

Church of the Redeemer

Sarasota, Florida



Requiem Planning Guide

Updated December 2023

The Church's Ministry at the Time of Death

When death occurs in a Christian family, the ministrations of a priest and the services of a funeral director are of immediate and necessary concern. Each has a specific obligation to the deceased and to the bereaved family.

Quite often many persons find themselves under family and social pressure to depart from the burial practices of the Church and may, in fact, lack a clear understanding of them as set forth in the *Book of Common Prayer*. This booklet is designed to assist the bereaved as proper arrangements are made.

At the Time of Death

When a person is near death, and if it is possible, a priest should be notified, in order that the "Ministration at the Time of Death" (*Book of Common Prayer*, pp. 462-7) may be provided. This is commonly called "last rites."

Grief and the Resurrection

"The liturgy for the dead is an Easter liturgy. It finds all its meaning in the resurrection. Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we, too, shall be raised.

The liturgy, therefore, is characterized by joy, in the certainty that 'neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.'

This joy, however, does not make human grief unchristian. The very love we have for each other in Christ brings deep sorrow when we are parted by death. Jesus himself wept at the grave of his friend. So, while we rejoice that one we love has entered into the nearer presence of our Lord, we sorrow in sympathy with those who mourn."

(Book of Common Prayer, p. 507)

General Guidelines

The death of a member of the parish should be reported as soon as possible. Arrangements for the funeral should be made in consultation with a priest.

Communicants in good standing are properly buried from the church, not a funeral home. The service, customarily a Requiem Mass, should be held at a time when the congregation has the opportunity to be present.

In all cases, the family of the deceased should confer first with the priest concerning the funeral arrangements. It is assumed that in requesting the services of a priest of the Church the family accepts the discipline and worship of the Church in which the priest was ordained to serve. The priest is responsible to the Bishop of the Diocese for the uniform conduct of the service. All burial rites will follow the *Book of Common Prayer*.

Specific Guidelines

Cremation

Cremation is an acceptable means for one's mortal remains. Interment of ashes is more appropriate than the practice of "scattering." Ashes may be interred in St. Francis Garden. Details are below. Ashes may or may not be present at the service of Christian burial.

Concerning the Coffin at the Church

The coffin, if one is present, must remain closed once it is brought to the church. Ideally, the body might be brought to the church at 9 a.m. on the day of the funeral, or before, to lie in state, with coffin lid closed, until the time of the service.

Music

Only sacred music (texts from Holy Scripture, the *Book of Common Prayer*, *The Hymnal 1982*, or *The Hymnal 1940*) will be allowed at a church funeral. The funeral is first and foremost a service of worship of Almighty God, and the priest is canonically charged to maintain the traditions of the Church in this area. It is most desirable that congregational hymns be sung at funerals.

Flowers

No flowers may be placed in the church, except those designated for the adornment of the Altar. If flowers are requested, a member of the Flower Committee of the Altar Guild will contact the person responsible for making funeral arrangements. Flowers will be prepared by members of the Flower Committee of the Altar Guild. Friends and family of the decedent are encouraged to make memorial contributions as requested by the family, rather than send flowers.

Funeral Pall

The funeral pall is used to cover the coffin in the church to signify that there is no distinction between persons in death. All coffins, no matter what the cost, appear the same when covered by the pall. No flowers are permitted to be placed on top of the pall at any time, while the body is in the church.

Post-Funeral Prayers

The deceased is customarily remembered at the altar on the Sunday following his or her death, and flowers for that Sunday may be given in memory of the deceased. Communicant members of the parish are remembered annually at mass on the anniversary of their death.

Planning

Death is something everyone must face. Knowing that, plans should be made that will witness to one's faith and relieve the family of the burden of decision-making at a highly emotional time.

Every church member should have on file at his or her parish church plans for his or her own funeral and for any member of the family for whom he has responsibility. It might also be wise to give a copy of instructions to an attorney or a trusted friend. Instructions should not be included in a will or placed in a safe deposit box, to which the family or priest may not have access in time to complete plans for the service.

