

A reading from the second Book of Maccabees

Judas, the ruler of Israel,
 took up a collection among all his soldiers,
 amounting to two thousand silver drachmas,
 which he sent to Jerusalem to provide for an expiatory sacrifice.
In doing this he acted in a very excellent and noble way,
 in as much as he had the resurrection of the dead in view;
 for if he were not expecting the fallen to rise again,
 it would have been useless and foolish to pray for them in death.
But if he did this with a view to the splendid reward
 that awaits those who have gone to rest in godliness,
 it was a holy and pious thought.
Thus he made atonement for the dead
 that they might be freed from this sin.

The word of the Lord.