

Biblical Readings & Poems

Colossians 3:12-19

"Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, and patience, forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them."

1 Corinthians 12:31 - 13:8 Sample A

Set your mind on the higher gifts. And now I am going to put before you the best way of all. Though I command languages both human and angelic -- if I speak without love, I am no more than a gong is booming or a cymbal clashing. And though I have the power of prophecy, to penetrate all mysteries and knowledge, and though I have all faith necessary to move mountains -- if I am without love, I am nothing. Though I should give away to the poor all that I possess, and even give up my body to be burned -- if I am without love, it will do me no good whatever. Love is always patient and kind; love is never jealous; love is not boastful or conceited, it is never rude and never seeks its own advantage, it does not take offence or store up grievances. Love does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but finds its joy in the truth. It is always ready to make allowances, to trust, to hope and to endure whatever comes. Love never comes to an end.

1 Corinthians 13:1-13 Sample B

"If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends; as for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For our knowledge is imperfect and our prophecy is imperfect; but when the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood. So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love."

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

"Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken."

Ephesians 5:1-2, 21-33

"Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. As the church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands. Husbands love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. Even so husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no man ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is a profound one, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church; however, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband."

Genesis 2:15-24

"The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die." Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." So out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for

the man there was not found a helper fit for him. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; and the rib which the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh."

John 2:1-1 Sample A

"On the third day there was a marriage at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; Jesus also was invited to the marriage, with his disciples. When the wine failed, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "O woman, what have you to do with me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Now six stone jars were standing there, for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the steward of the feast." So they took it. When the steward of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward of the feast called the bridegroom and said to him, "Every man serves the good wine first; and when men have drunk freely, then the poor wine; but you have kept the good wine until now." This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed in him."

First Letter of John 4: 7-12 Sample B

My dear friends, let us love one another, since love is from God and everyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. Whoever fails to love does not know God, because God *is* love. This is the revelation of God's love for us, that God sent his only Son into the world that we might have life through him. Love consists in this: it is not we who loved God, but God loved us and sent his Son to expiate our sins. My dear friends, if God loved us so much, we too should love one another. No one has ever seen God, but as long as we love one another God remains in us and his love comes to its perfection in us. This is the proof that we remain in him and he in us. That he has given us a share in his Spirit.

John 15: 9-12 Sample C

Jesus said to his disciples:"As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Live on in my love. You will live in my love if you keep my commandments, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and live in his love. And this I tell you that my joy may be yours and that your joy may be complete. This is my commandment: Love one another as I have loved you."

Mark 10:6-9, 13-16

"But from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder." And they were bringing children to him, that he might touch them; and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it he was indignant, and said to them, "Let the children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it." And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands upon them."

Matthew 5: 1-12a Sample A

Seeing the crowds, he went onto the mountain. And when he was seated his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them: How blessed are the poor in spirit: the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. Blessed are the gentle: they shall have the earth as inheritance. Blessed are those who mourn: they shall be comforted. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for uprightness: they shall have their fill. Blessed are the merciful: they shall have mercy shown them. Blessed are the pure in heart: they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: they shall be recognized as children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted in the cause of uprightness: the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. Blessed are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.

Matthew 19:4-6 Sample B

"He answered, "Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female and said, for this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. "

Matthew 22: 35-40 Sample C

To put him to the test, one of them asked him a question: "Master, which is the greatest commandment of the Law?" Jesus said to him, "You must love the Lord your God with all our heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second resembles it: You must love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang the whole Law, and the Prophets too."

Paul's Letter to the Romans 12:9-18

Love must be sincere. Look away from what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

From Pope John Paul II

"You will reciprocally promise love, loyalty, and matrimonial honesty. We only want for you this day that these words constitute the principle of your entire life; and that with the help of the divine grace you will observe these solemn vows that today, before God, you formulate."

A Reading from the Book of Ruth Ruth 1:16-17

"But Ruth said, "Entreat me not to leave you or to return from following you; for where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God; where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the LORD do so to me and more also if even death parts me from you."

