

RESPONDING TO THE PSALMS – January 2025

a project of the Spirituality Committee of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales

We offer the Sunday Responsorial Psalm as a focus for prayer and reflection during the week ahead for yourself or share with others. You could note your own thoughts as a possible personal journal. We began Advent praying a new translation of the psalms in our liturgy, the Abbey psalms. The changes may not be so obvious but the differences will give us a chance to reflect from a new perspective. How does the new wording help us with new insights into the psalms?

“In our journey towards the Jubilee, let us return to Scripture and realize that it speaks to us in these words: “May we who have taken refuge in him be strongly encouraged to seize the hope set before us. We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus, a forerunner on our behalf, has entered” (*Heb 6:18-20*). Those words are a forceful encouragement for us never to lose the hope we have been given, to hold fast to that hope and to find in God our refuge and our strength.

The image of the anchor is eloquent; it helps us to recognize the stability and security that is ours amid the troubled waters of this life, provided we entrust ourselves to the Lord Jesus. The storms that buffet us will never prevail, for we are firmly anchored in the hope born of grace, which enables us to live in Christ and to overcome sin, fear and death. This hope, which transcends life’s fleeting pleasures and the achievement of our immediate goals, makes us rise above our trials and difficulties, and inspires us to keep pressing forward, never losing sight of the grandeur of the heavenly goal to which we have been called.

The coming Jubilee will thus be a Holy Year marked by the hope that does not fade, our hope in God. May it help us to recover the confident trust that we require, in the Church and in society, in our interpersonal relationships, in international relations, and in our task of promoting the dignity of all persons and respect for God’s gift of creation. May the witness of believers be for our world a leaven of authentic hope, a harbinger of new heavens and a new earth (*cf. 2 Pet 3:13*), where men and women will dwell in justice and harmony, in joyful expectation of the fulfilment of the Lord’s promises.

Let us even now be drawn to this hope! Through our witness, may hope spread to all those who anxiously seek it. May the way we live our lives say to them in so many words: “Hope in the Lord! Hold firm, take heart and hope in the Lord!” (*Ps 27:14*). May the power of hope fill our days, as we await with confidence the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and glory, now and forever.

FRANCIS, Bishop of Rome – *Spes non confundit - Bull of Indiction for the Holy Year of 2025*

JANUARY 2025

Sunday 5 January 2025

Sunday 12 January 2025

Sunday 19 January 2025

Sunday 26 January 2025

The Epiphany of the Lord

The Baptism

Second Sunday of Ordinary Time – Year C

Third Sunday of Ordinary Time – Year C

Sunday of the Word of God



Excerpts from The Abbey Psalms and Canticles published and approved for use by USCCB and CBCEW

5 January 2025 The Epiphany of the Lord

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 72(71):1-2. 7-8. 10-11. 12-13. Rcf. 11

ALL THE NATIONS ON EARTH SHALL FALL PROSTRATE BEFORE YOU, O LORD.

O God, give your judgement to the king,
to a king's son your justice,
that he may judge your people in justice,
and your poor in right judgement.

*We pray for all who have power and exercise justice in the world to be true to their calling
We pray for all who suffer from injustice of any kind throughout our world*

In his days justice shall flourish,
and great peace till the moon is no more.
He shall rule from sea to sea,
from the River to the bounds of the earth.

*We pray for courage for all who are trying to bring about peace throughout the world
We pray for all suffer and struggle in places of war, conflict and division*

The kings of Tarshish and the islands
shall pay him tribute.
The kings of Sheba and Seba
shall bring him gifts.
Before him all kings shall fall prostrate,
all nations shall serve him.

*We pray for all exercise authority in any way to do so for the common good
We pray for all with any power to acknowledge their need of humility before God*

For he shall rescue the needy when they cry,
the poor who have no one to help.
He will have pity on the weak and the needy,
and save the lives of the needy.

