

Psalm 25

(The psalmist openly recognises his weakness and sinfulness while maintaining complete trust in God's compassion and mercy.)

- To begin this hour we will prayerfully listen to and reflect on Psalm 25, a psalm of mercy.
- Let's remind ourselves that we are in the presence of our Eucharistic Lord and prepare ourselves to hear his word.
- Come Holy Spirit, help us open our hearts and minds to the scriptures that you have inspired. Your word is alive and active and can speak to us today. Help us to leave behind our own expectations and pay attention to what you are doing in us through these words.
- Slowly read the scripture passage.

Psalm 25

A Psalm of David.

¹To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

²O my God, in you I trust;

let me not be put to shame;

let not my enemies exult over me.

³Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame;

let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.

⁴Make me to know your ways, O LORD;

teach me your paths.

⁵Lead me in your truth, and teach me,

for you are the God of my salvation;

for you I wait all day long.

⁶Be mindful of your compassion, O LORD, and of your merciful love,

for they have been from of old.

⁷Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions;

according to your mercy remember me,

for your goodness' sake, O LORD!

⁸ Good and upright is the LORD;

therefore he instructs sinners in the way.

⁹ He leads the humble in what is right,

and teaches the humble his way.

¹⁰ All the paths of the LORD are mercy and faithfulness,

for those who keep his covenant and his decrees.

¹¹ For your name's sake, O LORD,

pardon my guilt, for it is great.

¹² Who are they that fear the LORD?

He will teach them the way that they should choose.

¹³ They will abide in prosperity,

and their children shall possess the land.

¹⁴ The friendship of the LORD is for those who fear him,

and he makes his covenant known to them.

¹⁵ My eyes are ever toward the LORD,

for he will pluck my feet out of the net.

¹⁶ Turn to me and be gracious to me,
for I am lonely and afflicted.

¹⁷ Relieve the troubles of my heart,
and bring me out of my distresses.

¹⁸ Consider my affliction and my trouble,
and forgive all my sins.

¹⁹ Consider how many are my foes,
and with what violent hatred they hate me.

²⁰ O guard my life, and deliver me;
do not let me be put to shame, for I take refuge in you.

²¹ May integrity and uprightness preserve me,
for I wait for you.

²² Redeem Israel, O God,
out of all its troubles.

- Was there a word, phrase, or image that seemed to stir something in you? Spend some time repeating the phrase or sitting with the image. Trust that God is working. Make yourself available to his work in you.
- Lord, what do you want me to know?
- How do you want me to respond?
- How do you want me to apply this to my daily life?
- Spend some time in silent listening and adoration of God. At this stage, the Lord may further reveal himself to you in the gift of peace or joy. If so, allow yourself to rest with God in that feeling

(Wait 1-2 minutes before playing the reflection.)

Psalm 25 traces the wonderful movement of a person who seeks God's help, recognises and confesses his sinfulness, and places his complete trust in God's mercy.

In Verse 1, the psalmist begins with the words, "To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul."

This is the first movement of prayer. We remind ourselves that we are in God's presence and we recall who we are and who God is.

The word for soul in Hebrew is 'nephesh'. The meaning of the word comes from the way it sounds. It describes air passing the throat, so it means "breath" and, ultimately, the yearning of a human being, the part of a person that desires.

So when we lift up our soul to the Lord, we lift up the part of us that desires God.

What is the part of you that desires God? Lift it to him now.

BREAK - 30 secs

In verse 3 of Psalm 25, the psalmist asks "let none that **wait for you** be put to shame". As the psalmist waits on the Lord he remembers his sins and speaks about them, but he also remembers God's mercy and goodness.

"Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions;
according to your mercy remember me"

Here is a second movement of prayer. When we wait with God in prayer, he reveals to us our complete dependence on him. We see that we are weak and sinful but God also reminds us of his mercy and goodness.

Short break – 10 secs

This leads to a third movement in prayer; God teaches us his way but we cannot learn from him if we have not first realised our need for God.

In verses 8 & 9 the psalmist writes

"He leads the humble in what is right,
and teaches the humble his way."

The Hebrew word for humble, used in these verses, is 'anawim'. It means those who are materially poor; who have little or no resources for themselves, for example, money, food or clothing. However, the psalmist gives the word a new meaning. He refers to those who are aware of their lowly status and weakness and place their trust only in God. As we come to understand our weakness and need, God can begin to instruct us. He can teach us his ways when we pray because we are ready to listen.

BREAK – 30 secs

Further, in verse 14 of Psalm 25, the psalmist speaks of a special relationship with God:

“The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear him,
and he makes his covenant known to them.”

The psalmist is aware that the covenant makes God an intimate friend. He would be aware of the friendship that God showed to Abraham when, remembering his covenant with him, God told Abraham about his planned destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and allowed Abraham to negotiate for the righteous people in the city.

For us, the new covenant has been made by Christ’s Life, Death and Resurrection. It is sealed in us by the gift of the Holy Spirit in our Baptism. God has become our intimate friend who will listen to us and save us.

BREAK – 30 secs

In verses 16 to 19 of Psalm 25, the psalmist speaks of the things that are causing him distress. He mentions his enemies and their hatred but he gives much more time to his inner condition.

“Turn to me and be gracious to me,
for I am lonely and afflicted.

Relieve the troubles of my heart,
and bring me out of my distresses.

Consider my affliction and my trouble,
and forgive all my sins.”

It is the loneliness of separation from God’s grace that causes the most fear and anguish.

BREAK – 30 secs

As psalm 25 closes, verses 20 & 21 speak of rescue:

“O guard my life, and deliver me;
do not let me be put to shame, for I take refuge in you.

May integrity and uprightness preserve me,
for I wait for you.”

Once again the psalmist waits. He has openly acknowledged his poverty, weakness, loneliness and anguish. Now, with that weight lifted and with open hope and trust, he waits for God’s deliverance, his rescue.

As we spend this time now with our Lord, let us ask God to show us our need for his mercy. Let’s pray for the grace to be able to make an open confession of our sins this Lent, so that we can rejoice in God’s merciful deliverance at Easter.