Song Of Solomon 2:10-13 Sample A

"My beloved speaks and says to me: "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away; for lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land. The fig tree puts forth its figs, and the vines are in blossom; they give forth fragrance. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away."

Song Of Solomon 8:6-7 Sample B

"Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm; for love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave. Its flashes are flashes of fire, a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it. If a man offered for love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly scorned."

(OT-1) The Creation of Man and Woman (Genesis 1:26-28, 31a)

A reading from the book of Genesis: God said, "Let us make man in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves, and let them be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all the wild beasts and all the reptiles that crawl upon the earth." God created man in the image of himself, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them. God blessed them, saying to them, "Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and conquer it. Be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all living animals on the earth." God saw all he had made, and indeed it was very good. The word of the Lord.

(OT-2) The Creation of Woman (Genesis 2:18-24)

A reading from the book of Genesis: The Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him a helpmate." So from the soil the Lord God fashioned all the wild beasts and all the birds of the heaven. These he brought to the man to see what he would call them; each one was to bear the name the man would give it. The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of heaven and all the wild beasts. But no helpmate suitable for man was found for him.

So the Lord God made the man fall into deep sleep. And while he slept, he took one of his ribs and enclosed it in flesh. The Lord God built the rib he had taken from the man into a woman, and brought her to the man. The man exclaimed: "This at last is bone from my bones, and flesh from my flesh! This is to be called woman, for this was taken from man." This is why a man leaves his father and mother and joins himself to his wife, and they become one body. The word of the Lord.

(OT-3) The Meeting of Isaac and Rebekah (Genesis 24:48-51; 58-67)

A reading from the book of Genesis: The servant of Abraham said to Laban: "I blessed the Lord, God of my master Abraham, who had so graciously led me to choose the daughter of my master's brother for his son. Now tell me whether you are prepared to show kindness and goodness to my master; if not, say so, and I shall know what to do."

Laban and Bethuel replied, "This is from the Lord; it is not in our power to say yes or no to you. Rebekah is there before you. Take her and go; and let her become the wife of your master's son, as the Lord has decreed."

They called Rebekah and asked her, "Do you want to leave with this man?" "I do," she replied. Accordingly they let their sister Rebekah go, with her nurse, and Abraham's servant and his men. They blessed Rebekah in these words: "Sister of ours, increase to thousands and tens of thousands! May your descendants gain possession of the gates of their enemies!"

Rebekah and her servants stood up, mounted the camels, and followed the man. The servant took Rebekah and departed. Isaac, who lived in the Negev, had meanwhile come into the wilderness of the well of Lahai Roi. Now Isaac went walking in the fields as evening fell, and looking up saw camels approaching.

And Rebekah looked up and saw Isaac. She jumped down from her camel, and asked the servant, "Who is that man walking through the fields to meet us?" The servant replied, "That is my master;" then she took her veil and hid her face. The servant told Isaac the whole story, and Isaac left Rebekah into his tent and made her his wife; and he loved her. And so Isaac was consoled for the loss of his mother. The word of the Lord.

(OT-4) The Marriage of Tobias and Sarah (*Tobit 7:9c-10, 11c-17*)

A reading from the book of Tobit: Then Tobias said to Raphael, "Brother Azarias, will you ask Raguel to give me my sister Sarah?"

Raguel overheard the words, and said to the young man, "Eat and drink, and make the most of your evening; no one else has the right to take my daughter Sarah — no one but you, my brother. In any case, I, for my own part, am not at liberty to give her to anyone else, since you are her next of kin. However, my boy, I must be frank with you."

Tobias spoke out, "I will not hear of eating and drinking till you have come to a decision about me." Raguel answered, "very well. Since, as prescribed by the Book of Moses, she is given to you. From now you are her brother and she is your sister. She is given to you from today for ever. The Lord of heaven favor you his grace and peace."

Raguel called for his daughter Sarah, took her by the hand and gave her to Tobias with these words, "I entrust her to you; the law and the ruling recorded in the book of Moses assign her to you as your wife. Take her; take her home to your father's house with a good conscience. The God of heaven grant you a good journey in peace."

