



Ways Of Prayer - Session 2

Prayer Practice of the Week Suggestions for Practice Additional Resources

Prayer Practice of the Week: Psalms - Praying with Jesus' Prayer Book

God in the Midst of our Ordinary Days

Why pray the psalms? The psalmists show us how to bring the concerns of our whole lives and days to God in prayer. They pray boldly, honestly, and fearlessly to the God who promised "I am your God." In the deep trust of their ongoing relationship with God the psalmists give voice to the full range of human emotion and experience - anger, delight, joy, despair, wonder, fear, vengeance – the dark and light within and around us. In so doing, "they teach us to hide nothing from God, but to bring all that is real into the only relationship that can bless the best and heal the worst in us."

(<http://www.upperroom.org/resources/praying-the-psalms>)

Jesus prayed and sang the psalms in the temple and with his apostles. We welcome our Lord, now, to lead us in our prayer today. (If you are doing this at home you may choose any psalm you wish – for this group practice we used Psalms 14, 63, and 138 and read 3 translations/paraphrases for each.)

- ❖ Chose one of the three Psalms provided that speaks most deeply to your heart today.
- ❖ Prayerfully read each translation/paraphrase of that psalm.
- ❖ Choose one to work with today.
- ❖ Read this to yourself slowly. Pause when a word, a phrase, a stanza plucks a chord in you.
- ❖ What is this psalm about? What is the psalmist experiencing? What emotions? How does this psalm connect with you and your life? Try this using the other translations or give it your own words.
- ❖ Read the Psalm again – let yourself rest in the words that hold you. Repeat them as often as you need. Soak in this prayer.
- ❖ Read the Psalm a third time – but this time - hear Jesus praying it.
- ❖ Take time to rest in silence now. Let the words pray you.
- ❖ What is your response? Where does your prayer lead you?
- ❖ You may wish to reflect on this experience in your prayer journal.

Suggestions for Prayer Practice

Try going deeper with the psalms this week. As always...the only rule with prayer practice is that you commit to show up and trust God to show you the way.

Work with any of the psalms used during our workshop as part of your prayer this week.

Use the parish app or a daily devotional to pray the responsorial psalm of the day.

Visit the Bible Gateway site to compare translations of the psalms. Some versions have readers. Try listening to all the Psalms in sequence. The link for BibleGateway.com:

<https://www.biblegateway.com>

Open your bible to read a psalm a day. Let its words be your prayer throughout the day.

Write a psalm or rewrite a psalm in your own words or write a new psalm as a response to a psalm.

The psalmists show us how to be bold in our conversations with God. Journal about being bold with God in your own prayer and relationship with God.

Pray a psalm out loud during your prayer time. How is the experience different from silent recitation of the prayer.

Memorize a psalm, or a psalm passage/phrase that speaks to your heart.

Sing a favorite psalm or psalm response from Mass, the Lord's Prayer, or chant your own prayer.

Additional Resources

Online Resources

There are many great online resources about prayer and the psalms.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (2585-2597) on the Psalms as Prayers of God's People
http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p4s1c1a1.htm

Praying the Psalms – Diocese of Allentown

A 3 minute YouTube Video meditation on the psalms by the Bishop of Allentown.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qv1QFsVF5A>

PrayPsalms.Org

<https://praypsalms.org/resources-1c976dda6901>

The Upper Room

<https://www.upperroom.org/resources/praying-the-psalms>

Other Resources:

Two Lists to help you explore or pray with psalm(s) that address a particular concern or topic. From the website: http://bookofhours.org/psalms/tool_themes.htm

Psalm Themes and Topics

Hymn of Praise – 8, 33, 66, 100, 104, 150
 Individual Lament – 3, 7, 17, 22, 31, 51, 54, 55, 69, 88, 130
 Communal Lament – 44, 74, 79, 77, 80
 Thanksgiving Song – 30, 57, 92, 116, 138
 Psalms of Confidence – 4, 16, 23, 62, 91
 Messianic Psalms – 2, 19, 20, 72, 89, 110, 132
 Songs of Zion – 29, 46, 47, 93, 95-99
 Historical Psalms – 78, 105-107, 135, 136
 Wisdom Psalms – 19, 25, 34, 37, 111, 112, 119
 Penitential Psalms – 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143
 Praise of God – 8, 66, 104, 135-136, 145, 148, 150
 Thanksgiving to God – 30, 34, 92, 111, 116, 118, 138
 Prayer for Upright Living – 1, 15, 24, 37, 112
 Prayer for Forgiveness – 32, 51, 80, 86
 Prayer for Union with God – 12, 27, 42, 63, 139
 The Vanity of Human Life – 39, 49, 73, 90
 Laments to Life's Struggles – 22, 25, 31, 40, 90
 Confidence in God – 4, 16, 23, 25, 46, 131, 139
 Prayer in Old Age – 71, 90, 139
 Prayer in Times of Danger – 7, 28, 35, 38, 54, 56, 140
 Cursing Psalms - 58, 83, 109 omitted from Breviary

Topics (Psalms)

Anger 2, 6	Justification 143	Punishment 62
Church 2, 11	King 72	Redemption 130
Creation 33, 74	Law 1, 19, 119	Repentance 32, 51, 130
Enemies, foes 6, 143	Listen 95	Salvation 3, 6, 69
Faith 13, 78	Love 100, 103, 117, 135	Seek God 24
Fear of the Lord 2, 5, 34, 112	Magnificat 75	Sin 32
Forgiveness 25	New Creation 65, 104	Soul 62, 63
Grace 127	Obedience 1, 8, 40, 119	Suffering (redemptive) 44, 69
Heart 15, 73	Passion 22, 38, 41, 56, 57, 69	Testing (of heart) 139
Humility 131	Peace 34	Trust 4
Incarnation 11, 68, 72	Poor 76	Word of God 119
Innocence 7	Praise 63, 71	
Justice, righteousness 5, 26	Pride 94	

Books

There are many books available about the psalms. Here are 2 books with examples of psalms composed by modern day authors – inspiration for the psalmist dwelling within you:

Edward Hays. Prayers for a Planetary Pilgrim-a Personal Manual for Prayer and Ritual
 Thomas Merton. A Book of Hours