When making plans for the disposition of one's temporal assets, the *Book of Common Prayer* instructs the parish priest to instruct the people: "from time to time about the duty of Christian parents to make prudent provision for the well-being of their families, and of all persons to make wills, while they are in good health, arranging for the disposal of their temporal goods, not neglecting, if they are able, to leave bequests for religious and charitable uses" (BCP, p. 445).

Service of Fraternal Orders

Only official liturgies for the Burial of the Dead may be conducted at a funeral in the Anglican tradition. When fraternal rites are desired they should be conducted before the church service, either at the home of the deceased, the fraternal meeting place, or the funeral home.

The Holy Eucharist

It is appropriate for a church member's death to be observed with a mass. The Church, and Holy Scripture, teach that the most fitting way to "give thanks for the life of a brother or sister" and to celebrate the continued relationship in the Communion of Saints is by means of the Holy Eucharist. The Requiem need not be a long service; it is always uplifting.

Fees

There is never a charge for a funeral, and canon law forbids such practices. There are, however, certain fees associated with some common burial practices, and they are outlined below. Fees are subject to change.

Solo Organist: \$295

Organist with soloist: \$375

(additional musical accompaniment, choir, and instruments available upon request)

Flowers: \$275-500

(suggested donation; flowers for a reception will be an additional charge)

Livestreaming and/or recording: \$225

Interment in St. Francis Garden: \$0

Permanent Bronze Memorial Plaque in St. Francis Garden: \$2,500

Linen Rental: \$15 per linen

Parish Hall set-up/clean-up fee: \$200

Parish Hall rental fee: \$0 for members; non-member price available upon request

**Please note there is no fee for the celebrant and/or other assisting clergy. An honorarium, however, may be made directly to the clergy involved in the liturgy, but this is not required.*

Other than clergy honorariums, all fees are payable to Church of the Redeemer. Fees may be pre-paid. A fee statement will be mailed to the person responsible for planning the requiem within 30 days. Fees are payable upon receipt.

St. Francis Garden Interment Guidelines

Interment of ashes in the St. Francis Garden will customarily happen immediately following the funeral. There is to be no permanent container for the ashes. The cremains will be buried directly in the soil and covered with sod.

Permanent Memorial Inscription in St. Francis Garden

Names of those buried in the Garden may be permanently inscribed on the memorial wall, stating the date of birth and death. \$2,500 is required for the specific purpose of permanently inscribing the name of the deceased on the memorial wall, and it helps offset the cost of maintaining the fountain and grounds of the St. Francis Garden. You may pre-purchase and pre-reserve the space(s) of your choice, subject to availability, by contacting the parish office.

Please complete this section if you are requesting a permanent memorial inscription.

Name of the decedent as it should appear on memorial wall:

Date of birth: _____

Date of death: _____

Signature of person verifying above details are correct: _____

Planning for the Funeral

(This form is to be completed with a member of the clergy/ staff.)

Desired date and time for funeral (if known): _____

Decedent's full legal name: _____

Decedent's address: _____

Date of birth: _____

Date of death: _____

Communicant of Church of the Redeemer: Yes _____ No _____

If non-communicant, was the person baptized? Yes _____ No _____

Was the person confirmed? Yes _____ No _____

Person responsible for funeral arrangements: _____

Relationship to decedent: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Street Address: _____

Funeral Home: _____

Contact at Funeral Home: _____

The Liturgy

If there is a preference, please indicate the:

Celebrant: _____

Preacher: _____

The Requiem Mass (Rite One) _____ The Requiem Mass (Rite Two) _____

Said _____ Sung _____

Will incense be used? Yes _____ No _____

Burial Office Only? (No Eucharist) Yes _____ No _____

Interment in St. Francis Garden? Yes _____ No _____

Interment immediately following the liturgy _____ Interment at a later date _____

Committal of body at cemetery? _____

Committal of body following the liturgy _____ Committal of body at a later date _____

No committal or interment of body or ashes _____

Will ashes be present in the church? Yes _____ No _____

Will the body be present in the church? Yes _____ No _____

Flowers: Yes _____ No _____

Floral preference? _____

(A member of the Altar Guild's Flower Committee will contact you.)