Then he turned to her mother and asked her to fetch him writing paper. He drew up the marriage contract, how he gave his daughter as bride to Tobias according to the ordinances in the Law of Moses. After this they began to eat and drink. The word of the Lord.

(OT-5) Prayer of the New Spouses (*Tobit 8:4-9*)

A reading from the book of Tobit: Tobias rose up from the bed and said to Sarah, "Get up, my sister; you and I must pray and petition our Lord to win his grace and his protection." She stood up and they began praying for protection and this was how he began:

"You are blessed, O God of our fathers; blessed, too, is your name for ever and ever. Let the heavens bless you and all things you have made for evermore. It was you who created Adam, you who created Eve his wife to be his help and support; and from these two the human race was born. It was you who said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; let us make him a helpmate like himself.' And so I do not take my sister for any lustful motive; I do it in singleness of heart. Be kind enough to have pity on her and on me and bring us to old age together." The word of the Lord.

(OT-6) Love is Strong as Death (*Song of Songs 2:8-10, 14, 16a; 8:6-7a*)

A reading from the Song of Songs:

I hear my Beloved
See how he comes
leaping on the mountains,
bounding over the hills,
My Beloved is like a gazelle,
like a young stag.

See where he stands
behind our wall.
He looks in at the window,
he peers through the lattice.

My Beloved lifts up his voice,
he says to me,
"Come then, my love,
my lovely one, come.

My dove, hiding in the clefts of the rock,
in the coverts of the cliff,
show me your face,
let me hear your voice;
for your voice is sweet
and your fact is beautiful."

My beloved is mind and I am his.
He said to me:

Set me like a seal on your heart,
like a seal on your arm.
For love is strong as Death,
jealously relentless as Sheol.
The flash of it is a flash of fire,
a flame of the Lord himself.

Love no flood can quench,
no torrents drown.

The word of the Lord.

(OT-7) A Really Good Wife and a Joyful Husband (*Sirach 26:1-4; 16-21*)

A reading from the book of Sirach:

Happy the husband of a really good wife;
the number of his days will be doubled.

A perfect wife is the joy of the husband,
he will live out the years of his life in peace.

A good wife is the best of portions,
reserved for those who fear the Lord;
rich or poor, they will be glad of heart,
cheerful of face, whatever the season.

The grace of a wife will charm her husband,
her accomplishments will make him stronger.
A silent wife is a gift from the Lord,
no price can be put on a well-trained character.

A modest wife is a boon twice over,
a chaste character cannot be weighted on scales.

Like the sun rising over the mountains of the Lord
is the beauty of a good wife in a well-kept house.

The word of the Lord.

(OT-8) The New Covenant of the People of God (*Jeremiah 31:31-32a, 33-34a*)

A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah: See, the days are coming — it is Yahweh who speaks — when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel (and the House of Judah), but not a covenant like the one I made with their ancestors on the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. No, this is the covenant I will make with the House of Israel when those days arrive — it is the Lord who speaks. Deep within them I will plant my Law, writing in on their hearts. Then I will be their God and they shall be my people. There will be no further need for neighbor to try to teach neighbor, or bother to say to brother, "Learn to know the Lord!" No, they will all know me, the least no less than the greatest. The word of the Lord.

(OT-9) Ruth's Statement of Love (*Book of Ruth 1:16-17*)

A reading from the Book of Ruth: And Ruth said, "Urge me not to leave you, or to return from following you; for where you go, I will go; and where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Wherever you die, I will die, and there will I be buried. May Lord do so to me, and more also, if anything but death parts me from you." This is the Word of the Lord.

