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## Pope Francis: “Let us pray every day for peace”

“Let us continue praying for peace. War is always a defeat, from the very first moment. Let us pray for peace in the tormented Ukraine, in the Holy Land, in Sudan, in Myanmar and wherever there are people suffering from war. Let us pray for peace every day.” **Pope Francis** renewed his appeal for peace as he greeted the Italian-speaking faithful at the end of his Wednesday general audience in St Peter's Square today. He then referred to World Refugee Day, which is marked today: “We are all called to welcome, promote, accompany and integrate those who arrive knocking at our doors. States should guarantee dignified conditions and facilitate social integration”. He concluded by inviting the faith community to pray for the “dear Chinese people, a noble and courageous people with such a beautiful culture.” “I have a Ukrainian edition of the New Testament and of the Book of Psalms on my desk that was given to me and that belonged to a soldier who died in the war. He would pray at the front with this very Book,” said the Pope in his catechesis for today's General Audience, devoted to the Psalms, “a great symphony of prayer with the Holy Spirit as its composer.” **“All the Books of the Bible are inspired by the Holy Spirit, but the Book of Psalms, is especially full of poetic inspiration”**, Francis explained: “The Psalms have had a special place in the New Testament. In fact, there have been and still are editions that include both the New Testament and the Psalms.” “Not all the Psalms - and not every Psalm in its entirety - can be repeated and embraced by Christians, and even less so by modern man,” the Pope noted, because “they occasionally reflect a historical circumstance and a religious mindset that no longer correspond to our own.” But “this does not mean that they are not inspired.” “What most commends the Psalms to our attention is that they were the prayer of Jesus, Mary, the Apostles and all the Christian generations that have preceded us.”

“I ask you: do you sometimes pray with the Psalms?”

Do you take the Bible, the New Testament, and pray a particular Psalm? For example, when you are sad because you have sinned, do you pray Psalm 50?” the Pope asked the crowd of pilgrims gathered in St Peter's Square. “There are so many Psalms that help us to move forward,” the Pope assured, off-text: “Make it a habit to pray with the Psalms. I assure you, you will be happy!” “We should not just live off the legacy of the past. It is necessary to make the Psalms our prayer,” he argued: “It has been written that, in a certain sense, we must ourselves become the ‘scribes’ of the Psalms, making them ours and praying with them. When Psalms, or verses, speak to our hearts, it is good to repeat them and pray them during the day.”

The Psalms are prayers for all seasons:

“there is no state of mind or need that does not find in them the best words to be transformed into prayer.” In fact, for Francis, “the Psalms help us open ourselves to a prayer that is less focused on ourselves, and rather on praise, blessing, and thanksgiving. They also help us be the voice of all Creation, including it in our praise”. In short, the Psalms “allow us not to impoverish our prayer by reducing it only to requests, to a continuous ‘give me, give us...’”. “Let us learn from our Father, who before asking for our daily bread says: ‘Hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done,’” the invitation: “May the Holy Spirit, who gave the Church, the Bride, the words to pray to the Lord, her Spouse, help us to echo them in the Church today and make this year of preparation for the Jubilee a true symphony of prayer.”