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**FIRST READING (*PLEASE CHOOSE ONE*)**

**A-2 A READING FROM THE BOOK OF WISDOM 3:1-6, 9**

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 in the eyes of 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.  
The word of the Lord.

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**A-3 A READING FROM THE BOOK OF WISDOM 4:7-15**

The just, though they 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.

Rather, understanding is the hoary crown,  
and an unsullied life, the attainment of old age.  
Those who pleased God were loved;  
they who lived among sinners were transported—  
Snatched away, lest wickedness pervert their mind  
or deceit beguile their soul;  
For the witchery of paltry things obscures what is right  
and the whirl of desire transforms the innocent mind.  
Having become perfect in a short while,  
they reached the fullness of a long career;  
for their souls were pleasing to the Lord,  
therefore he sped them out of the midst of wickedness.  
But the people saw and did not understand,  
nor did they take this into account.  
The word of the Lord.

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#### **A-4 A READING FROM THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET ISAIAH 25:6A, 7-9**

On this mountain the Lord of hosts  
will provide for all peoples.  
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!”  
The word of the Lord.

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## **A-5 A READING FROM THE BOOK OF LAMENTATIONS 3:17-26**

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.  
The word of the Lord.

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## **A-6 A READING FROM THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES 3:1-11**

There is an appointed time for everything,  
and a time for every thing 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.  
The word of the Lord.