

<b>A</b>	<p><b><u>Introduction to the Methodology, Flow of Lesson, Materials &amp; Curriculum</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reasons for choosing the Psalms as the focus of this year</li> <li>• The wealth of materials and emphasis on prayer and meditation</li> <li>• The regular flow of lesson</li> <li>• Key references: 1. <i>The Great Adventure Series: Psalms – the School of Prayer study set</i>, by Jeff Cavins, Sarah Christmyer, and Tim Gray (“Advent”); 2. <i>Come and See Catholic Bible Study – David and the Psalms</i>, by Fr. Joseph Ponessa and Laurie Watson Manhardt (“David”); 3. <i>Praying the Psalms with the Holy Fathers</i>, compiled by Peter Celano (Fathers).</li> <li>• Introduction to the curriculum</li> <li>• Referencing</li> </ul>	<p>SN 1</p> <p>SN2</p> <p>SN3</p>
<b>B</b>	<p><b><u>What is the Book of Psalms?</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Psalm = psalmos (GK), mizmor (HB) = song. In Hebrew, the book of Psalms is called Tehillim; meaning “praises” or “prayers of praise”. Psalter (psalterium – GK) = Psalms. If the words in Scripture are God speaking directly to us, the book of Psalms, inspired by God, is our response to Him. The Psalms is the Church’s voice in Christ.</li> <li>• One needs to focus on listening to our own response to God’s words in the Psalms: your hope, emotions, and feelings. Let the lyrics become your own prayer and offer it to God.</li> <li>• The Psalms is written for worship and liturgy and is to be sung in the Temple. Praising God is the main focus of the prayers in the book; therefore, calling the psalms from OT “prayers of praise” is very appropriate.</li> <li>• The current arrangement of the book was established in 3<sup>rd</sup> Century BC, and David authored most of the writings. Therefore, it is also called “The Psalms of David”.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Advent</i> Intro. P 1-2</p> <p><i>David</i> p 1 SN4</p> <p><i>David</i> p 1</p> <p><i>Advent</i> Intro. P 1, SK p 837</p>
<b>C</b>	<p><b><u>Structure, Literary Devices, Significance within the Church</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structure and chapters (mostly in original language, but Latin and Greek translations are also used)</li> <li>• Editors in charge of translation often determined the titles of various chapters; therefore, different versions have different titles and they don’t belong to meditative scripture. Information about authors, background, music is deemed</li> </ul>	<p>SN 5</p> <p>QS1p8</p>

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	<p>inspired scripture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Considered genre of poetry; accompanied with music to be used in worship. Writing style or literary devices, including imagery, repetition, or parallelism. One needs to be attentive to details, reflect and mediate with the words so that these seeds may sprout in the heart to become one's personal prayer.</li> <li>• Psalms is the book in OT from which NT cites frequently. This includes teachings that are fulfilled by Jesus. Jesus often uses the Psalms in His teachings. Similar to all other OT scripture, the truth in the Psalms can only be revealed through Jesus and the vantage point of NT.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Advent Intro.</i> P2-3</p> <p><i>Advent Intro.</i> P2 CCC129</p>
<b>D</b>	<p><b><u>The Book of Psalms Praises God Unceasingly</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Praises to God is the focus of Psalms, a unique feature of the collection. This feature can be seen through the 5 books of Psalms and the whole book of Psalms. Therefore, it is called Tehillim (HB) – “prayers of praise”. Praising God should become a key characteristic of all Christians and the Church. Praises to God should be unceasing because our faithful God is praiseworthy!</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	

**SPECIAL NOTES**

1. 2014 – 2015 BSP Flow of the Lesson

7:45-8:00	Announcements and opening prayer
8:00-9:10	Navigator Time
9:10-9:15 (5 min)	Stretch Break
9:15-9:55 (40 min)	Group Time (Praying with the Responsorial Psalms, or Lectio Divina, Q&A, sharing)
9:55-10:00	Closing

2. 2014 – 2015 <BSP – The Psalms"> Curriculum

DATE	TOPIC
Sept 26, 2014	Introduction I
Oct 24, 2014	Introduction II
Nov 28, 2014	David and the Psalms
Dec 19, 2014	The Responsorial Psalms
Jan 23, 2015	Royal and Messianic Psalms
Feb 26, 2015 (Thur)	Thirsting for God
Mar 26, 2015 (Thur)	Psalms of Pilgrimage and Ascents
Apr 24, 2015	Psalms of Suffering and Lament
May 22, 2015	The Penitential Psalms
Jun 26, 2015	Psalms of Praise and Thanksgiving

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3. Reference Material: Great Adventure – Psalms Study Set is divided into sections of questions and answers. Q = questions, R = answers. For instance:
- QS1 p10 = Question, Session 1, page 10
  - RS2 p3 = Answer, Session 2, page 3

4. Pope St. Pius X on How to Pray the Psalms:

“The Psalms seem to me to be like a mirror, in which the person using them can see himself, and the stirrings of his own heart; he can recite them against the background of his own emotions. Augustine says in his *Confessions*: ‘How I wept when I heard your hymns and canticles, being deeply moved by the sweet singing of your Church. Those voices flowed into my ears, truth filtered into my heart, and from my heart surged waves of devotion. Tears ran down, and I was happy in my tears.’

“Who can fail to be moved by those many passages in the psalms which set forth so profoundly the infinite majesty of God, his omnipotence, his justice and goodness and clemency, too deep for words, and all the other infinite qualities of his that deserve our praise? Who could fail to be roused to the same emotions by the prayers of thanksgiving to God for blessings received, by the petitions, so humble and confident, for blessings still awaited, by the cries of a soul in sorrow for sin committed? Who would not be fired with love as he looks on the likeness of Christ, the redeemer, here so lovingly foretold? His was the voice Augustine heard in every psalm, the voice of praise, of suffering, of joyful expectation, of present distress.” (*Divino Afflatu*)

5. The structure of the Psalms – similar to the “Torah”; scholars believe that the Psalms is a meditation on the Torah in which each book concludes with “doxology”. The five books are as follows: -
- Book 1: 1 – 41 (Ps 1 and 2 are the gateway and introduction to Psalms; both teach readers the way to true happiness [note])
  - Book 2: 42 – 72
  - Book 3: 73 – 89
  - Book 4: 90 – 106
  - Book 5: 107 – 150 (The last five psalms 146-150 form a section called the “Alleluia Psalms” which appropriately concludes the book with praises.)

Books 1 to 3 lament and entreat the rise and fall of David’s kingdom. This section is organized according to authors or the psalms’ original orders. Books 4 and 5 are thematically organized; focusing on the sufferings resulted from the fall of Jerusalem and living in exile and implore the Israelites to return to their true king, that is, to return to their faithful God.

Note: e.g. 1 – According to Ps 1:1-2, 2:12b, what will happen to those who are blessed? E.g. 2- Ps 1 teaches individuals while Ps 2 targets the whole community (nations, peoples, kings, authorities on earth). This is because God’s love and covenant are not only for individuals, but for all nations and all peoples. What does God say to the communities and authorities? (see Ps 2:6-11, 12b).