



March 20, 2022 Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast

Psalms of Wisdom, Psalms of Prayer

*Hear this, all you peoples; listen, all who live in this world, both low and high, rich and poor alike:
My mouth will speak words of wisdom; ...
Why should I fear when evil days come, when wicked deceivers surround me—
those who trust in their wealth and boast of their great riches? ...
People, despite their wealth, do not endure; they are like the beasts that perish.
This is the fate of those who trust in themselves,
and of their followers, who approve their sayings. [Psalm 49:1-3, 5-6, 12-13, NIV]*

In the New York Times this month Tish Harrison Warren shared prayers offered for Ukraine that people have sent her. Many people sent Psalms and portions of Psalms to her, and that is no surprise. In addition to providing wisdom for the ages, there are many Psalms that can be especially useful for prayer in times of uncertainty and distress...like the citizens of Ukraine are experiencing now.

These verses from Psalm 49 reflect faith's wisdom to combat the perils of life. Sounding very much like "the Teacher" in Ecclesiastes, the psalmist stands bravely against "wealth and great riches," symbolic of power, position, and influence. Some have compared the book of Psalms to a civil court where the psalmist brings charges against oppressors and expects judgment and restitution. It is not a great leap to see why people are praying the psalms for Ukraine in the same way, or any attack by the powerful against the weak. As with all of wisdom literature, psalms address the problem of "might" vs. "right."

Our Corner for Lent: Psalms for Private Prayer



The psalms have been a guide for prayer for countless of the faithful for thousands of years. One Biblical scholar wrote: "Old prayers become richer, as, through their long use the thoughts and expressions of the many saints who have repeated them, become woven round them." Here is a prayer for this week, and one you may wish to commit to memory, Psalm 51:10-12:

*"Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and put a new and right spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from your presence,
and do not take your holy spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and sustain in me a willing spirit. Amen"*

[Some other psalms recommended for prayer in troubling times are Psalms 7, 23, 31, 49, and 91.]

Additional Prayers: for those facing serious medical conditions – Peter, Jan and Frank, Jim, and all our friends who are fighting cancer; peace in the Ukraine and safety for all affected by war; our first responders; healing of the divisions in our country. Hear our prayers O Lord!