

YEAR 1, PROPER 24, THURSDAY: 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

A wise magistrate will educate his people, and the rule of an understanding man will be well ordered. Like the magistrate of the people, so are his officials; and like the ruler of the city, so are all its inhabitants. An undisciplined king will ruin his people, but a city will grow through the understanding of its rulers. The government of the earth is in the hands of the Lord, and over it he will raise up the right man for the time. The success of a man is in the hands of the Lord, and he confers his honor upon the person of the scribe. Do not be angry with your neighbor for any injury, and do not attempt anything by acts of insolence. Arrogance is hateful before the Lord and before men, and injustice is outrageous to both. Sovereignty passes from nation to nation on account of injustice and insolence and wealth. How can he who is dust and

ashes be proud? for even in life his bowels decay. A long illness baffles the physician; the king of today will die tomorrow. For when a man is dead, he will inherit creeping things, and wild beasts, and worms. The beginning of man's pride is to depart from the Lord; his heart has forsaken his Maker. For the beginning of pride is sin, and the man who clings to it pours out abominations. Therefore the Lord brought upon them extraordinary afflictions, and destroyed them utterly. The Lord has cast down the thrones of rulers, and has seated the lowly in their place. The Lord has plucked up the roots of the nations, and has planted the humble in their place. The Lord has overthrown the lands of the nations, and has destroyed them to the foundations of the earth. He has removed some of them and destroyed them, and has extinguished the memory of them from the earth. Pride was not created for men, nor fierce anger for those born of women.

The Reader concludes The Word of the Lord.

The Second Lesson. The Reader begins

A Reading from the Gospel According to Matthew

Jesus, aware that the Pharisees took counsel against him, withdrew from there. And many followed him, and he healed them all, and ordered them not to make

him known. This was to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: “Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him, and he shall proclaim justice to the Gentiles. He will not wrangle or cry aloud, nor will any one hear his voice in the streets; he will not break a bruised reed or quench a smoldering wick, till he brings justice to victory; and in his name will the Gentiles hope.”

The Reader concludes

The Word of the Lord.