

A reading from the book of Wisdom 4:7-15

The virtuous man, though he die before his time, will find rest.

Length of days is not what makes age honorable, nor number of years the true measure of life; understanding, this is man's grey hairs, untarnished life, this is ripe old age.

He has sought to please God, so God has loved him; as he was living among sinners, he has been taken up.

He has been carried off so that evil may not warp his understanding or treachery seduce his soul; for the fascination of evil throws good things into the shade and the whirlwind of desire corrupts a simple heart.

Coming to perfection in so short a while, he achieved long life; his soul being pleasing to the Lord, he has taken him quickly from the wickedness around him.

Yet people look on, uncomprehending; it does not enter their heads that grace and mercy await the chosen of the Lord, and protection, his holy ones.

The word of the Lord.