*We pray for all the needy and poor throughout the world
We pray that we will do what we can to serve the poor and needy in our own place*

Sunday 12 January 2025 The Baptism of the Lord – Year C

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 104(103):1b-2. 3-4. 24-25. 27-28. 29-30. **R1**

BLESS THE LORD, O MY SOUL! MY GOD, HOW GREAT YOU ARE!

O LORD my God, how great you are,
clothed in majesty and honour,
wrapped in light as with a robe!
You stretch out the heavens like a tent.

*Let us reflect for a moment on the greatness of creation and the Creator
Take time to think of our need to be humble in God's presence as his children*

On the waters you lay the foundation for your dwelling.
You make the clouds your chariot;
you ride on the wings of the wind.
You make the winds your messengers, flame and fire your servants.

*Pray for all who travel by air or sea, for all who work to bring people safely to their destination
Pray for all who have suffered natural disasters recently and how they can rebuild their lives*

How many are your works, O LORD!
In wisdom you have made them all.
The earth is full of your creatures.
Vast and wide is the span of the sea,
with its creeping things past counting, living things great and small.

*Pray for more people to discover the truth of God by understanding creation more clearly
Pray for a deeper sense of responsibility towards all God's creatures, great and small*

All of these look to you
to give them their food in due season.
You give it, they gather it up;
you open wide your hand, they are well filled.

*Express your gratitude for all who work on the land and at sea to provide our food
Think about those who do not have enough to eat and drink and how we can help them*

You hide your face, they are dismayed;
you take away their breath, they die,
returning to the dust from which they came.
You send forth your spirit, and they are created,
and you renew the face of the earth.

*Pray for a greater respect for human life from womb to tomb especially by our legislators
Reflect on the gift of life we enjoy and commit yourself to use it to the full*

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 96(95):1-2a. 2b-3. 7-8a. 9-10ac. R3

PROCLAIM THE WONDERS OF THE LORD AMONG ALL THE PEOPLES.

O sing a new song to the LORD;
sing to the LORD, all the earth.
O sing to the LORD; bless his name.

*Thank God for music in our worship and for all our musicians and singers
Begin each day with hope and thanksgiving for the new opportunities God gives us*

Proclaim his salvation day by day.
Tell among the nations his glory,
and his wonders among all the peoples.

*Pray for all who proclaim and teach the gospel to those who have not heard of Christ
Ask for the ability to express the gospel clearly to others by your way of life*

Ascribe to the LORD, you families of peoples,
ascribe to the LORD glory and power;
ascribe to the LORD the glory of his name.

*Pray for unity among nations that all people may live in peace and harmony
Pray for those nations where the Christian faith is suppressed and persecuted*

Worship the LORD in holy splendour.
O tremble before him, all the earth.
Say to the nations, 'The LORD is king.'
He will judge the peoples in fairness.

*Ask for a deeper consciousness of the holiness of God to touch my way of life
Pray for all peoples to be open to the message of the gospel*

Sunday 26 January 2025 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time - Year C

Sunday of the Word of God

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 19(18):8. 9. 10. 15. *R* John 6:63c

YOUR WORDS, O LORD, ARE SPIRIT AND LIFE.

The law of the LORD is perfect;
it revives the soul.
The decrees of the LORD are steadfast;
they give wisdom to the simple.

*Reflect on where the Word of God is in your life on a daily basis
Thank God for the wisdom that comes to us through the scriptures*

The precepts of the LORD are right;
they gladden the heart.
The command of the LORD is clear;
it gives light to the eyes.

*Pray for more people to guide their lives by the precepts and commands of the Lord
Ask forgiveness for the times we have not followed the Law of the Lord*

The fear of the LORD is pure,
abiding for ever.
The judgements of the LORD are true;
they are, all of them, just.

*Pray for all in power and all legislators to make decisions guided by the fear of the Lord
Pray for all involved to administer the justice system fairly and honestly in truth*

May the spoken words of my mouth,
the thoughts of my heart,
win favour in your sight, O LORD,
my rock and my redeemer!

*May all the words I speak today be helpful and positive for others
May my words help other people know the truth of God*