Will there be a reception after the liturgy onsite? _____ yes _____ no

Will the reception be in Gillespie Hall or Goewey Hall? _____

(Catering is the responsibility of the person(s) making funeral arrangements. There is a set-up/clean-up fee.)

If the reception will not be in Gillespie Hall or Goewey Hall, please indicate where on campus it will be held:

Lay Readers: _____
(You may specify up to three readers, depending on the number of lessons chosen. Alternatively, the parish can provide readers. The deacon or celebrant will read the Gospel.)

Ushers: _____

Acolytes: _____

Pall Bearers *(when required)*: _____

Lessons from Holy Scripture

Please choose at least one lesson plus the Holy Gospel. If you wish, two lessons (one from the Old Testament and one from the New Testament), a Psalm, and a Gospel lesson may be used. A Psalm is never required but is often selected.

Please see the pages at the end of this booklet for the full text of the readings.

Note: Other lessons not contained in this booklet may be used with permission of the Celebrant.

Lessons from the Old Testament

- _____ Isaiah 25:6-9 “He shall swallow up death in victory...”
- _____ Isaiah 61:1-3 “To comfort all that mourn...”
- _____ Lamentations 3:22-26, 31-33 “The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him...”
- _____ Wisdom 3:1-5, 9 “The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God...”
- _____ Job 19:21-27 “I know that my redeemer lives...”

Psalm (select one, if desired)

_____ 42 _____ 121 _____ 90 _____ 46 _____ 130 _____ 139

_____ 23 (King James Version _____ or Book of Common Prayer Psalter _____)

Lessons from the New Testament

- _____ Romans 8:14-19, 34-35, 37-39 “The glory that shall be revealed...”
- _____ 1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, 42-44, 53-38 “Raised in incorruption...”
- _____ 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:9 “Things which are not seen are eternal...”
- _____ 1 John 3:1-2 “We shall be like Him...”
- _____ Revelation 7:9-17 “God shall wipe away...”
- _____ Revelation 21:2-7 “Behold I make all things new...”

The Holy Gospel

- _____ John 5:24-27 “He that believeth hath everlasting life...”
- _____ John 6:37-40 “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me...”
- _____ John 10:11-16 “I am the good shepherd...”
- _____ John 11:21-27 “I am the resurrection and the life...”
- _____ John 14:1-6 “In my Father’s house are many mansions...”

Music

Will there be music at the liturgy? Yes _____ No _____

Commonly used funeral hymns from *The Hymnal 1982*:

(You may listen to these hymns online.)

| | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|
| 208 | The strife is o’er, the battle done | 549 | Jesus calls us o’er the tumult |
| 287 | For all the saints | 558 | Faith of our Fathers |
| 304 | I come with joy to meet my Lord | 560 | Blessed are the poor in spirit |
| 356 | May choirs of angels lead you | 582 | O holy city, seen of John |
| 357 | Jesus, Son of Mary, fount of life | 618 | Ye watchers and ye holy ones |
| 372 | Praise to the living God | 620 | Jerusalem, my happy home |
| 390 | Praise to the Lord, the almighty | 625 | Ye holy angels bright |
| 690 | Guide me, o thou great Jehovah | 636 or 637 | How firm a foundation |
| 401 | The God of Abraham praise | 645 | The king of love my shepherd is |
| 423 | Immortal, invisible, God only wise | 657 | Love divine, all loves excelling |
| 448 | O love, how deep, how broad, how | 664 | My shepherd will supply my need |
| 400 | All creatures of our God and king | 665 | All my hope on God is founded |
| 460 | Alleluia, sing to Jesus | 680 | O God, our help in ages past |
| 488 | Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart | 685 | Rock of ages, cleft for me |
| 517 | How lovely is thy dwelling place | 691 | My faith looks up to thee |
| 179 | Welcome, happy morning | 178 | Alleluia...to the risen Lord |
| 199 | Come ye faithful, raise the strain | 686 | Come thou fount of every blessing |

Hymns selected: _____

Additional special music requested: Yes _____ No _____

(The Organist/Choirmaster will contact you regarding soloist(s), anthems, motets, preludes, postludes, etc.)

