

RESPONDING TO THE PSALMS – March 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. For the first time we will be hearing the new translation of the Lenten psalms in our liturgy, the Abbey psalms. When some of the more familiar words or phrases change how do they make us reflect anew on the meaning of these sacred texts? Perhaps we will gain new insights

Many of the Psalms are permeated by trust as a vital expression of religious experience and dynamic interpersonal relationships, and they are called psalms of trust because they contain verbs such as “take refuge,” “trust,” “wait,” and “hope.” But trust is the “atmosphere” of all the Psalms because the basis of these compositions is the conviction that trust in God makes every other certainty and support pale in comparison. The prayerful person who has experienced the disappointment of the ways of self-salvation and reliance on human means and supports, in “lifting up his eyes to the mountains” (cf. Ps. 121:1) has discovered the anchor of trust. This trust belongs not only to the individual but is also expressed by the group, as in Psalm 22:27, where it speaks of the “poor” or little ones of the Lord (‘ānāwîm), a movement that arose in the fifth century B.C. around the ideal of faithfulness to the Lord and his Torah (Law) and which, in conflict with the upper classes, preferred trust in the Lord. A movement that waits to encompass us, too, if we are ready to say with faith, hope and love, “Those who fear you rejoice to see me, because I hope in your word.” (Ps. 119:74).

Rosalba Manes

*Professor of Biblical Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome
in the Vatican Liturgical Resources for the Sixth Sunday of the Word of God*

March 2025

Sunday 2 March 2025 **8th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year C**

Sunday 9 March 2025 **1st Sunday of Lent – Year C**

Sunday 16 March 2025 **2nd Sunday of Lent – Year C**

Sunday 23 March 2025 **3rd Sunday of Lent – Year C**

Sunday 30 March 2025 **4th Sunday of Lent [Laetare] – Year C**

8th Sunday in Ordinary Time - Sunday 2 March 2025

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 92(91):2-3. 13-14. 15-16. *R* cf. 2a

IT IS GOOD TO GIVE THANKS TO YOU, O LORD.

It is good to give thanks to the LORD,
to make music to your name, O Most High,
to proclaim your loving mercy in the morning,
and your truth in the watches of the night.

*Let us reflect on how the Eucharist is the best way we have to thank God for all he has given us
Thank God for all who help us pray through the ministry of music as singers, musicians, composers*

The just one will flourish like the palm tree,
and grow like a Lebanon cedar.
Planted in the house of the LORD,
they will flourish in the courts of our God.

*Pray for justice at every level, in the courts, in society, in government, in the Church
Remember all who suffer injustice throughout the world and all who inflict it*

Still bearing fruit when they are old,
still full of sap, still green,
to proclaim that the LORD is upright.
In him, my rock, there is no wrong.

*Pray for all those individuals and organisation that promote and defend human rights
Think how we can express God's righteousness in the way we live and act*

1st Sunday of Lent - Sunday 9 March 2025

Luke's account of the Temptations of Jesus

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 91(90):1-2. 10-11. 12-13. 14-15. *R* cf 15b

BE WITH ME, O LORD, IN MY DISTRESS.

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High,
and abides in the shade of the Almighty,
says to the LORD, 'My refuge,
my stronghold, my God in whom I trust!'

*Jesus shows us what it means to trust in the Father. Pray for a deepening of that trust for yourself this Lent
Pray for those who find life hopeless, or feel they have no one in whom they can put their trust.*

Upon you no evil shall fall,
no plague approach your tent.
For you has he commanded his angels
to keep you in all your ways.

*Jesus resists temptation because he knows the Father's care is absolute. Thank God for his care for you
Think of people in your life who have cared for you like the angels of the psalm. Pray God's blessing on them*

They shall bear you upon their hands,
lest you strike your foot against a stone.
On the lion and the viper you will tread,
and trample the young lion and the serpent.

