## Year 2, Proper 19, Friday: Morning Prayer

*The First Lesson. The Reader begins*

## A Reading from the Book of Judith

The people of Israel living in Judea heard of everything that Holofer′nes, the general of Nebuchadnez′zar the king of the Assyrians, had done to the nations, and how he had plundered and destroyed all their temples; they were therefore very greatly terrified at his approach, and were alarmed both for Jerusalem and for the temple of the Lord their God. For they had only recently returned from the captivity, and all the people of Judea were newly gathered together, and the sacred vessels and the altar and the temple had been consecrated after their profanation. So they sent to every district of Samar′ia, and to Kona and Beth-horon and Belma′in and Jericho and to Choba and Aesor′a and the valley of Salem, and immediately seized all the high hilltops and fortified the villages on them and stored up food in preparation for war—since their fields had recently been harvested. And Jo′akim, the high priest, who was in Jerusalem at the time, wrote to the people of Bethu′lia and Betomestha′im, which faces Esdrae′lon opposite the plain near Dothan, ordering them to seize the passes up into the hills, since by them Judea could be invaded, and it was easy to stop any who tried to enter, for the approach was narrow, only wide enough for two men at the most. So the Israelites did as Jo′akim the high priest and the senate of the whole people of Israel, in session at Jerusalem, had given order. And every man of Israel cried out to God with great fervor, and they humbled themselves with much fasting. They and their wives and their children and their cattle and every resident alien and hired laborer and purchased slave—they all girded themselves with sackcloth. And all the men and women of Israel, and their children, living at Jerusalem, prostrated themselves before the temple and put ashes on their heads and spread out their sackcloth before the Lord. They even surrounded the altar with sackcloth and cried out in unison, praying earnestly to the God of Israel not to give up their infants as prey and their wives as booty, and the cities they had inherited to be destroyed, and the sanctuary to be profaned and desecrated to the malicious joy of the Gentiles. So the Lord heard their prayers and looked upon their affliction; for the people fasted many days throughout Judea and in Jerusalem before the sanctuary of the Lord Almighty. And Jo′akim the high priest and all the priests who stood before the Lord and ministered to the Lord, with their loins girded with sackcloth, offered the continual burnt offerings and the vows and freewill offerings of the people. With ashes upon their turbans, they cried out to the Lord with all their might to look with favor upon the whole house of Israel.

*The Reader concludes* The Word of the Lord.

# The Second Lesson. The Reader begins

**A Reading from the Gospel according to John**

When Jesus had said this, he departed and hid himself from the Jews. Though he had done so many signs before them, yet they did not believe in him; it was that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: “Lord, who has believed our report, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” Therefore they could not believe. For Isaiah again said, “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they should see with their eyes and perceive with their heart, and turn for me to heal them.” Isaiah said this because he saw his glory and spoke of him. Nevertheless many even of the authorities believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for

they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

*The Reader concludes* The Word of the Lord.