

## **MASSES FOR THE DEAD - RESPONSORIAL PSALMS**

The psalms are rich in imagery, feeling, and symbolism. They powerfully express the suffering and pain, the hope and trust of people of every age and culture. Above all the psalms sing of faith in God, of revelation and redemption. They enable the assembly to pray in the words that Jesus himself used during his life on earth. Jesus, who knew anguish and the fear of death, 'offered up prayer and entreaty, aloud and in silent tears, to the one who had the power to save him out of death... Although he was Son, he learned to obey through suffering; but having been made perfect, he became for all who obey him the source of eternal salvation...' (Hebrews 5:7-9). In the psalms the members of the assembly pray in the voice of Christ, who intercedes on their behalf before the Father. The Church, like Christ, turns again and again to the psalms as a genuine expression of grief and of praise and as a sure source of trust and hope in times of trial. Priests and other ministers are, therefore, to make an earnest effort through an effective catechesis to lead their communities to a clearer and deeper grasp of at least some of the psalms provided for the funeral rites.

The psalms are designated for use in many places in the funeral rites (for example, as responses to the readings, for the processions, for use at the vigil for the deceased). Since the psalms are songs, whenever possible, they should be sung.

– *Order of Christian Funerals*, General Introduction, nos. 25-26

**From the *Lectionary for Mass*, no. 1013**

**Psalm 23:1-3, 4, 5, 6**

**R/. The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.**

or:

**R/. Though I walk in the valley of darkness, I fear no evil, for you are with me.**

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

in verdant pastures he gives me repose;

Beside restful waters he leads me;

he refreshes my soul.

He guides me in right paths

for his name sake. **R/.**

Even though I walk in the dark valley

I fear no evil; for you are at my side

With your rod and your staff

that give me courage. **R/.**

You spread the table before me

in the sight of my foes;

You anoint my head with oil;

my cup overflows. **R/.**

Only goodness and kindness follow me

all the days of my life;

And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord

for years to come. **R/.**

**Psalm 25:6 and 7b, 17-18, 20-21**

**R/. To you, O Lord, I lift my soul.**

or:

**R/. No one who waits for you, O Lord, will ever be put to shame.**

Remember that your compassion, O LORD,  
and your kindness are from of old.

In your kindness remember me,  
because of your goodness, O LORD. **R/.**

Relieve the troubles of my heart;  
And bring me out of my distress.  
Put an end to my affliction and my suffering;  
and take away all my sins. **R/.**

Preserve my life and rescue me;  
let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in you.  
Let integrity and uprightness preserve me,  
Because I wait for you, O LORD. **R/.**

**Psalm 34:2-3, 17-18, 19, 23**

**R/. The Lord hears the cry of the poor. Blessed be the Lord.**

I will bless the Lord at all times,  
with praise ever in my mouth.  
Let my soul glory in the Lord,  
who will hear the cry of the poor. **R/.**

Let the lowly hear and be glad:  
the Lord listens to their pleas;  
and to hearts broken God is near,  
who will hear the cry of the poor. **R/.**

Every spirit crushed God will save;  
will be ransom for their lives;  
will be safe shelter for their fears,  
and will hear the cry of the poor. **R/.**

We proclaim your greatness, O God,  
your praise ever in our mouth;  
every face brightened in your light,  
for you hear the cry of the poor. **R/.**

**Psalm 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7**

**R/. Taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord. Oh, taste and see, taste and see the goodness of the Lord, of the Lord.**

I will bless the Lord at all times.

    God's praise shall ever be in my mouth;  
Glory in the Lord for ever;  
    And the lowly will hear and be glad. **R/.**

Glorify the Lord with me.

    Let us together extol God's name.  
I sought the Lord, who answered me;  
    And delivered me from all my fear. **R/.**

Look to God that you might be radiant with joy,  
    And your faces free from all shame.  
The Lord hears the suffering souls,  
    And saves them from all distress. **R/.**

**Psalm 103:8 and 10, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18**

**R/. The Lord is kind and merciful.**

or:

**R/. The salvation of the just comes from the Lord.**

Merciful and gracious is the LORD,  
slow to anger, and abounding in kindness.  
Not according to our sins does he deal with us,  
nor does he requite us according to our crimes. **R/.**

As a father has compassion on his children,  
so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him.  
For he knows how we are formed,  
he remembers that we are dust. **R/.**

Man's days are like those of grass;  
like a flower of the field he blooms;  
The wind sweeps over him and he is gone,  
and his place knows him no more. **R/.**

But the kindness of the LORD is from eternity,  
to eternity toward those who fear him,  
And his justice toward children's children  
among those who keep his covenant  
and remember to fulfill his precepts. **R/.**

**Psalm 122:1-2, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9**

**R/. I rejoiced when I heard them say: let us go to the house of the Lord.**

or:

**R/. Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord.**

I rejoiced because they said to me,  
"We will go up to the house of the LORD."  
And now we have set foot  
within your gates, O Jerusalem. **R/.**

To it the tribes go up,  
the tribes of the LORD,  
According to the decree for Israel,  
to give thanks to the name of the LORD.  
In it are set up judgment seats,  
seats for the house of David. **R/.**

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!  
May those who love you prosper!  
May peace be within your walls,  
prosperity in your buildings. **R/.**

Because of my relatives and friends  
I will say "Peace be within you!"  
Because of the house of the LORD, our God,  
I will pray for your good. **R/.**