*Pray for all those people working to keep others safe from danger, here or in places of war, conflict, disaster.
Thank God for the times he has saved you from difficulties and dangers of any sort.*

Since he clings to me in love, I will free him,
protect him, for he knows my name.
When he calls on me, I will answer him;
I will be with him in distress;
I will deliver him and give him glory.

*Thank God for the freedom from sin we can celebrate because of our faith, especially in the sacraments
Pray for the strength and discernment to help others in whatever distress they may face*

2nd Sunday of Lent - Sunday 16 March 2025
Luke's account of the Transfiguration of Jesus

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 27(26):1. 7-8b. 8c-9c. 13-14. **R**1a

THE LORD IS MY LIGHT AND MY SALVATION.

The LORD is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?
The LORD is the stronghold of my life;
whom should I dread?

*Put yourself at the scene of the Transfiguration and contemplate the glory revealed in Jesus
Put aside and fear and dread from your life and express your faith God as your light and salvation*

O LORD, hear my voice when I call;
have mercy and answer me.
Of you my heart has spoken,
'Seek his face.'

*Ask for God's mercy, prepare well for the Sacrament of Reconciliation
Find an image of Christ and contemplate who he is for you*

It is your face, O LORD, that I seek;
hide not your face from me.
Dismiss not your servant in anger;
you have been my help.

*Think about how you can see the face of Christ in other people, their goodness, their needs
Remember with gratitude specific moments when God has been your help*

I believe I shall see the LORD'S goodness
in the land of the living.
Wait for the LORD; be strong;
be stout-hearted, and wait for the LORD!

*It is good to contemplate heaven as our ultimate goal which Christ reveals in his Transfiguration.
Meanwhile pray for the strength of character to live as a faithful Christian waiting for the Lord*

3rd Sunday of Lent - Sunday 23 March 2025 – Year C

Luke's account of Jesus' parable of the barren fig tree that is given another chance to bear fruit

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 103(102):1-2. 3-4. 6-7. 8, 11. **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.

*With the psalmist bless God with your whole heart
Recall all the good things God has shared with you in recent months*

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 the times he has taken us back after sin and has given another chance as in the gospel
Thank God too for the way he treats us with mercy and compassion not condemnation*

The LORD does deeds of justice,
gives full justice to all who are oppressed.
He made known his ways to Moses,
and his deeds to the children of Israel.

*Pray for the places of the world where people are oppressed that God will bring them justice
Think of the Holy Land and pray for all to know God's peace in the land where Jesus taught*

The LORD is compassionate and gracious,
slow to anger and rich in mercy.
For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so strong his mercy for those who fear him.

*Pray for the grace to be as compassionate and gracious to others as God is to you
Pray for an end to anger among peoples and an increase in mercy for all*

4th Sunday of Lent (Laetare Sunday) Sunday 30 March 2025 – Year C

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 34(33):2-3. 4-5. 6-7. *℟* cf. 18b

Luke's parable of the extravagant father, the wasteful son and his jealous brother

TASTE AND SEE THAT THE LORD IS GOOD.

I will bless the LORD at all times,
praise of him is always in my mouth.
In the LORD my soul shall make its boast;
the humble shall hear and be glad.

The Father:

*Think about how good God is to us constantly and give him the praise that is his due
Reflect on how little we deserve God's care for us and pray for humility*

Glorify the LORD with me;
together let us praise his name.
I sought the LORD, and he answered me;
from all my terrors he set me free.

The wasteful Son:

*Just reflect how the first son came to his senses and went back home looking for his father's house
Think how that son was raised up from the depths to a new dignity as the father's child*

Look towards him and be radiant;
let your faces not be abashed.
This lowly one called; the LORD heard,
and rescued him from all his distress.

The jealous brother:

*Pray for people who feel overlooked and aggrieved, yet are truly valued for the good they do
Pray that all resentment and such like in the church may be turned into contentment and appreciation*