



A FUTURE  
FULL OF HOPE



Session Three

The Psalms

## **Opening Prayer**

Living God,  
you walk alongside us  
and speak to us throughout the Scriptures.  
Your Son, Jesus Christ, listens to our hopes and fears  
and shows us how to live for one another.  
Send us the Holy Spirit to open our hearts and minds  
so that we may be your witnesses throughout the world. Amen

V. Your word is our path and your truth is our light.  
R. This day and every day.

Our Lady of the Annunciation  
Pray for us

St Matthew  
Pray for us

St Jerome  
Pray for us

## **Scripture Psalm 22(23)**

The Lord is my shepherd  
There is nothing I shall want  
Fresh and green are the pastures  
Where he gives me repose  
Near restful waters he leads me  
To revive my drooping spirit.

You guide me along the right path  
You are true to your name  
If I should walk in the valley of darkness  
no evil would I fear.  
You are there with your crook and your staff  
with these you give me comfort.

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

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

### **Words of Pope Francis**

"At times of sadness, suffering and sickness, amid the anguish of persecution and grief, everyone looks for a word of consolation. We sense a powerful need for someone to be close and feel compassion for us. We experience what it means to be disoriented, confused, more heartsick than we ever thought possible. We look around us with uncertainty, trying to see if we can find someone who really understands our pain. Our mind is full of questions but answers do not come. Reason by itself is not capable of making sense of our deepest feelings, appreciating the grief we experience and providing the answers we are looking for. At times like these, more than ever do we need the reasons of the heart, which alone can help us understand the mystery which embraces our loneliness."

Prayer at Feast of the Ascension, May 6, 2016

### **Words of Henri Nouwen (Priest and Spiritual Writer 1932-1996)**

We walk in a "ravine as dark as death" (Psalm 23:4), and still we have nothing to fear because God is at our side: God's staff and crook are there to soothe us (Psalm 23:4). This is not just a consoling idea. It is an experience of the heart that we can trust.

Our lives are full of suffering, pain, disillusion, losses and grief, but they are also marked by visions of the coming of the Son of Man "like lightning striking in the east and flashing far into west" (Matthew 24:27). These moments in which we see clearly, hear loudly, and feel deeply that God is with us on the journey make us shine as a light into the darkness. Jesus says, "You are the light of the world. Your light must shine in people's sight, so that, seeing your good works, they may give praise to your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:14-16).

### **Reflection Fr. Henry Wandsbrough OSB**

*The reflection from Fr. Henry is available to download from [cliftondiocese.com](http://cliftondiocese.com)  
Play the video clip [here](#).*

## Questions for Conversation

*What is your favourite psalm and why?*

*If you had to choose a favourite group of psalms which would it be? Why?*

*What is your understanding of the place of the psalm in Mass? How can the saying or singing the psalm during the Liturgy of the Word make it more meaningful to people?*

*How can the psalms help up us in our everyday lives?*

Re-read the Scripture passage for this session. You may like to follow the reading with a time of prayer and intercession after which you might pray the **OUR FATHER**

## Final Prayer

Pilgrim God,  
you walk alongside us  
and speak to us throughout the Scriptures:  
in the message of the prophets,  
the songs of David  
and the vision of Paul.  
Your Son, Jesus Christ, listens to our hopes and fears  
and shows us how to live:  
in our love of neighbour  
our desire for justice,  
and in our dying and rising each day.  
Send us the Holy Spirit to open our hearts and minds  
so that we may be your witnesses throughout the world:  
in our protection of the vulnerable,  
our words and actions  
and in our communion with the earth.

