

**Responding to Responsorial Psalms:
We Hear Them Regularly: How Do We Relate?
Sister Barbara Green, OP**

The Psalms are our biblical prayer-book, shared with 3000 years of Jews and 2000 years Christians. Each Eucharistic Liturgy first reading has (part of!) one offered as a response to the reading, though of course we can pray the Psalms (all of them) any time we wish to do so. *The purpose and aim* of this series of five sessions is to help us feel more comfortable with the Psalms as *our* prayers, which likely involves coming to know them better, ourselves and all else as well. What we do with the Psalms—how we pray them—is in some ways similar to what our forebears did and sometimes very different. Now is our time to inhabit them, and we want to get as much as possible from doing so. Our particular focus will be *questions*: what we can ask that opens us up for fresh insights.

Previously we had a St. Anselm-sponsored and Sister Barbara-led set of classes on them, which featured about fifteen of them. This time we will take the *set that come up in Sunday liturgy between September 10th to November 25th* (stopping at Advent) and see what we can learn from them. We will spread our study over *5 sessions of 75 minutes each*, where we interact by zoom (or by requesting to be in person on site). We will go in order, and ask several questions of each psalm as we go. There will be *study sheets* available ahead of time, though only you will know if you come prepared! You likely get more if you don't come "cold," though none of us is "cold" to the Psalms! The sheet helps make clear what we are doing with each Psalm and is thus worth having as a guide for the session itself, if not as "homework."

The series will be introduced by an *in-person session* (**not** zoomed or recorded), where some points that apply to all the Psalms can be reviewed and questions asked, insights offered, refreshments shared. That "live" event will be on *August 29, 4-5 pm at the parish hall*. The five follow-up zoom sessions will be on *five Tuesdays, 10:30-11:45 am: September 12, 26; October 10, 17, 31*. The preparatory study sheet or "homework" for the next session will be on the website shortly after the previous session (so the next day or so). Access to the sessions will be from the St. Anselm website.

The psalms on offer include twelve (for the Sundays before Advent starts); we have previously done four of them but will touch back on what we did before and ask new questions. The Psalms will be 95, 103, 145, 25, 80, 23, 96, 18, 131, 63, 128, 23 (again). If you like to see exactly what the Liturgy has, your Missalette will provide you with that specific text. I will use an alternate translation, because I think it is better and to hear something fresh is good. We will also do whole psalms, which the liturgy does not always do. If we were reading other poetry, we would not cut and paste like that, so here we will look at each psalm in its entirety.