(OT-10) True Comfort of Spousal Love (*Book of Sirach 40:16-27*)

A Reading from the Book of Sirach:

The reeds by any water or river bank
are plucked up before any grass;
But goodness will never be cut off,
and justice endures forever.
Wealth or wages can make life sweet,
but better than either, is finding a treasure.
A child or a city will preserve one's name,
but better than either is attaining wisdom.
Sheep folds and orchards bring flourishing health;
but better than either, a devoted (spouse);
Wine and music delight the soul,
but better than either, conjugal love.
The flute and the harp offer sweet melody,
but better than either, a voice that is true.
Charm and beauty delight the eye,
but better than either the flowers of the field.
A friend, a neighbor, are timely guides,
but better than either, a prudent husband and wife.
A brother, a helper, for times of stress;
but better than either, charity that rescues.
Gold and silver make one's way secure,
but better than either, sound judgment.
Wealth and vigor build up confidence,
but better than either, fear of God.
Fear of the Lord leaves nothing wanting;
he who has it need seek no other support.
The fear of God is a paradise of blessings;
its canopy, all that is glorious.

This is the Word of the Lord.

(OT-11) Dress of Bride and Bridegroom (*Book of Isaiah 61:10-11*)

A reading from the Book of Isaiah: God has dressed me with garments of exultation... As a bridegroom puts on a priestly diadem, and as a bride adorns herself with jewels. For, as the earth puts forth her blossoms or bushes in the garden burst into flower, so shall the Lord God make righteousness and praise blossom before all the nations. This is the Word of the Lord.

(OT-12) Two are Better than One (*Book of Ecclesiastes 4: 9-12*)

A Reading from the Book of Ecclesiastes:

Two are better than one,
because they have a good reward for their toil.
For if they fall, one will lift up the other;
but woe to one who is alone and falls and does not have another to help.
Again, if two lie together, they keep warm;
but how can one keep warm alone?
And though one might prevail against another, two will withstand one.

This is the Word of the Lord.

(NT-1) The Love of Christ (Romans 8: 31b-35, 37-39)

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Romans: With God on our side who can be against us? Since God did not spare his own Son, but gave

him up to benefit us all, we may be certain, after such a gift, that he will not refuse anything he can give. Could anyone accuse those that God has chosen? When God acquits, could anyone condemn? Could Christ Jesus? No!! He not only died for us — he rose from the dead, and there at God's right hand he stands and pleads for us. Nothing therefore can come between us and the love of Christ, even if we are troubled or worried, or being persecuted, or lacking food or clothes, or being threatened or even attacked. These are the trials through which we triumph, by the power of him who loved us. For I am certain of this; neither death nor life, no angel, no prince, nothing that exists, nothing still to come, not any power, or height or depth, nor any created thing can ever come between us and the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord. The word of the Lord.

The Life of a Christian *(NT-2s) Short Version: Romans 12:1-2, 9-13*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans: Think of God's mercy, my brothers and sisters, and worship him, I beg you, in a way that is worthy of thinking beings, by offering your living bodies as a holy sacrifice, truly pleasing to God. Do not model yourselves on the behavior of the world around you, but let your behavior change, modeled by your new mind. This is the only way to discover the will of God and know what is good, what it is that God wants, what is the perfect thing to do. Do not let your love be a pretense, but sincerely prefer good to evil. Love each other as much as siblings should, and have a profound respect for each other. Work for the Lord with untiring effort and with earnestness of spirit. If you have hope, this will make you cheerful. Do not give up if trials come; and keep on praying. If any of the saints are in need you must share with them; and you should make hospitality your special care. The word of the Lord.

(NT-3) Your Members are Temples of the Holy Spirit *(1 Corinthians 6:13c-15a, 17-20)*

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians: The body — is not meant for fornication; it is for the Lord, and the Lord for the Body. God, who raised the Lord from the dead, will by his power raise us up too. You know, surely, that your bodies are members making up the body of Christ. But anyone who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him. Keep away from fornication. All the other sins are committed outside the body; but to fornicate is to sin against your own body. Your body, you know, is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you since you received him from God. You are not your own property; you have been bought and paid for. That is why you should use your body for the glory of God. The word of the Lord.

(NT-4) The Greatest of These is Love *(1 Corinthians 12:31-13:8a)*

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians. Be ambitious for the higher gifts. And I am going to show you a way that is better than any of them. If I have all the eloquence of men or of angels, but speak without love, I am simply a gong booming or a cymbal clashing. If I have the gift of prophecy, understanding all the mysteries there are, and know everything and if I have faith in all its fullness, to move mountains, but am without love, then I am nothing at all. If I give away all that I possess, piece by piece, and if I even let them take my body to burn it, but am without love, it will do me no good whatever.

