

Twelfth Grade Psalm 25

**To You, I lift up my soul, O my God. In You I trust.
 Your ways O Lord make known to me, teach me Your paths.
 Set me in the way of Your truth, and teach me, for You are the God who saves me and my hope is
 in You all day long. Good and upright is the Lord, He teaches the way to sinners;
 in all that is right He guides the humble, and instructs the poor in His way.
 All the paths of the Lord are love and truth for those who seek His help to keep His covenant
 and His decrees. For Your name's sake, O Lord, forgive my guilt, for it is great.
 Everyone who fears the Lord
 [which means reverence, awe and respect for the power of God, Creator of the Universe]
 will be taught the course a person should choose;
 his soul will live in prosperity, his children have the land for their own.
 The friendship of the Lord is with those who fear Him, and His covenant, for their instruction.**
 (verses 1, 4-5, 8-14)

Praying *Psalm 25* throughout the entire year will allow young people to encounter Jesus in a deeply personal way and develop a close friendship with Him. The words of *Psalm 25* help us to understand that God offers us guidance. The following resources are meant to foster an understanding of the different ways that the Holy Spirit – the Spirit of Jesus dwelling within us – offers us guidance. All are invited to pray *Psalm 25* every day and at every session and include one aspect from these resources to help the young people go deeper in their understanding of this prayer. Further, the 16 sessions on the specific ways that God offers us guidance are available on the website: diolc.org/prayer/ 12th grade.

God's love for you

God sent His Son Jesus to die for us so that our sins could be forgiven. Through His Death and Resurrection, Jesus made it possible for us to receive God the Holy Spirit. Jesus returned to Heaven so that He could send the Holy Spirit to dwell within us, to be with us always.

God created us with a desire for Himself written in our hearts. We seek Him and want to know Him but we also are drawn away from God through our sins. We need the Holy Spirit so that, through the power of His grace, we can resist inclinations to sin and break sinful habits, which is really slavery and leads to separation from God.

In other words, the Christian life is not about “earning our way to Heaven.” The Christian life is about cooperating with God's grace, and in this freedom, seeks to know the truth of Jesus Christ and to be His committed follower. Jesus is the bridge connecting us to our Father in Heaven. It is the Holy Spirit who leads us to Jesus, helps us to encounter Him and strengthens us to commit our lives to Him. God offers us personal guidance in many ways to stay on the right path, always with the purpose of bringing us to the greatest fulfillment, joy and peace, even amidst life's struggles.



The Holy Spirit is a Divine Person. The dove is a Biblical symbol.

Why pray Psalm 25 each day? Why learn specifically how God guides in every situation?

- 1) To develop and deepen communication with the Person of Jesus.
- 2) To be aware that God guides us and to open our hearts to this great gift.
- 3) To learn how God guides and directs us in every situation, specifically described in the 16 sessions available online.
- 4) To understand that for a time, throughout periods of our lives, there will be difficulties and trials, but that as we continue to pray and listen for His guidance, we can with assurance through life experiences, learn to trust in the ultimate goodness of God.
- 5) To come to realize that even more important than understanding God's guidance, we want to know the Guide – Jesus Christ – Himself. Learning to listen to God and recognize the different ways He gives us guidance every day (see the 16 sessions online) helps us to develop a growing friendship with Him.

Meaning of the Words of Psalm 25 (verses 1, 4-5, 8-14)

- **To You, I lift up my soul, O my God.** We need to lift up our soul to God because He is our Creator and Lord. It is the desire of our heart to take refuge in God and address Him in a most personal way as "my God." We want to offer Him our praise, worship and thanksgiving.
- **In You I trust.** We trust God because He loves us perfectly and only wants what is best for us.
- **Your ways O Lord make known to me, teach me Your paths.** We ask the Lord to show us His ways and teach us His paths because Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life (John 14:6). He is the only Way to Heaven and, if we choose to be committed to Him, He saves us from Satan, sin and death. Jesus is the fullness of Truth itself and He makes it possible for us to inherit eternal life through the great cost of His Passion and Death, and ultimately His Resurrection from the dead.
- **Set me in the way of Your truth, and teach me, for You are the God who saves me and my hope is in You all day long. Good and upright is the Lord, He teaches the way to sinners; in all that is right He guides the humble, and instructs the poor in His way.** The Lord is perfectly good and loves us completely. Therefore we can place our hope in God. As a loving Father, He wants to show His children, who frequently wander away from Him, the way to stay close to Him. God will guide people who want and are seeking to be guided. These are the poor in spirit (the humble), those who recognize their need for God and His guidance. This way to our eternal Father, even though there will be struggles along the way, is where we will experience interior joy, peace and freedom.



