

Scripture Reading

A Reading from the Book of Psalms (*Psalms 146:1-2*)

Praise the Lord, my soul. I will praise the Lord all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live. The Word of the Lord.
R. Thanks be to God.

Reflection ~ A great desire of our soul is to render praise to God

The purpose of all creation is to give God glory. During creation, God puts His laws of nature into all His creatures. Thus, the bird naturally sings its melody, the flower unfolds and gives off its scent, the sun rises and sets with a hue of colors. Each creature in its own way gives glory to God simply by doing what it is created to do. Our soul - our most priceless possession - was also created to render praise and glory to God. Thus so created, it is the innate natural desire of a pure soul to render praise and glory to God. A pure, untainted soul is not self-seeking but seeks only to glorify its Maker, its Highest Good. This is our pure true nature. Yes, we are wonderfully made (*Psalms 139:14*)!

All glory belongs to God and must return to Him. When the Blessed Virgin Mary heard that her cousin Elizabeth was pregnant, she hurried to visit her. Elizabeth, inspired by and filled with the Holy Spirit addressed her as the “Mother of my Lord”, praised her and blessed her. Mary, immediately returned the praise to God, exclaiming: “My soul exalts the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior...” (cf. *Luke 1:46-47*). Thus, Mary teaches us that we should return to God all credit and glory due to Him. Out of pride and insecurity, the human nature, weakened by sin, tends to seek praise, honour and glory for its own sake, falsely elevating itself. St Paul exhorts us: *So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31)*. This is the purest intention.

If they kept quiet, the stones will cry out in praise of God (cf. *Luke 19:40*). For all the goodness God has shown us in every moment of our life, we must give to God the praise and glory due to Him. When Jesus approached Jerusalem, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully praising God loudly for all the miracles they had seen. At this, some Pharisees asked Jesus to rebuke His disciples. Jesus replied that if they kept quiet the stones will cry out! (cf. *Luke 19:37-40*). In the Book of Tobit, Raphael, the Archangel advised Tobiah and Sarah after God healed Sarah: *Bless God and give Him thanks before all the living for the good things He has done for you ... Proclaim before all with due honor the deeds of God, and do not be slack in thanking Him. A king's secret should be kept secret, but one must declare the works of God and give thanks with due honor (Tobit 12:6-7)*.

Everyone is happy when God is praised! The devil cannot stay around when we elevate God with our praises, the antidote to feelings of sadness. It is the devil that makes us unhappy through his impure suggestions, lies and temptations into sin. *Through the praise of children and infants You have established a stronghold against your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger (Psalm 8:2)*. When we praise God we are reminded of His presence, our hearts are open to His graces and we allow ourselves to be transformed by God. When we praise God with our heart, we feel the harmony in our body, mind, soul and spirit because it is the most natural thing for us to do!

We glorify God the most when we do His will. God is love (cf. *1 John 4:8*). His will is holy love with the purpose of helping each and every one of His children attain the glorious eternal inheritance He has prepared for them. Thus, He imparts to us His divine teachings to walk in fidelity and faith on the true path to our heavenly home where we will share in His glory. Due to the effects of sin, our lower, fleshy self seeks to do its own will to its own detriment, whilst our spirit seeks to glorify its Maker and to tend towards grace. Thus, we are invited daily: *“to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness” (Ephesians 4:23-24)*.

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, praise is an acceptable sacrifice to You. May my entire life be an everlasting hymn of praise to You. May all things that breathe praise You! I join my heart to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and all the saints and angels in heaven in ceaselessly rendering You glory, thanksgiving and praise! May Your most high and holy Name be exalted above all forever! May I glorify You by the way I live my life. Through Your grace, help me walk humbly and faithfully with You every day of my life. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.