Love is always patient and kind; it is never jealous; love is never boastful or conceited; it is never rude or selfish; it does not take offense, and is not resentful. Love takes no pleasure in other people's sins but delights in the truth; it is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope, and to endure whatever comes.

Love does not come to an end. The word of the Lord.

(NT-5s) The Mystery of Marriage A. Short Version *(Ephesians 5:2a, 25-32)*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians: Follow Christ by loving as he loved you. Give way to one another in obedience to Christ. Wives should regard their husbands as they regard the Lord, since as Christ is head of the Church and saves the whole family, so is a husband the head of his wife; and as the Church submits to Christ, so should wives to their husbands, in everything.

Husbands should love their wives just as Christ loved the Church and sacrificed himself for her to make her holy. He made her clean by washing her in water with a form of words, so that when he took her to himself she would be glorious, with no speck or wrinkle or anything like that, but holy and faultless.

A man never hates his own body, but he feeds it and looks after it; and that is the way Christ treats the Church, because it is his body — and we are his living parts. For this reason, a man must leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one body. This mystery has many implications; but I am saying it applies to Christ and the Church. The word of the Lord.

(NT-5L) The Mystery of Marriage *(NT-5) Long Version: (Ephesians 5:2a, 21-33)*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians: Follow Christ by loving as he loved you. Give way to one another in obedience to Christ. Wives should regard their husbands as they regard the Lord, since as Christ is head of the Church and saves the whole family, so is a husband the head of his wife; and as the Church submits to Christ, so should wives to their husbands, in everything.

Husbands should love their wives just as Christ loved the Church and sacrificed himself for her to make her holy. He made her clean by washing her in water with a form of words, so that when he took her to himself she would be glorious, with no speck or wrinkle or anything like that, but holy and faultless.

A man never hates his own body, but he feeds it and looks after it; and that is the way Christ treats the Church, because it is his body - and we are his living parts. For this reason, a man must leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one body. This mystery has many implications; but I am saying it applies to Christ and the Church.

To sum up; you too, each one of you, must love his wife as he loves himself; and let every wife respect her husband. The word of the Lord.

(NT-6) Live in Love and Thanksgiving (*Colossians 3:12-17*)

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Colossians: You are God's chosen race, his saints; he loves you, and you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same. Over all these clothes, to keep them together and complete them, put on love. And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were called together as parts of one body. Always be thankful.

Let the message of Christ, in all its richness, find a home with you. Teach each other, and advise each other, in all wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God; and never say or do anything except in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. The word of the Lord.

(NT-7) Peace and Harmony in the Family (*1 Peter 3:1-9*)

A reading from the first letter of Peter: Wives should be obedient to their husbands. Then, if there are some husbands who have not yet obeyed the word, they may find themselves won over, without a word spoken, by the way their wives behave, when they see how faithful and conscientious they are. Do not dress up for show; doing up your hair, wearing gold bracelets and fine clothes; all this should be inside, in a person's heart, imperishable; the ornament — this is what is precious in the sight of God. That was how the holy women of the past dressed themselves attractively — they hoped in God and were tender and obedient to their husbands; like Sarah, who was obedient to Abraham, and called him her Lord. You are now her children, as long as you live good lives and do not give way to fear and worry. In the same way, husbands must treat their wives with consideration in their life together, respecting a woman as one who, though she may be the weaker partner, is equally an heir to the life of grace. This will stop anything from coming in the way of your prayers.

Finally: you should all agree among yourselves and be sympathetic; love the brothers, have compassion and be self-effacing. Never pay back one wrong with another, or an angry word with another one; instead, pay back with a blessing. That is what you are called to do, so that you inherit a blessing yourself. The word of the Lord.

(NT-8) Love, Real and Active (*1 John 3:18-24*)

A reading from the first letter of John: My children, our love is not to be just words or mere talk, but something real and active; only by this can we be certain that we are children of truth and be able to quiet our conscience in his presence, whatever accusations it may raise against us, because God is greater than our conscience and he knows everything.

