# Year 1, Proper 25, Thursday: Evening Prayer

**For use with the First Lesson**

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

Ecclesiasticus uh-KLEE-zee-AS-ti-kuhs

# *The First Lesson. The Reader begins*

# A Reading from Ecclesiasticus

Are you seated at the table of a great man? Do not be greedy at it, and do not say, “There is certainly much upon it!” Remember that a greedy eye is a bad thing. What has been created more greedy than the eye? Therefore it sheds tears from every face. Do not reach out your hand for everything you see, and do not crowd your neighbor at the dish. Judge your neighbor’s feelings by your own, and in every matter be thoughtful. Eat like a human being what is set before you, and do not chew greedily, lest you be hated. Be the first to stop eating, for the sake of good manners, and do not be insatiable, lest you give offense. If you are seated among many persons, do not reach out your hand before they do. Do not aim to be valiant over wine, for wine has destroyed many. Fire and water prove the temper of steel, so wine tests hearts in the strife of the proud. Wine is like life to men, if you drink it in moderation. What is life to a man who is without wine? It has been created to make men glad. Wine drunk in season and temperately is rejoicing of heart and gladness of soul. Wine drunk to excess is bitterness of soul, with provocation and stumbling. Drunkenness increases the anger of a fool to his injury, reducing his strength and adding wounds. Do not reprove your neighbor at a banquet of wine, and do not despise him in his merrymaking; speak no word of reproach to him, and do not afflict him by making demands of him. If they make you master of the feast, do not exalt yourself; be among them as one of them; take good care of them and then be seated; when you have fulfilled your duties, take your place, that you may be merry on their account and receive a wreath for your excellent leadership.

*The Reader concludes* The Word of the Lord.

# *The Second Lesson. The Reader begins*

# A Reading from the Gospel According to Matthew

Jesus said to the disciples, “Hear then the parable of the sower. When any one hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in his heart; this is what was sown along the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is he who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the delight in riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. As for what was sown on good soil, this is he who hears the word and understands it; he indeed bears fruit, and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

*The Reader concludes* The Word of the Lord.