

Responding to the Psalms

November 2020

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

The Responsorial Psalm is an integral part of the Liturgy of the Word. You could reflect on a verse for one or two days, and then move onto the next verse. The questions that follow each verse of the psalm are for personal reflection. Some might be good for sharing with another, or a small group. Some might be too personal. Where the text says 'we' it can also be rephrased as 'I'.

All Saints

1 November 2020

Psalm 23(24):1-6

Such are the men who seek your face, O Lord.

The Lord's is the earth and its fullness,
the world and all its peoples.
It is he who set it on the seas;
on the waters he made it firm.

*How will I respond personally as I pray to the God of all holiness,
our creator?*

Just stand back and admire the glory of creation.

Who shall climb the mountain of the Lord?
Who shall stand in his holy place?
The man with clean hands and pure heart,
who desires not worthless things.

*Have we prepared ourselves for our journey as Christians?
How do we work to achieve "clean hands and pure hearts"?*

He shall receive blessings from the Lord
and reward from the God who saves him.
Such are the men who seek him,
seek the face of the God of Jacob.

*Let us give thanks for the blessings of goodness from God.
Let us ask for the ability to see God's face clearly.*

32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

8 November 2020

Psalm 62(63):2-8

For you my soul is thirsting, O God, my God.

O God, you are my God, for you I long;
for you my soul is thirsting.

My body pines for you
like a dry, weary land without water.

How do you picture the God you long to see?

When your prayer is a struggle how do you then see God?

So I gaze on you in the sanctuary
to see your strength and your glory.
For your love is better than life,
my lips will speak your praise.

How is God giving you strength at this time?

Stop everything and just praise God for being love that is better than life.

So I will bless you all my life,
in your name I will lift up my hands.
My soul shall be filled as with a banquet,
my mouth shall praise you with joy.

Think of your age, and how God has been with you every moment you have lived.

Give God thanks for the joy who have received in your life.

On my bed I remember you.
On you I muse through the night
for you have been my help;
in the shadow of your wings I rejoice.

As you go to sleep ask God to keep you safe this and every night.

Give thanks for the times when God has been your help.

33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

15 November 2020

Psalm 127(128):1-5

O blessed are those who fear the Lord.

O blessed are those who fear the Lord
and walk in his ways!

By the labour of your hands you shall eat.
You will be happy and prosper.

Ask God to show you the way to walk for the rest of the day.

Give thanks today for what you eat and how you receive it.

Your wife will be like a fruitful vine
in the heart of your house;
your children like shoots of the olive,
around your table.

Give thanks for your family and good relationships.

Pray for the young that they may be happy and prosper.

Indeed thus shall be blessed
the man who fears the Lord.
May the Lord bless you from Zion
all the days of your life!

Bless God for the gift of having faith and what it means.

Ask God to bless you for the rest of your life.

Christ the King —

22 November 2020

Psalm 22(23):1-3a,5-6

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.

Fresh and green are the pastures
where he gives me repose.

Give thanks for all the good things God has given you.

Take a moment of repose and just be at peace.

Near restful waters he leads me,
to revive my drooping spirit.
He guides me along the right path;
he is true to his name.

Think about a moment when faith has lifted your spirits.

Ask for guidance for the right path ahead today.

You have prepared a banquet for me
in the sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing.

Rejoice in the banquet that is the eucharist we share.

Enjoy the fact that you are anointed as a Christian.

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me
all the days of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell
for ever and ever.

Pray to share God's goodness and kindness with others.

Savour a moment in a church or sacred space, the House of the King.

1st Sunday of Advent, Year B

29 November 2020

Psalm 79(80):2-3,15-16,18-19

*God of hosts, bring us back;
let your face shine on us and we shall be saved.*

O shepherd of Israel, hear us,
shine forth from your cherubim throne.

O Lord, rouse up your might,

O Lord, come to our help.

*As Advent begins pray for the strength to hear the voice of the shepherd,
who is God.*

With hope ask God to help you find new meaning for this Advent.

God of hosts, turn again, we implore,
look down from heaven and see.

Visit this vine and protect it,
the vine your right hand has planted.

*Implore God to look and bring peace to a particular person
or a nation this Advent.*

Ask God to be with and to protect the Church in these days of Advent.

May your hand be on the man you have chosen,
the man you have given your strength.

And we shall never forsake you again;
give us life that we may call upon your name.

*Pray for the Pope and the Bishops
to have the strength they need in these times.*

*Pray for all Christians
that they may have hope as they call on God's name.*