

A Pray using Psalms (James 5:13).

- ❖ Each Psalm is a prayer to God that should be used according to the needs of the moment: to lament; to give thanks; To ask for forgiveness; to seek divine direction; to remember history; to praise; to show anger...
- ❖ How can we use the Psalms as prayers?
 - Read the psalm and pray
 - Observe the way the psalmist addresses God
 - Discover the reasons for his prayer
 - Compare your situation with the psalmist's experience
 - Think about how the psalm can help you express your feelings to God.
 - If there is something in the psalm that challenges you, reflect on it
 - Relate the psalm to Jesus and his work of salvation
 - Ask God to put his Word in your heart and mind

B Pray in difficult times (Psalm 44).

- ❖ Do you feel that God treats you unfairly by allowing you to experience difficult situations that you do not deserve?
- ❖ Maybe yes, or maybe not. But, if so, would you express it in a prayer, whether public or private?
- ❖ The psalmist did not hesitate to do so. The people of Israel were being plundered, exiled and murdered. And they had done nothing to deserve it! They had not turned away from God nor sinned against Him (Ps. 44:9-19).
- ❖ We should feel free to express our feelings and emotions to God in prayer. Let's present reality as we live it. Let us recognize that He can get us out of the most complex situations (Ps. 44:1-8), even if we do not understand why He does not do it now.
- ❖ Above all, let us not doubt that, even in the midst of problems and difficulties, God is loving and merciful (Ps. 44:26).

C Pray in times of despair (Psalm 22).

- ❖ Imagine Jesus praying with the words of Psalm 22:1, while his body hangs on the cross (Ps. 22:14); his hands and feet pierced (Ps. 22:16); surrounded by a threatening crowd (Ps. 22:7-8); observing the soldiers dividing his clothes (Ps. 22:18); thirsty, waiting for the moment of his death (Ps. 22:15); ... desperate.
- ❖ Your situation may not be as agonizing as that of Jesus, but you have surely felt, like Him, desperate at some point.
- ❖ In those moments, Psalms teach us to pray, looking beyond our current situation, and see by faith the restoration of our lives. See by faith the moments in which we will return to praise God with joy and gladness (Ps. 22:25-26).
- ❖ In times of despair, we can be sure that God hears us. He cares about our affliction and sees us, even though we do not see Him (Ps. 22:24).

D Pray between doubt and hope (Psalm 13).

- ❖ Has God forgotten me? Sometimes, our perception is yes. The psalmist expressed it with great clarity. But he went beyond the doubts and showed us his hope.
 - Psalm 13:1-2. He rebukes God for his indifference toward him: "How long?"
 - Psalm 13:3-4. He asks him to respond so that his enemies do not rejoice.
 - Psalm 13:5. He shows his complete trust in God, and trusts in his salvation.
 - Psalm 13:6. Finally, he breaks into songs of praise.
- ❖ When in doubt, we must ask that the Spirit "enlighten our eyes," that is, help us clear our doubts (Ps. 13:3).

E Pray for restoration (Psalm 60).

- ❖ Lamentation psalms – like 60 – are prayers expressed in moments of physical, psychological or spiritual pain (or all together).
- ❖ They help us to be aware that suffering is part of the experience of both the just and the unjust.
- ❖ They also help us understand that God is in control, and that He will deliver us at the right time (Ps. 60:5).
- ❖ Our suffering helps us to be compassionate toward those who suffer, just like the psalmist who, seeing the world shaken, pleads with God: "heal his brokenness, because he wavers" (Ps. 60:2).
- ❖ Above all, this psalm teaches us to fully trust in God (Ps. 60:11); to exalt Him before the world (Ps. 60:4); and to be instruments in his hands: "In God we will do mighty things" (Ps. 60:12)