My dear people, if we cannot be condemned by our own conscience, we need not be afraid in God's presence, and whatever we ask him, we shall receive, because we keep his commandments and live the kind of life that he wants. His commandments are these: that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and that we love one another as he told us to. Whoever keeps his commandments lives in God and God lives in him. We know that he lives in us by the Spirit that he has given us. The word of the Lord.

(NT-9) God is Love (*1 John 4:7-12*)

A reading from the first letter of John: My dear people, let us love one another since love comes from God and everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Anyone who fails to love can never have known God, because God is love. God's love for us was revealed when God sent into the world his only Son so that we could have a life through him; this is the love I mean: not our love for God, but God's love for us when he sent his Son to be the sacrifice that takes our sins away.

My dear people, since God has loved us so much, we too should love one another. No one has ever seen God; but as long as we love one another God will live in us and his love will be complete in us. The word of the Lord.

(NT-10) Marriage of the Lamb (Revelation 19:1, 5-9a) A reading from the book of Revelation:

"I, John, seemed to hear the great sound of a huge crowd in heaven, singing, 'Alleluia! Victory and glory and power to our God!'" Then a voice came from the throne; it said, "Praise our God, you servants of his and all who, great or small, revere him." And I seemed to hear the voices of a huge

crowd, like the sound of the ocean or the great roar of thunder, answering, "Alleluia! The reign of the Lord our God Almighty has begun; let us be glad and joyful and give praise to God, because this is the time for the marriage of the Lamb. "His bride is ready, and she has been able to free herself in dazzling white linen, because linen is made of the good deeds of the saints." The angel said, "Write this: Happy are those who are invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb."

Gospel reading are read following the OT & NT reading.

GL-1) The Beatitudes (*Matthew 5:1-12a*)

A reading to the holy gospel according to Matthew: Seeing the crowds, he went up the hill. There he sat down and was joined by his disciples. Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them:

"How happy are the poor in spirit: theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Happy the gentle: they shall have the earth for their heritage.

Happy those who mourn: they shall be comforted.

Happy those who hunger and thirst for what is right: they shall be satisfied.

Happy the merciful: they shall have mercy shown them.

Happy the pure in heart: they shall see God.

Happy the peacemakers: they shall be called children of God.

Happy those who are persecuted in the cause of right: theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Happy are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you on my account.

Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven." The gospel of the Lord.

(GL-2) Salt of the Earth and Light of the World (*Matthew 5:13-16*)

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew: Jesus said to his disciples: "You are the salt of the earth. But if salt becomes tasteless, what can make it salty again? It is good for nothing, can only be thrown out to be trampled underfoot by people. You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill top cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp to put it under a tub; they put it on the lamp stand where it shines for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine in the sight of all people, so that, seeing your good works, they may give the praise to your Father in heaven." The gospel of the Lord.

(F3AS) House Built upon a Rock (*GL-3S*) Short Version: (*Matthew 7:21, 24-25*)

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew: Jesus said to his disciples: It is not those who say to me, 'Lord, Lord' who will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the person who does the will of my Father in heaven. Therefore, everyone who listens to these words of mind and acts on them will be like a sensible man who built his house on rock. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and hurled themselves against that house, and it did not fall: it was founded on rock. The gospel of the Lord.

(FAL) House Built upon a Rock (*GL-3L*) Long Version: (*Matthew 7:21, 24-29*)

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew: Jesus said to his disciples: "It is not those who say to me, 'Lord, Lord' who will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the person who does the will of my Father in heaven. Therefore, everyone who listens to these words of mind and acts on them will be like a sensible man who built his house on rock. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and hurled themselves against that house, and it did not fall: it was founded on rock.

"But everyone who listens to these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a stupid person who built his house on sand. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and struck that house, and it fell; and what a fall it had!"

Jesus had now finished what he wanted to say, and his teaching made a deep impression on the people because he taught them with authority, and not like their own scribes. The gospel of the Lord.

