

A Reading from the Book of Ecclesiastes.

(Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-23)

Meaningless! Meaningless!

says the Teacher.

“Utterly meaningless!

Everything is meaningless.”

No one remembers the former generations,

and even those yet to come

will not be remembered

by those who follow them.

12 I, the Teacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem. 13 I applied my mind to study and to explore by wisdom all that is done under the heavens. What a heavy burden God has laid on mankind! 14 I have seen all the things that are done under the sun; all of them are meaningless, a chasing after the wind.

18 I hated all the things I had toiled for under the sun, because I must leave them to the one who comes after me. 19 And who knows whether that person will be wise or foolish? Yet they will have control over all the fruit of my toil into which I have poured my effort and skill under the sun. This too is meaningless. 20 So my heart began to despair over all my toilsome labor under the sun. 21 For a person may labor with wisdom, knowledge and skill, and then they must leave all they own to another who has not toiled for it. This too is meaningless and a great misfortune. 22 What do people get for all the toil and anxious striving with which they labor under the sun? 23 All their days their work is grief and pain; even at night their minds do not rest. This too is meaningless.

The Word of the Lord.

Please join in reading today's psalm.

(Psalm 49:1-11)

- 1 Hear this, all you peoples;
hearken, all you who dwell in the world, *
you of high degree and low, rich and poor together.
- 2 My mouth shall speak of wisdom, *
and my heart shall meditate on understanding.
- 3 I will incline my ear to a proverb *
and set forth my riddle upon the harp.
- 4 Why should I be afraid in evil days, *
when the wickedness of those at my heels surrounds me,
- 5 The wickedness of those who put their trust in their goods, *
and boast of their great riches?
- 6 We can never ransom ourselves, *
or deliver to God the price of our life;
- 7 For the ransom of our life is so great, *
that we should never have enough to pay it,
- 8 In order to live for ever and ever, *
and never see the grave.
- 9 For we see that the wise die also;
like the dull and stupid they perish *
and leave their wealth to those who come after them.
- 10 Their graves shall be their homes for ever,
their dwelling places from generation to generation, *
though they call the lands after their own names.
- 11 Even though honored, they cannot live for ever; *
they are like the beasts that perish.

A Reading from Paul's letter to the Colossians.

(Colossians 3:1-11)

¹ Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.³ For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.⁵ Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.⁶ Because of these, the wrath of God is coming.⁷ You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived.⁸ But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.⁹ Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.¹¹ Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

The Word of the Lord.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

(Luke 12:13-21)

¹³ Someone in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." ¹⁴ He replied, "Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?"¹⁵ Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."¹⁶ And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop.¹⁷ He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.'¹⁸ Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.'¹⁹ And I'll say to myself, 'You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.'²⁰ But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'²¹ This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God."

The Gospel of the Lord.