

### 3-PRAYING THE PSALMS

A-All with eyes to see can discover in it **a complete gymnasium for the soul**, a stadium for all the virtues equipped for every kind of exercise; it for each to choose the kind he judges best to help him gain the prize. St. Ambrose

B-The Book of Psalms (the Psalter) is called *the prayer book of the Bible*. The Psalter is a book of prayer poems meant to be sung.

C-Part of the Wisdom literature

D-Hebrew Poetry

- 1-Not rhyming and rhythm as we think of it but a rhythm of sense
- 2-Alphabetic Psalms, Parallelism, Repetition

E-Categories of Psalms

F-Why pray the psalms?

- 1-Wide range of emotions, even being angry with and complaining to God.
- 2-Closest words of Jesus we have to pray after the Our Father.
- 3-Prayer of Jesus, Mary and , Joseph, the apostles, et al.
- 4-Poetic expression
- 5-Both as a prayer and a springboard for prayer.
- 6-NT authors saw the psalter as a prophetic source.
- 7-To praise God
- 8-"The masterwork of prayer in the Old Testament" 2585
- 9-Significant role in the liturgical life of the Church.
- 10-Role of honesty

G-Ways of praying the Psalms

- 1-Augustinian Method-Psalms become the voice of Christ praying to Father and the Church joins him in this prayer.
- 2-Benedictine Method-Not with Christ to the Father but to Christ. Psalms become the voice of the Church praying to the exalted Christ, the Lord of all creation.
- 3-Inserting one's self into the psalm or praying on behalf of others.

H-Problems with Violence

- 1-Different day & age, imperfect, pre-Christian and parts of us are pre-Christian
- 2-Catharsis
- 3-Placing it all before God, parts of us are pre-Christian
- 4-How not to pray
- 5-A figurative sense

For further reading: *Praying the Psalms* by Thomas Merton.

## CATEGORIES OF PSALMS

*A complete gymnasium for the soul, a stadium for all the virtues. St. Ambrose*

*The psalms of David, in sublimity, beauty, pathos and originality, or in one word poetry, are superior to all the odes, hymns and songs in any language. John Adams*

Hymns of Praise: 8, 19, 33, 66, 100, 103, 104, 111, 113, 14, 117, 145-150.

Hymns of Thanksgiving: 18, 30, 32, 34, 40, 65-67, 75, 92, 107, 116, 118, 124, 136, 138.

Individual Laments: 3-7, 9-10, 13, 14, 17, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 31, 35, 38-43, 51, 57, 59, 61, 64, 69-71, 77, 86, 88, 89, 102, 109, 120, 130, 139, 141-143.

Communal Laments: 12, 44, 58, 60, 74, 79, 80, 83, 85, 90, 94, 123, 126, 129, 137.

Liturgical Psalms: 15, 24, 50, 68, 81, 82, 115, 134.

Wisdom Psalms: 1, 19, 36, 37, 49, 73, 78, 112, 119, 127, 128.

Trust Songs: 11, 16, 23, 27, 62, 63, 91, 121, 125, 131.

Royal Psalms of the King: 2, 18, 20, 21, 45, 72, 78, 89, 101, 110, 132, 144.

Zion Hymns: 46, 48, 76, 84, 87, 122.

Royal Psalms of God as King: 29, 47, 93, 95-99.

Historical Psalms: 78, 105, 106, 135.

Penitential Psalms: 5, 32, 38, 51, 101, 130, 143.

Psalms of Ascent: 120-134.

Taken in large part from: Lawrence Boadt, Reading the Old Testament, (New York: Paulist Press, 1984), p. 282.

## 4-THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS

The Liturgy of the Hours (LH) is a collection of psalms, scripture readings and other writings known as the official prayer of the Church. The LH is liturgical rather than devotional prayer. It is also known as the Divine Office. Clergy and religious assume a responsibility to pray the office daily but it is the prayer of the entire Church. The Second Vatican Council envisioned the LH becoming the prayer of the entire People of God. The Liturgy of the Hours represents:

- 1-A sanctification and consecration of the day
- 2-A fulfillment of St. Paul's mandate to "Pray always" I Thessalonians 5:17
- 3-A joining with the Church throughout the world in prayer *ecclesia orans*
- 4-A prayer on behalf of the Church and the world
- 5-Praying for those who have no one to pray for them
- 6-A prayer that leads towards and flows from the Eucharist
- 7-Allowing ourselves to be informed and formed by the Word of God
- 8-An exercise of the priestly office of all believers
- 9-Prayer with the Church in heaven
- 10-A prayer of harmony with mind and voice

The Liturgy of the Hours consists of :

### *1-Morning Prayer (Lauds)*

- a-It is said in the morning in order that the first stirring of our mind and will may be consecrated to God. St. Basil the Great
- b-This hour also recalls the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

### *2-Evening Prayer (Vespers)*

- a-An act of thanksgiving
- b-A recollection of the evening sacrifice Christ

*These two hours are the two hinges on which the daily office turns; hence they are to be considered as the chief hours and celebrated as such. General Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours.*

### *3-Office of Readings*

- a-Seeks to provide God's people, and in particular those consecrated to God in a special way, with a wider selection of passages from sacred Scripture for meditation, together with the finest excerpts from spiritual writers.
- b-It may be recited at any hour of the day.

### *4-Daytime Prayer*

### *5-Night Prayer (Compline)*

[www.universalis.com](http://www.universalis.com)

[www.liturgyofthehours.org](http://www.liturgyofthehours.org)

[www.divineoffice.org](http://www.divineoffice.org)

<http://www.ibreviary.org/en/> (app)