(GL-4) What God Has United, Man Must Not Divide (*Matthew 19:3-6*)

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew: Some Pharisees approached him, and to test him they said, "Is it against the Law for a Man to divorce his wife on any pretext whatever?" He answered, "Have you not read that the Creator from the beginning made them male and female and that he said, 'This is why a man must leave father and mother, and cling to his wife, and the two become one body?' They are no longer two, therefore, but one body. So then, what God has united, no human being may divide." The gospel of the Lord.

(GL-5) Love, the Greatest Commandment (*Matthew 22:35-40*)

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew: To disconcert him, one of them put a question, Master, which is the greatest commandment of the Law?

Jesus said, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all you soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second resembles it: You must love your neighbor as yourself. One these two commandments stand the whole Law and the Prophets also." The gospel of the Lord.

(GL-6) Two Become One Body *(Mark 10:6-9)*

A reading from the holy gospel according to Mark: From the beginning of creation God made them male and female. This is why a man must leave father and mother, and the two become one body. They are no longer two, therefore, but one body. So the, what God has united, a human being must not divide. The gospel of the Lord.

(GL-7) Marriage Feast of Cana *(John 2:1-11)*

A reading from the holy gospel according to John: There was a wedding at Cana in Galilee. The mother of Jesus was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited. When they ran out of wine, since the wine provided for the wedding was all finished, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine."

Jesus said, "Woman, why turn to me? My hour has not come yet."

His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

There were six stone water jars standing there meant for the ablutions that are customary among the Jews: each could hold twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water," and they filled them to the brim. "Draw some out now," he told them, "and take it to the steward." They did this; the steward tested the water and it had turned into wine.

Having no idea where it came from — only the servant who had drawn the water knew — the steward called the bridegroom and said, "People generally serve the best wine first and keep the cheaper sort till the guests have had plenty to drink; but you have kept the best wine till now."

This was the first of the signs given by Jesus: it was given at Cana in Galilee. He let his glory be seen and his disciples believed in him. The gospel of the Lord.

(GL-8) Remain in My Love *(John 15:9-12)*

A reading from the holy gospel according to John. Jesus said to his disciples: "As the Father as loved me, so I have loved you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my own joy may be in you and your joy may be complete. This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you." The gospel of the Lord.

(GL-9) Love One Another as I have Loved You *(John 15: 12-16)*

A reading from the holy gospel according to John.

Jesus said to his disciples: "This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you. A man or woman can have no greater love than to lay down their own life for friends. You are my friends, if you do what I command you. I shall not call you servants any more, because a servant does not know his master's business; I call you friends, because I have made known to you everything I have learnt from my Father. You did not choose me, no, I chose you; and I commissioned you to go out and to bear fruit, fruit that will last; and then the Father will give you anything you ask him in my name." The gospel of the Lord.

(GL-10S) That They May Be One as We are One *(GL-10S) Short Version: (John 17:20-23)*

A reading from the holy gospel according to John.

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and prayed, saying: "I pray not only for these, but for those also who through their words will believe in me. May they all be one. Father, may they be one in us, as you are in me and I am in you, so that the world may believe it was you who sent me. I have given them the glory you gave to me, that they may be one as we are one. With me in them and you in me, may they be so completely one that the world will realize that it was you who sent me and that I have loved them as much as you loved me." The gospel of the Lord.

(GL-10L) That They May Be One as We are One *(GL-10L) Long Version: (John 17:20-26)*

A reading from the holy gospel according to John. Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and prayed, saying: "I pray not only for these, but for those also who through their words will believe in me. May they all be one. Father, may they be one in us, as you are in me and I am in you, so that the world

may believe it was you who sent me. I have given them the glory you gave to me, that they may be one as we are one. With me in them and you in me, may they be so completely one that the world will realize that it was you who sent me and that I have loved them as much as you loved me.

Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, so that they may always see the glory you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. Father, Righteous One, the world has not known you, but I have known you, and these have known that you have sent me. I have made your name known to them and will continue to make it known, so that the love with which you loved me may be in them, and so that I may be in them." The gospel of the Lord.