- **All the paths of the Lord are love and truth for those who seek His help to keep His covenant and His decrees.** A covenant is a sacred family bond; a promise that God will never break, even if we choose to break the covenant with Him. When we live united with Jesus in the sacred covenant of prayer and the Sacraments, we recognize that following His paths are always about love and truth.

- **For Your name's sake, O Lord, forgive my guilt, for it is great.** We acknowledge our many sins of selfishness in daily life and humbly ask pardon from the Lord. We do

not deserve forgiveness, but we ask the Lord to forgive us of our many sins for His name's sake – simply because of who He is. "The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness." (Psalm 145:8) God will forgive us if we turn to Him with a humble and contrite heart.

- **Everyone who fears the Lord will be taught the course a person should choose; his soul will live in prosperity, his children have the land for their own.** A holy fear for the Lord means having reverence, awe and respect for the power of God, Creator of the Universe. This is not about being frightened of God. Everyone who has a holy fear for the Lord and seeks to know Jesus through a committed daily time of prayer will be guided on the right path. The resulting consequences will be: he will live a life of prosperity, most especially with a heart filled with joy and peace; his children will have the land for their own.



- **The friendship of the Lord is with those who fear Him, and His covenant, for their instruction.** Those who have this holy fear for the Lord will develop a close friendship with Him. Out of this sacred family bond – this covenant – they will grow more in their understanding of His personal instruction for their life.

Learning the Principles

- *Psalm 25* was composed by David who was praying for guidance even in the midst of recognizing his personal sins.
- God communicates with us in many ways. We know this to be true because God has revealed it to us throughout the inspired Word of the Bible. God is perfect love and therefore He cannot or will not deceive us. We need to understand the specific ways in which God gives us guidance and direction.
- God offers us guidance in many ways. By taking time to listen to the Holy Spirit – the Spirit of Jesus dwelling within us – we will learn to recognize His guidance as we develop a growing friendship with Him. There will be difficulties and trials, but as we pray and listen for His guidance, we can, with His assurance, trust in the ultimate goodness of God.
- Learning to listen to God and recognizing the different ways He gives us guidance every day helps us to develop a growing friendship with Him.
- God will give us guidance for all decisions, both big and small.
- Titles of the specific sessions on how God offers us Guidance available online:
 Session One – How we know God guides us
 Session Two – God offers us guidance in our Personal Prayer
 Session Three – God offers us guidance in the Scriptures
 Session Four – God offers us guidance through Other People
 Session Five – God offers us guidance through Angels
 Session Six – God offers us guidance in Our Hearts
 Session Seven – God offers us guidance in Our Thoughts, Part 1
 Session Eight – God offers us guidance in Our Thoughts, Part II
 Session Nine - God offers us guidance in Dreams and Visions

Session Ten – God offers us guidance through Signs and Seeming “Coincidences”

Session Eleven – God offers us guidance by Opening and Closing Doors

Session Twelve – God offers us guidance in Our Memories

Session Thirteen – God offers us guidance during Our Struggles

Session Fourteen– God offers us guidance in Miracles

Session Fifteen – God offers us guidance through the Sacraments

Session Sixteen – God offers us guidance through the Teachings of the Church

Activities for Learning the Words

- Pray *Psalm 25* every day and at every session.
- Commit *Psalm 25* to memory - learn the verses by heart! In order for this to happen, the young people need to be “taken in” with the meaning of the words, letting them be deeply touched in a personal way. This familiarity with *Psalm 25* will help the young people to recognize their own life experiences within these words – to see themselves in it. Then they will be personally engaged, and as a result, their hearts will be open to Jesus’ guidance.
- Discuss each phrase of the Psalm.
- Make connections between the lines of the Psalm and the young people’s lives.
- At various times, after the parents or teacher reads *Psalm 25* aloud, allow time for the youth to journal about something that stood out for them.
- God has revealed to us in the Scriptures that He will guide us. Read the seven Bible passages provided in Session 1 – How God offers us Guidance, found online: www.dioc.org/prayer/. This will be useful to help confirm the reality of God’s desire to lead us.
- Teach the young people how to pray *Psalm 25* with their heart, not just rattling words. “Prayer is internalized to the extent that we become aware of Him ‘to whom we speak.’”
- Prayer is a vital necessity. Prayer and Christian life are inseparable. (CCC 2744-2745)
In other words, when we pray with our heart, we come to know Jesus Christ personally and deeply. As this friendship with Him grows, we recognize more and more how much He loves us and how much we love Him. From this love, received and given, we respond from a natural desire to be one with Him in all things, and live our lives in a way that is reflective of His own. This brings much peace and joy to ourselves and those around us.
- Provide time for the young people to receive the teaching for each of the 16 sessions, either as a presentation or by reading the handout. It is also necessary to answer the discussion questions about the teaching on “How God Offers Us Guidance” for each session.
- Read the true stories about people who have experienced receiving God’s guidance for each of the 16 sessions.
- Invite the youth to write down a personal story of how God has provided guidance for them for each of the 16 sessions.
- Encourage teens to relate and discuss the teaching on *Psalm 25* and the contents of the 16 sessions on the ways that God offers us guidance with their parents.



