

Mass, and in the Masses of the Novena to Our Lady Mediatrix of All Graces & St. Louis Marie de Montfort April 29 - May 7, 2001.

In the Hearts of Jesus and Mary,



Fr. William F. Ashley

PS: A special word of thanks to all those who sent greetings on the occasion of the 24th anniversary of my ordination to the priesthood, April 21, 2001!

Excerpts from
Pope John Paul II - General Audience Talk
Wednesday 28 March 2001
Focuses on Psalms as Inspiration for Prayer



2. We can begin to understand the Psalms through various ways. The first is to present the literary structure, authors, formation and context in which they came into being. Hence, a thought-provoking reading that would put in evidence the poetic character, which at times reaches very high levels of lyrical intuition and symbolic expression. No less interesting would be to read the Psalms by keeping in mind the various feelings of the human spirit, which they manifest: joy, recognition, thanksgiving, love, tenderness, enthusiasm, but also intense suffering, recrimination, appeals for help and justice, which at times end in anger and curses. The human being discovers himself entirely in the Psalms.

Our reading will be geared, above all, to distill the religious meaning of the Psalms, showing how these, although written so many centuries ago by Hebrew believers, can be assumed in the prayer of Christ's disciples. We will allow ourselves to be helped by the results of exegesis, but also place ourselves in the school of Tradition, and above all we will listen to the Fathers of the Church.

3. With profound spiritual penetration the latter, in fact, knew how to discern and point out the great "key" to the reading of the Psalms in Christ Himself, in the fullness of His mystery. The Fathers were thoroughly convinced: The Psalms speak of Christ. In fact, the risen Jesus applied the Psalms to Himself when He said to the disciples that it is necessary "that everything written about Me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled" (Luke 24:44). The Fathers add that in the Psalms there is either reference to Christ, or Christ speaks directly. In saying this, they were not only thinking of the individual person of Jesus, but the "Christus totus," the total Christ, made up of Christ, the head and His members.

In this way, the possibility arises for the Christian to read the Psalter in light of the whole mystery of Christ. From this view, precisely, the ecclesial dimension also emerges, which is seen especially in the choral singing of the Psalms. Thus we understand, how from the first centuries the Psalms were able to be assumed as a prayer of the People of God. If, in some historical periods, the tendency arose to prefer other prayers, it was the great merit of the monks to hold the torch of the Psalter high in the Church. At the dawn of the second Christian millennium, one of them, St. Romuald, founder of the