

**YEAR 1, PROPER 24, WEDNESDAY:
EVENING PRAYER**

For use with the First Lesson

Adapted from *The Vocabulary of the Church* (1960):

Ecclesiasticus uh-KLEE-zee-ASS-ti-kuhs

The First Lesson. The Reader begins

A Reading from Ecclesiasticus

Do not seek from the Lord the highest office, nor the seat of honor from the king. Do not assert your righteousness before the Lord, nor display your wisdom before the king. Do not seek to become a judge, lest you be unable to remove iniquity, lest you be partial to a powerful man, and thus put a blot on your integrity. Do not offend against the public, and do not disgrace yourself among the people. Do not commit a sin twice; even for one you will not go unpunished. Do not say, “He will consider the multitude of my gifts, and when I make an offering to the Most High God he will accept it.” Do not be fainthearted in your prayer, nor neglect to give alms. Do not ridicule a man who is bitter in soul, for there is One who abases and exalts. Do not devise a lie against

your brother, nor do the like to a friend. Refuse to utter any lie, for the habit of lying serves no good. Do not prattle in the assembly of the elders, nor repeat yourself in your prayer.

The Reader concludes

The Word of the Lord.

The Second Lesson. The Reader begins

A Reading from the Gospel According to Matthew

At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the sabbath; his disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, “Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the sabbath.” He said to them, “Have you not read what David did, when he was hungry, and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? Or have you not read in the law how on the sabbath the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are guiltless? I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. And if you had known what this means, ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,’ you would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of man is lord of the sabbath.” And he went on from

there, and entered their synagogue. And behold, there was a man with a withered hand. And they asked him, “Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath?” so that they might accuse him. He said to them, “What man of you, if he has one sheep and it falls into a pit on the sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out? Of how much more value is a man than a sheep! So it is lawful to do good on the sabbath.” Then he said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And the man stretched it out, and it was restored, whole like the other. But the Pharisees went out and took counsel against him, how to destroy him.

The Reader concludes

The Word of the Lord.