · PROVERBS 3:1–8

Trust in the Lord with all your heart

A reading from the Book of Proverbs.

My sons and daughters, don't forget what I teach you.
Always remember what I tell you to do.

Never let go of loyalty and faithfulness;
tie them around your neck,
write them on your heart.
If you do this, both God and people will be pleased with you.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart.
Remember the Lord in everything you do,
and he will show you the right way.
Never let yourself think that you are wiser than you are;
simply obey the Lord and refuse to do wrong.
If you do, it will be like good medicine,
healing your wounds and easing your pains.

The word of the Lord.

All respond: Thanks be to God.

2 FIRST READING 2 · PROVERBS 31:10–12, 20, 25–31

A woman clothed with strength and dignity

Often chosen for a mother, grandmother, or wife

A reading from the Book of Proverbs.

When one finds a valiant woman,
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 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 family rise up and praise her;
her husband, too, extols her:
“Many are the women of proven worth,
but you have excelled them all.”
Charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting;
the woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.
Give her a reward for her labor,
and let her works praise her at the city gates.

The word of the Lord.

All respond: Thanks be to God.

3 FIRST READING 3 · JEREMIAH 31:31–34

I will write my law on their hearts

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah.

The Lord says the time is coming when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel. It will not be like the old covenant that I made with their ancestors on the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of Egypt. Although I was like a husband to them, they did not keep that covenant. The new covenant that I will make with the people of Israel is this:

Deep within them I will plant my Law;
I will write it on their hearts.
Then I will be their God, and they shall be my people.
Then neighbor need not teach neighbor,
nor brother say to brother, “Learn to know the Lord.”
No, they will all know me, the least no less than the greatest.
I will forgive their sins and no longer remember their wrongs.
I, the Lord, have spoken.

The word of the Lord.

All respond: Thanks be to God.

4 FIRST READING 4 · ISAIAH 49:8–16

I will never forget you

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

Thus says the LORD: In a time of favor I answer you, on the day of salvation I help you, to restore the land and allot the desolate heritages, saying to the prisoners: Come out! To those in darkness: Show yourselves!

Along the ways they shall find pasture, on every bare height shall their pastures be. They shall not hunger or thirst, nor shall the scorching wind or the sun strike them; for he who pities them leads them and guides them beside springs of water. I will cut a road through all my mountains, and make my highways level. See, some shall come from afar, others from the north and the west, and some from the land of Syene.

Sing out, O heavens, and rejoice, O earth, break forth into song, you mountains. For the LORD comforts his people and shows mercy to his afflicted.

But Zion said, "The LORD has forsaken me; my Lord has forgotten me." Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of her womb? Even should she forget, I will never forget you. See, upon the palms of my hands I have written your name.

The word of the Lord.

All respond: Thanks be to God.

5 FIRST READING 5 · ISAIAH 43:1–5; 49:15–16

I have called you by name; you are mine

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

The Lord who created you says:
Do not be afraid, I will save you;
I have called you by your name, and you are mine.
When you pass through deep waters, I will be with you,
and your troubles will not be able to overcome you.
Even if you walk through fire, you will not be burned;
even though you endure hard trials, they will not be victorious over you.
For I am your God, the God who saves you from final harm.
You are precious to me and I love you,
so do not be afraid, for I am with you.
From the distant West and the farthest East, I will bring you home.
I will tell the North to let you go, and the South not to hold you back,
for you are my own dear child, whom I have created for glory.

Before you were even born, I chose you as my own.
But perhaps you say, “How can we be sure of the Lord’s love?”
And so the Lord answers: “Can a mother forget her own baby?
Can she refuse to love the child that she bore?
Yet even if she should forget, I will not.
I have written your name on the palm of my hand,
and I will bring you home.”

The word of the Lord.

All respond: Thanks be to God.

6 FIRST READING 6 · ISAIAH 25:6–9

God will wipe away the tears from all faces

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

On this mountain the Lord of hosts
    will provide for all peoples
a feast of rich food and choice wine,
    juicy, rich food and pure, choice wine.
On this mountain the Lord God will destroy
    the veil that veils all peoples,
the web that is woven over all nations;
    he will destroy death forever.
The Lord God will wipe away
    the tears from all faces;
the reproach of his people he will remove
    from the whole earth; for the Lord has spoken.
On that day it will be said:
    “Behold our God, to whom we looked to save us!
This is the Lord for whom we looked;
    let us rejoice and be glad that he has saved us!”

The word of the Lord.

All respond: Thanks be to God.

7

FIRST READING 7 · WISDOM 4:7–8; 3:1–3

The just, though they die early, shall be at rest

Often chosen for a life that ended too soon

A reading from the Book of Wisdom.

The just man, though he die early, shall be at rest. For the age that is honorable comes not with the passing of time, nor can it be measured in terms of years.

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 at peace.

The word of the Lord.

All respond: Thanks be to God.

8 FIRST READING 8 · ECCLESIASTES 3:1–14

A time for everything under heaven

A reading from the Book of Ecclesiastes.

There is an appointed time for everything,
a time for everything under the heavens:
a time to be born, a time to die;
a time to plant, a time to harvest;
a time to destroy, a time to rebuild;
a time to cry, a time to laugh;
a time to grieve, a time to dance;
a time for scattering stones, a time for gathering stones;
a time to hug, a time not to hug;
a time to find, a time to lose;
a time for keeping, a time for throwing away;
a time to rend, a time to sew;
a time to be silent, a time to speak up.

What advantage has the worker from his toil?
I have considered the task which God has appointed
for us to be busy about.
God has made everything appropriate to its time,
and has put the timeless into our hearts,
without us ever discovering, from beginning to end,
the work which God has done.
I know the best thing we can do is to always enjoy life,
because God's gift to us is happiness.
Everything God does will endure forever.

The word of the Lord.

All respond: Thanks be to God.

9 FIRST READING 9 · WISDOM 3:1–6, 9

The souls of the just are in the hand of God

A reading from the Book of Wisdom.

The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them. They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead; and their passing away was thought an affliction, and their going forth from us, utter destruction. But they are in peace.

They shall be greatly blessed, because God tried them and found them worthy of himself. Those who trust in God shall understand truth, and the faithful shall abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are with God's holy ones, and God's care is with his elect.

The word of the Lord.

All respond: Thanks be to God.

10 FIRST READING 10 · ISAIAH 35:3–4, 8–10
Be strong; do not be afraid

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

Give strength to hands that are tired
and to knees that tremble with weakness.
Tell everyone who is discouraged,
"Be strong and don't be afraid!
God is coming to your rescue."

There will be a highway there,
called "The Road of Holiness."
No lions will be there;
no fierce animals will pass that way.
Those whom the Lord has rescued
will travel home by that road.
They will reach Jerusalem with gladness,
singing and shouting for joy.
They will be happy forever,
forever free from sorrow and grief.

The word of the Lord.

All respond: Thanks be to God.

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FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Tips for the Reader

- Practice the reading aloud a few times before the day. Look up any names or words that are unfamiliar.
- Begin with the opening line exactly as printed, for example *"A reading from the Book of Wisdom."* There is no need to read the number, the title, or the chapter and verse at the top of the page.
- Go slower than feels natural. Pause at the end of each sentence and let the words settle.
- When you finish, pause for a breath, look up, and say *"The word of the Lord."* Everyone will respond, *"Thanks be to God."*
- It is perfectly okay to feel emotional. Take a moment, breathe, and continue when you are ready.

St. Mary's Parish, Nutley

Our Lady of Grace, pray for us.