Additional Notes:

Signed: _____ Date _____

Priest: _____

First Lesson (*select one*)

[He will swallow up death for ever]

Isaiah 25:6-9

On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of fat things, a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined. And he will destroy on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death for ever, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth; for the Lord has spoken. It will be said on that day, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation."

[To comfort those who mourn]

Isaiah 61:1-3

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to grant to those who mourn in Zion — to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified.

[The Lord is good to those who wait for him]

Lamentations 3:22-26, 31-33

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness. "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him." The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul that seeks him. It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord. For the Lord will not cast off for ever, but, though he cause grief, he will have compassion according to the abundance of his steadfast love; for he does not willingly afflict or grieve the sons of men.

[The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God]

Wisdom 3:1-5, 9

The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be an affliction, and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace. For though in the sight of men they were punished, their hope is full of immortality. Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself. Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.

[I know that my Redeemer lives]

Job 19:21-27a

Job answered, "Have pity on me, have pity on me, O you my friends, for the hand of God has touched me! Why do you, like God, pursue me? Why are you not satisfied with my flesh? Oh that my words were written! Oh that they were inscribed in a book! Oh that with an iron pen and lead they were graven in the rock for ever! For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at last he will stand upon the earth; and after my skin has been thus destroyed, then from my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see on my side, and my eyes shall behold, and not another."

Psalm (*select one*)

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; *
I shall not be in want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures *
and leads me beside still waters.
He revives my soul *
and guides me along right pathways for his Name's sake.
Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I shall fear no evil; *
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
You spread a table before me in the presence of those
who trouble me; *
you have anointed my head with oil,
and my cup is running over.
Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days
of my life, *
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Psalm 27

The Lord is my light and my salvation;
whom then shall I fear? *
the Lord is the strength of my life;
of whom then shall I be afraid?
When evildoers came upon me to eat up my flesh, *
it was they, my foes and my adversaries, who
stumbled and fell.
Though an army should encamp against me, *
yet my heart shall not be afraid;

Psalm 27, continued

And though war should rise up against me, *
yet will I put my trust in him.
One thing have I asked of the Lord;
one thing I seek; *
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days
of my life;
To behold the fair beauty of the Lord *
and to seek him in his temple.
For in the day of trouble he shall keep me safe
in his shelter; *
he shall hide me in the secrecy of his dwelling
and set me high upon a rock.
Even now he lifts up my head *
above my enemies round about me.
Therefore I will offer in his dwelling an oblation
with sounds of great gladness; *
I will sing and make music to the Lord.
Hearken to my voice, O Lord, when I call; *
have mercy on me and answer me.
You speak in my heart and say, "Seek my face." *
Your face, Lord, will I seek.
Hide not your face from me, *
nor turn away your servant in displeasure.
You have been my helper;
cast me not away; *
do not forsake me, O God of my salvation.
Though my father and my mother forsake me, *
the Lord will sustain me.
Show me your way, O Lord; *
lead me on a level path, because of my enemies.
Deliver me not into the hand of my adversaries, *
for false witnesses have risen up against me,
and also those who speak malice.
What if I had not believed
that I should see the goodness of the Lord *
in the land of the living!
O tarry and await the Lord's pleasure;
be strong, and he shall comfort your heart; *
wait patiently for the Lord.

