

RESPONDING TO THE PSALMS – April 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, the Abbey psalms in our Holy Week and Easter liturgies. 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

Today throughout the world there resounds the message proclaimed two thousand years ago from Jerusalem: "Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified, has been raised!" (Mk 16:6).

The Church relives the amazement of the women who went to the tomb at dawn on the first day of the week. The tomb of Jesus had been sealed with a great stone. Today too, great stones, heavy stones, block the hopes of humanity: the stone of war, the stone of humanitarian crises, the stone of human rights violations, the stone of human trafficking, and other stones as well. Like the women disciples of Jesus, we ask one another: "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" (cf. Mk 16:3).

This is the amazing discovery of that Easter morning: the stone, the immense stone, was rolled away. The astonishment of the women is our astonishment as well: the tomb of Jesus is open and it is empty! From this, everything begins anew! A new path leads through that empty tomb: the path that none of us, but God alone, could open: the path of life in the midst of death, the path of peace in the midst of war, the path of reconciliation in the midst of hatred, the path of fraternity in the midst of hostility.

Brothers and sisters, Jesus Christ is risen! He alone has the power to roll away the stones that block the path to life. He, the living One, is himself that path. He is the Way: the way that leads to life, the way of peace, reconciliation and fraternity. He opens that path, humanly impossible, because he alone takes away the sin of the world and forgives us our sins. For without God's forgiveness, that stone cannot be removed. Without the forgiveness of sins, there is no overcoming the barriers of prejudice, mutual recrimination, the presumption that we are always right and others wrong. Only the risen Christ, by granting us the forgiveness of our sins, opens the way for a renewed world.

Jesus alone opens up before us the doors of life, those doors that continually we shut with the wars spreading throughout the world.

Pope Francis Easter Message 2024

April 2025

Sunday 6 April 2025

5th Sunday of Lent – Year C

Sunday 13 April 2025

Palm [Passion] Sunday – Year C

Sunday 20 April 2025

EASTER SUNDAY– Year C

Sunday 27 April 2025

2nd Sunday of Easter – Year C

Sunday 6 April 2025 Fifth Sunday of Lent

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 126(125):1-2b. 2c-3. 4-5. 6. R3

*WHAT GREAT DEEDS THE LORD WORKED FOR US!
INDEED, WE WERE GLAD.*

When the LORD brought back the exiles of Sion,
we thought we were dreaming.
Then was our mouth filled with laughter;
on our tongues, songs of joy.

*Reflect how in Lent God forgives us and brings us back when sin exiles us from his love.
Give thanks and rejoice for that gift of forgiveness especially in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.*

Then they said among the nations,
'What great deeds the LORD worked for them!'
What great deeds the LORD worked for us!
Indeed, we were glad.

*Think how we can show our confidence in God's forgiveness to others and the world
Pray that we will exercise forgiveness in our relationships and help others to do the same*

Bring back our exiles, O LORD,
as streams in the Negeb.
Those who are sowing in tears
will sing when they reap.

*Let us reflect how we can encourage estranged people to return to the practice of their faith
Pray that God will refresh people whose faith is arid, dry like the Negeb desert of the psalm*

They go out, they go out, full of tears,
bearing seed for the sowing;
they come back, they come back with a song,
bearing their sheaves.

*Pray for all who are to be initiated through the Easter sacraments this year
Thank God for all who will come closer to the Lord through their Lenten exercises this year*

Sunday 13 April 2025 Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 22(21):8-9. 17-18a. 19-20. 23-24. R2a

MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?

All who see me deride me;
they curl their lips, they toss their heads:
'He trusted in the LORD, let him save him;
let him release him, for in him he delights.'

*The Carthusian motto: Stat Crux dum volvitur orbis. The cross stands still while the earth revolves
Reflect on the power of Christ's sufferings and death on the cross for us in an everchanging world*

For dogs have surrounded me;
a band of the wicked besets me.
They tear holes in my hands and my feet;
I can count every one of my bones.

*How do we respond when so many people ask – Why does a good God allow suffering?
Reflect on Jesus as the Son of God made man, how he knew physical pain and betrayal by friends*

They divide my clothing among them,
they cast lots for my robe.
But you, O LORD, do not stay afar off;
my strength, make haste to help me!

*Think of how Jesus said that he would accept the chalice of suffering if it was necessary for us
Pray for all those people whose faith is challenged by suffering of any kind*

I will tell of your name to my kin,
and praise you in the midst of the assembly;
'You who fear the LORD, give him praise;
all descendants of Jacob, give him glory;
revere him, all you descendants of Israel.'

*Thank God for his faithfulness because we know the cross is not the end
Pray for ways to bring life to people who feel they have no purpose or meaning*

Sunday 20 April 2025 Easter Sunday

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 118(117):1-2. 16-17. 22-23. R24

THIS IS THE DAY THE LORD HAS MADE; LET US REJOICE IN IT AND BE GLAD.

or: ALLELUIA.

Give praise to the LORD, for he is good;
his mercy endures for ever.
Let the house of Israel say,
'His mercy endures for ever.'

*We must find every way possible to rejoice in the meaning of the Resurrection
We need to do this with all who share that same faith and hope and promise.*

The LORD's right hand is exalted.
The LORD's right hand has done mighty deeds.
I shall not die, I shall live
and recount the deeds of the LORD.

*Pray to find ways of demonstrating our Easter joy in God's power over death
Reflect on what it means to have the possibility of living in God's presence forever*

The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone.
By the LORD has this been done,
a marvel in our eyes.

*Give thanks for all who, like Christ, have suffered for the faith to build the Church
Ask for the courage and strength to be faithful witnesses to the Risen Lord*

Sunday 27 April 2025 Second Sunday of Easter [Divine Mercy Sunday]

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 118(117):2-4. 22-24. 25-27a. ~~R~~1

*GIVE PRAISE TO THE LORD FOR HE IS GOOD,
HIS MERCY ENDURES FOR EVER.*

or: ALLELUIA.

Let the house of Israel say,
'His mercy endures for ever.'
Let the house of Aaron say,
'His mercy endures for ever.'
Let those who fear the LORD say,
'His mercy endures for ever.'

*Thank God for all those who belong to the community of the Risen Lord with you
Pray for all those in power that they will exercise God's mercy to all in their care*

The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone.
By the LORD has this been done,
a marvel in our eyes.
This is the day the LORD has made;
let us rejoice in it and be glad.

*Pray for all who feel rejected for defending the faith and truth and justice
Thank God for their perseverance and dedication*

We beseech you, O LORD, grant salvation;
we beseech you, O LORD, grant success.
Blest is he who comes
in the name of the LORD.
We bless you from the house of the LORD;
the LORD is God, and has given us light.

*With confidence and Easter joy ask God's blessing on the future of your community
Thank God for the light of faith that comes with the Easter miracle*