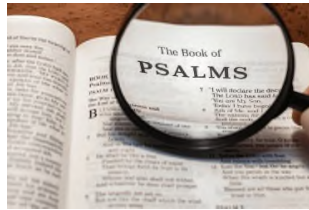


## *The Psalms - Part 1*



As we have come to know, sacred Scripture is most important in the celebration of the liturgy. Scripture is important for liturgy, and liturgy is important for Scripture. This relationship is very important because the celebration of the Eucharist is the primary setting in which we engage with the Word of God.

In the Catholic Church, we read lessons or readings that are excerpts of a biblical passage. These passages are collected in the Lectionary, a book arranged according to the liturgical year. We do not read from the Bible itself, but from the Lectionary. For the weekend liturgies, we have a three-year cycle, named cycle A, B and C. There is a separate Lectionary for each of these years. Cycle A will mainly deal with Matthew's Gospel, Cycle B we hear Mark's Gospel, and Cycle C is devoted to the Gospel of Luke. You might wonder, where does the Gospel of John come in? John's Gospel appears on most of the Sundays of Easter, on Holy Thursday, for the Passion on Good Friday and in Cycle A on the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Sundays of Lent. John also appears in the latter part of Cycle B, completing the liturgical year after the very short Gospel according to Mark ends. Readings for weekdays are provided for two years, namely, year I and year 2.

The Lectionary, with its selection and grouping of passages, all arranged in a particular order, creates a liturgical context from which we interpret the psalms. In the liturgy, the Responsorial Psalm focuses the assembly's response on a specific theme articulated in the First Reading.

When we turn to the liturgy, we see that the psalms are used quite often. They form the backbone of the Liturgy of the Hours where they are prayed in a four-week cycle. And, in the Eucharist, they function particularly as prayers of response. "The Psalms remain essential to the prayer of the Church" (CCC, #2586).

Have a blessed and prayerful week ahead!