Psalm 42

As the deer longs for the water-brooks, *
so longs my soul for you, O God.
My soul is athirst for God, athirst for the living God; *
when shall I come to appear before the presence of God?
My tears have been my food day and night, *
while all day long they say to me,
“Where now is your God?”
I pour out my soul when I think on these things: *
how I went with the multitude and led them into the
house of God,
With the voice of praise and thanksgiving, *
among those who keep holy-day.
Why are you so full of heaviness, O my soul? *
and why are you so disquieted within me?
Put your trust in God; *
for I will yet give thanks to him,
who is the help of my countenance, and my God.
My soul is heavy within me; *
therefore I will remember you from the land of Jordan,
and from the peak of Mizar among the heights of Hermon.
One deep calls to another in the noise of your cataracts; *
all your rapids and floods have gone over me.
The Lord grants his loving-kindness in the daytime; *
in the night season his song is with me,
a prayer to the God of my life.
I will say to the God of my strength,
“Why have you forgotten me? *
and why do I go so heavily while the enemy
oppresses me?”
While my bones are being broken, *
my enemies mock me to my face;
All day long they mock me *
and say to me, “Where now is your God?”
Why are you so full of heaviness, O my soul? *
and why are you so disquieted within me?
Put your trust in God; *
for I will yet give thanks to him,
who is the help of my countenance, and my God.

Psalm 46

God is our refuge and strength, *
a very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved, *
and though the mountains be toppled into the
depths of the sea;
Though its waters rage and foam, *
and though the mountains tremble at its tumult.
The Lord of hosts is with us; *
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.
There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, *
the holy habitation of the Most High.
God is in the midst of her;
she shall not be overthrown; *
God shall help her at the break of day.
The nations make much ado, and the kingdoms are shaken; *
God has spoken, and the earth shall melt away.
The Lord of hosts is with us; *
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.
Come now and look upon the works of the Lord, *
what awesome things he has done on earth.
It is he who makes war to cease in all the world; *
he breaks the bow, and shatters the spear,
and burns the shields with fire.

Psalm 90:1-12

Lord, you have been our refuge *
from one generation to another.
Before the mountains were brought forth,
or the land and the earth were born, *
from age to age you are God.
You turn us back to the dust and say, *
“Go back, O child of earth.”
For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday
when it is past *
and like a watch in the night.
You sweep us away like a dream; *
we fade away suddenly like the grass.
In the morning it is green and flourishes; *
in the evening it is dried up and withered.
For we consume away in your displeasure; *
we are afraid because of your wrathful indignation.
Our iniquities you have set before you, *
and our secret sins in the light of your countenance.

Psalm 90:1-12, continued

When you are angry, all our days are gone; *
we bring our years to an end like a sigh.
The span of our life is seventy years,
perhaps in strength even eighty; *
yet the sum of them is but labor and sorrow,
for they pass away quickly and we are gone.
Who regards the power of your wrath? *
who rightly fears your indignation?
So teach us to number our days *
that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.

Psalm 106:1-5

Hallelujah!
Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, *
for his mercy endures for ever.
Who can declare the mighty acts of the Lord *
or show forth all his praise?
Happy are those who act with justice *
and always do what is right!
Remember me, O Lord, with the favor you have
for your people, *
and visit me with your saving help;
That I may see the prosperity of your elect
and be glad with the gladness of your people, *
that I may glory with your inheritance.

Psalm 116

I love the Lord, because he has heard the voice of
my supplication, *
because he has inclined his ear to me whenever
I called upon him.
The cords of death entangled me;
the grip of the grave took hold of me; *
I came to grief and sorrow.
Then I called upon the Name of the Lord: *
“O Lord, I pray you, save my life.”
Gracious is the Lord and righteous; *
our God is full of compassion.
The Lord watches over the innocent; *
I was brought very low, and he helped me.
Turn again to your rest, O my soul, *
for the Lord has treated you well.

Psalm 116, continued

For you have rescued my life from death, *
my eyes from tears, and my feet from stumbling.
I will walk in the presence of the Lord *
in the land of the living.
I believed, even when I said,
“I have been brought very low.” *
In my distress I said, “No one can be trusted.”
How shall I repay the Lord *
for all the good things he has done for me?
I will lift up the cup of salvation *
and call upon the Name of the Lord.
I will fulfill my vows to the Lord *
in the presence of all his people.
Precious in the sight of the Lord *
is the death of his servants.
O Lord, I am your servant; *
I am your servant and the child of your handmaid;
you have freed me from my bonds.
I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving *
and call upon the Name of the Lord.
I will fulfill my vows to the Lord *
in the presence of all his people,
In the courts of the Lord’s house, *
in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.
Hallelujah!

Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills; *
from where is my help to come?
My help comes from the Lord, *
the maker of heaven and earth.
He will not let your foot be moved *
and he who watches over you will not fall asleep.
Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel *
shall neither slumber nor sleep;
The Lord himself watches over you; *
the Lord is your shade at your right hand,
So that the sun shall not strike you by day, *
nor the moon by night.
The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; *
it is he who shall keep you safe.
The Lord shall watch over your going out and
your coming in, *
from this time forth for evermore.

Psalm 130

Out of the depths have I called to you, O Lord;
Lord, hear my voice; *
let your ears consider well the voice of my supplication.
If you, Lord, were to note what is done amiss, *
O Lord, who could stand?
For there is forgiveness with you; *
therefore you shall be feared.
I wait for the Lord; my soul waits for him; *
in his word is my hope.
My soul waits for the Lord,
more than watchmen for the morning, *
more than watchmen for the morning.
O Israel, wait for the Lord, *
for with the Lord there is mercy;
With him there is plenteous redemption, *
and he shall redeem Israel from all their sins.

Psalm 139:1-11

Lord, you have searched me out and known me; *
you know my sitting down and my rising up;
you discern my thoughts from afar.
You trace my journeys and my resting-places *
and are acquainted with all my ways.
Indeed, there is not a word on my lips, *
but you, O Lord, know it altogether.
You press upon me behind and before *
and lay your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; *
it is so high that I cannot attain to it.
Where can I go then from your Spirit? *
where can I flee from your presence?
If I climb up to heaven, you are there; *
if I make the grave my bed, you are there also.
If I take the wings of the morning *
and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
Even there your hand will lead me *
and your right hand hold me fast.
If I say, "Surely the darkness will cover me, *
and the light around me turn to night,"
Darkness is not dark to you;
the night is as bright as the day; *
darkness and light to you are both alike.

Epistle (*select one*)

[The glory that shall be revealed]

Romans 8:14-19, 34-35, 37-39

All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. Who is to condemn? Is it Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

[The imperishable body]

1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, 42-44, 53-58

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. But some one will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?” You foolish man! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And what you sow is not the body which is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body. For this perishable nature must put on the imperishable, and this mortal nature must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” “O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?” The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

[Things that are unseen are eternal]

2 Corinthians 4:16-5:9

We do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed every day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, because we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen; for the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal. For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Here indeed we groan, and long to put on our heavenly dwelling, so that by putting it on we may not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we sigh with anxiety; not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. So we are always of good courage; 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. We are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.

[We shall be like him]

1 John 3:1-2

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

[God will wipe away every tear]

Revelation 7:9-17

After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no man could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb!" And all the angels stood round the throne and round the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God for ever and ever! Amen." Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and whence have they come?" I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night within his temple; and he who sits upon the throne will shelter them with his presence. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water; and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

[Behold, I make all things new]

Revelation 21:2-7

I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; and I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away." And he who sat upon the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the fountain of the water of life without payment. He who conquers shall have this heritage, and I will be his God and he shall be my son."

Gospel Reading (*select one*)

[He who believes has everlasting life]

John 5:24-27

Jesus said to the people, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life; he does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. Truly, truly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself, and has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man."

[All that the Father gives me will come to me]

John 6:37-40

Jesus said to the people, "All that the Father gives me will come to me; and him who comes to me I will not cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me; and this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up at the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that every one who sees the Son and believes in him should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

[I am the good shepherd]

John 10:11-16

Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He who is a hireling and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hireling and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me, as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep, that are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will heed my voice. So there shall be one flock, one shepherd."

[I am the resurrection and the life]

John 11:21-27

Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. And even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.” Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?” She said to him, “Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, he who is coming into the world.”

[In my Father’s house are many rooms]

John 14:1-6

Jesus said, “Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way where I am going.” Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?” Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me.”

