

RESPONDING TO THE PSALMS – February 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. Have you noticed the changes, especially where it is just one word difference? How does the new wording help us with new insights into the psalms?

In the Psalms we encounter hymns of praise and thanksgiving; lamentations or supplications arising from the situation of suffering of the individual praying or of the whole community of Israel; meditations on the history of salvation; sapiential reflections on the gift of the Word and the quality of human action; requests for forgiveness, deliverance, and healing; invocations for help or revenge against enemies. Drawing on the collective imagination and the symbols that characterize the poetry of all ages, it can be said that the Psalms are the expression of the religious soul of Israel translated into poetry and prayer; they were the prayer of Jesus and are the prayer of the disciples and disciples of all times; they are the backbone of the liturgy of the hours in the Catholic Church; they inspire antiphons and a great many liturgical songs. They lyrically read all the stages of covenant history: the promise, the exodus, the gift of the law, the entry into the promised land, the liturgy in the temple in Jerusalem, the celebrations of the great feasts and pilgrimages, the enthronement of kings, the humiliation of exile and the joy of return. There are also a number of Psalms, composed to celebrate the figure of the Davidic king, which later became, for the people of Israel, celebrations of hope in the promised and expected Messiah

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FEBRUARY 2025

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| Sunday 2 February 2025 | Feast of the Presentation of the Lord |
| Sunday 9 February 2025 | 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year C |
| Sunday 16 February 2025 | 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year C |
| Sunday 23 February 2025 | 7th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year C |

Sunday 2 February 2025

Feast of the Presentation of the Lord

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 24(23):7. 8. 9. 10. R8a

THE LORD OF HOSTS, HE IS THE KING OF GLORY!

O gates, lift high your heads;
grow higher, ancient doors.
Let him enter, the king of glory!

*Pray that we will allow Christ to enter our hearts and our lives as we celebrate this feast
Pray that the Church, especially ourselves, will help more people accept Christ as their king of glory*

Who is this king of glory?
The LORD, the mighty, the valiant;
the LORD, the valiant in war.

*Reflect on what it means for Simeon to recognise the child as the light for revelation to the Gentiles
Reflect on what it means for Anna to thank God for the child as the redemption of Jerusalem*

O gates, lift high your heads;
grow higher, ancient doors.
Let him enter, the king of glory!

*Anna and Simeon rejoice to see the Lord before they die. We pray for the dying to have God's peace
We pray for all who work in palliative care and the families of the dying to have God's strength
We pray that the Assisted Dying movement may reflect more deeply on God's gift of life.*

Who is this king of glory?
He, the LORD of hosts,
he is the king of glory.

*Think of how the child presented is the Son of Lord God of Hosts we acclaim in the Sanctus at Mass
Think of how this child is the Son we acclaim with Father and Spirit as we pray Glory be*

Sunday 9 February 2025

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year C

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 138(137):1-2a. 2bc, 3. 4-5. 7c-8. ~~R~~1c

IN THE PRESENCE OF THE ANGELS I PRAISE YOU, O LORD.

I thank you, LORD, with all my heart;
you have heard the words of my mouth.
In the presence of the angels I praise you.
I bow down towards your holy Temple.

*Reflect that when we sing/pray the Holy Holy at Mass we are praising God with the angels
Are we conscious of why we genuflect, kneel or bow in Church as an act of reverence?*

I give thanks to your name
for your merciful love and your faithfulness.
On the day I called, you answered me;
you increased the strength of my soul.

*Give thanks for the moments of mercy and faithfulness God has shown you in your life recently
Think about how God has answered your prayers and given you strength for daily living*

All earth's kings shall thank you, O LORD,
when they hear the words of your mouth.
They shall sing of the ways of the LORD,
'How great is the glory of the LORD!'

*Pray that all world leaders and those in power will indeed listen to God's guidance to follow his ways
Pray that we will hear God calling each of us and how we should follow what he calls us to be and do.*

With your right hand you save me;
the LORD will accomplish this for me.
O LORD, your merciful love is eternal;
discard not the work of your hands.

*Thank God for the times you know he has saved you or others for whom you care
Pray for God's creation, our common world, and that we will care for the work of his hands*

Sunday 16 February 2025 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year C

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 1:1-2. 3. 4, 6. *R* Psalm 40(39):5a

BLESSED THE MAN WHO HAS PLACED HIS TRUST IN THE LORD.

Blessed indeed is the man
who follows not the counsel of the wicked,
nor stands in the path with sinners,
nor abides in the company of scorners,
but whose delight is the law of the LORD,
and who ponders his law day and night.

*Pray that we will deepen our delight in and meditation on God's law, that is what he wants of us
Pray for an end to the suffering sin and wickedness bring about in the world*

He is like a tree that is planted
beside the flowing waters,
that yields its fruit in due season,
and whose leaves shall never fade;
and all that he does shall prosper.

*Pray for ourselves and all people of good will to respond positively to the inspiration of the Spirit for life
Pray for God's blessing on the created world and for us to share in caring for nature and its beauty*

Not so are the wicked, not so!
For they, like winnowed chaff,
shall be driven away by the wind.
For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.

*Ask God to forgive our sins and pray for people who are caught up in a life that brings them down
Pray to know God's way for us and for the gift to show others how to live the good life*

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Sunday 23 February 2025 7th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year C

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 103(102):1-2. 3-4. 8, 10. 12-13. ~~R~~8a

THE LORD IS COMPASSIONATE AND GRACIOUS.

Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all within me, his holy name.
Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and never forget all his benefits.

*Think of what it means for you to pray at Mass, “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord”
Thank the Lord for the benefits he has given you already this year*

It is the Lord who forgives all your sins,
who heals every one of your ills,
who redeems your life from the grave,
who crowns you with mercy and compassion.

*Thank God for his forgiveness of your sins and for the strength he has given you
How can you share his mercy and compassion with people you meet?*

The LORD is compassionate and gracious,
slow to anger and rich in mercy.
He does not treat us according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our faults.

*Pray for restraint from anger and for people who find that very difficult in their life and work
How forgiving are we since God has forgiven us so much?*

As far as the east is from the west,
so far from us does he remove our transgressions.
As a father has compassion on his children,
the LORD’S compassion is on those who fear him.

*Pray for all who have the power and resources to use them to show compassion to all in need
How can we help people without faith to see God’s compassion towards them?*