Person of Faith

**Old Testament Readings**

**1) A Reading from the book of Wisdom (3:1-9)**

**But 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 the stubble, so will they. They shall judge 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***

**2) A Reading from the book of Ruth (1,8-17 passim)  
  
Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, ‘Go back, each of you to her mother’s house. May Yahweh be kind to you as you have been to those who have died and to me. Yahweh grant that you find rest, each of you, in the house of a husband’. And she kissed them. But they wept aloud and said to her, ‘No, we will go back with you to your people’. And Naomi said, ‘You must return, my daughters; why come with me? Have I any more sons in my womb to make husbands for you? Return my daughters, go, for I am too old now to marry again. Even if I said there is still hope for me, even if I were to have a husband this very night and bear sons, would you be prepared to wait until they were grown up? Would you refuse to marry for this? No, my daughters, I should then be deeply grieved for you, for the hand of Yahweh has been raised against me’. And once more they started to weep aloud. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law and went back to her people. But Ruth clung to her. Naomi said to her, ‘Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her god. You must return too; follow your sister-in-law’. But Ruth said, ‘Do not press me to leave you and to turn back from your company, for ‘wherever you go, I will go, wherever you live, I will live. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. Wherever you die, I will die and there I will be buried. May Yahweh do this thing to me and more also, if even death should come between us!’.**

***The Word of the Lord***

**3) A Reading from the Book of Wisdom (4,7-15)**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***

**New Testament Readings**

**4) ) A reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans (14:7-12)  
  
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. This is also why you should never pass judgement on a brother or treat him with contempt, as some of you have done. 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.*  
*The Word of the Lord***



**5) A reading from the Second Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians (5,1.6-10)   
  
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. In this present state, it is true, we groan as we wait with longing to put on our heavenly home over the other; we should like to be found wearing clothes and not without them. Yes, we groan and find it a burden being still in this tent, not that we want to strip it off, but to put the second garment over it and to have what must die taken up into life. This is the purpose for which God made us, and he has given us the pledge of the Spirit. 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***

**6) A reading from the Second Letter of Saint Paul to Timothy (4,6-8)  
  
As for me, my life is already being poured away as a libation, and the time has come for me to be gone. I have fought the good fight to the end; I have run the race to the finish; I have kept the faith; all there is to come now is the crown of righteousness reserved for me, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give to me on that Day; and not only to me but to all those who have longed for his Appearing.**

***The Word of the Lord***