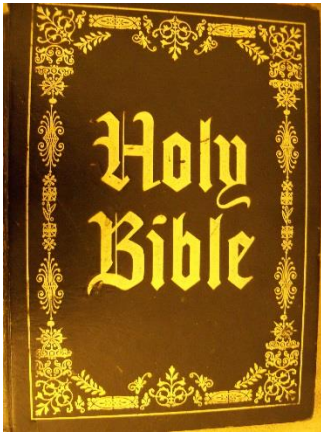
Spiritual Comprehension – Do they understand?

- Ask questions to ensure that the youth understand the meaning of the words in *Psalms* 25 and the teachings on how God offers us guidance.
- *Psalms* 25 is the prayer the young people should know by heart and with good understanding before they go deeper with another prayer. This prayer will help youth hold onto the truth that God offers us guidance. Therefore, it should be prayed every day and at every session. Please continue to teach other prayers as planned.

Encountering God in Prayer

- Allow time for silence either in the home, classroom or take them to Church for the young people to pray with *Psalms* 25 and write down what stood out for them. Encourage the youth to have a conversation with Jesus about something that is weighing on their heart.
- When students receive God's guidance in daily living, all will want to take time to thank Him for His love and direction. Being thankful opens the heart to God in a greater way.

Scriptural Foundation that helps us to understand why we need to learn Scripture, such as Psalm 25



- “The Holy Scriptures... are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.” 2 Timothy 3:14-15
- *God's Word is more reliable than anything else:* “And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the Word of God, which is at work in you believers.” 1 Thessalonians 2:13
- “For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.” Romans 15:4
- “All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- “Your Word o Lord is hidden in my heart so that I may not sin against You.” Psalm 119:11
- *God's Word is addressed to each of us personally:* “Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.” Psalm 119: 105 “For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.” *Jeremiah* 29:11
- “My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding— indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding.” Proverbs 2:1-6
- “Do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart, for they will prolong your life many years and bring you peace and prosperity.” Proverbs 3:1-2
- “Listen, my son, accept what I say, and the years of your life will be many. I instruct you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths. When you walk, your steps will not be hampered; when you run, you will not stumble. Hold on to instruction, do not let it go; guard it well, for it is your life.” Proverbs 4:10-13

Catechism of the Catholic Church – Sacred Scripture

- "In Sacred Scripture, the Church constantly finds her nourishment and her strength, for she welcomes it not as a human word, "but as what it really is, the word of God. 'In the sacred books, the Father who is in Heaven comes lovingly to meet His children, and talks with them.'" (paragraph 104)
- "The inspired books teach the truth. 'Since therefore all that the inspired authors or sacred writers affirm should be regarded as affirmed by the Holy Spirit, we must acknowledge that the books of Scripture firmly, faithfully, and without error teach that truth which God, for the sake of our salvation, wished to see confided to the Sacred Scriptures.'" (paragraph 107)
- "Still, the Christian faith is not a 'religion of the book'. Christianity is the religion of the 'Word' of God, 'not a written and mute word, but incarnate and living'. If the Scriptures are not to remain a dead letter, Christ, the eternal Word of the living God, must, through the Holy Spirit, "open (our) minds to understand the Scriptures." (paragraph 108)
- "'The Word of God, which is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, is set forth and displays its power in a most wonderful way in the writings of the New Testament' which hand on the ultimate truth of God's Revelation. Their central object is Jesus Christ, God's incarnate Son: His acts, teachings, Passion and glorification, and his Church's beginnings under the Spirit's guidance." (paragraph 124)
- "The Gospels are the heart of all the Scriptures 'because they are our principal source for the life and teaching of the Incarnate Word, our Savior'". (paragraph 125)
- "'And such is the force and power of the Word of God that it can serve the Church as her support and vigor, and the children of the Church as strength for their faith, food for the soul, and a pure and lasting fount of spiritual life.' Hence 'access to Sacred Scripture ought to be open wide to the Christian faithful.'" (paragraph 131)
- "The Church 'forcefully and specifically exhorts all the Christian faithful... to learn the surpassing knowledge of Jesus Christ, by frequent reading of the divine Scriptures. 'Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ.'" (paragraph 133)

