

MARCH 2021

On the long journey

Make me know your ways, O Lord: teach me your paths (Ps 25 [24]:4).

This psalm presents us with a man who feels threatened and in danger. He needs to find the right path to lead him to safety. Who can he appeal to for help?

Aware of his own frailty, he finally raises his eyes and cries out to the Lord, to the God of Israel, who has never abandoned his people, but has guided them on the long journey through the desert to the Promised Land.

The experience of 'walking with God' fills the wayfarer with a sense of hope once again. It is a special time of new intimacy with God, of trusting abandonment to his faithful love, despite one's own infidelity.

In the language of the Bible, walking with God is also a lesson in life: it is a time of learning to recognise his plan of salvation.

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Often, we walk along the roads of what we presume to be our self-sufficiency but then we find ourselves disoriented, confused, and aware of our limitations and shortcomings. We would like to find a compass in life and the correct pathway to reach our goal.

This Psalm helps us greatly; it urges us towards a new or renewed personal encounter with God and of trust in his friendship.

It gives us the courage to embrace his teachings, which constantly invite us to avoid remaining closed in on ourselves, to follow him on the way of love, upon which he is the first to travel as he comes to meet us.

It can be a prayer that accompanies us throughout the day and makes every moment, whether joyful or sad, into a stage on our journey.

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In Switzerland, Hedy, who is married and has four children, has been trying to live the Word for a long time. She is now seriously ill and knows that she is about to reach the goal of her journey on earth.

Her dear friend Kati tells us, 'During every visit, even with the nursing staff, Hedy is always looking out for other people - she is always interested in other people - even though it is now very

difficult for her to speak. She thanks everyone for being there and shares her experience with them. She is only Love, a living "yes" to God's will! She attracts many people: friends, relatives and clergy.

Everyone is deeply impressed by her attention to all her visitors and by her strength, the fruit of faith in God's love.'

Focolare founder, Chiara Lubich, spoke of life as a 'holy journey'ⁱ The 'holy journey' is a symbol of the path we travel towards God. ... Why not make of the only life we have, a journey, a holy journey, because holy is he who awaits us. ... Even those who do not have precise religious beliefs can make a masterpiece of their lives and, with great integrity undertake a journey of sincere moral commitment. ... If life is a 'holy journey' along the pathways of God's will, we should make progress every day. ... But when we stop? ... Should we abandon the enterprise because we are discouraged by our mistakes? No, in these moments the watchword is 'start again' ... by putting all our trust in God's grace rather than in our abilities. ... And it's important that we walk together, united in love, helping one another. The Holy One will be in our midst and he will be our 'Way'. He will make us understand God's will more clearly and give us the desire and the capacity to carry it out. Everything will be easier if we are united and we will experience the joy promised to those who undertake the 'holy journey'.ⁱⁱ

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ⁱ Cf. Ps. 84 (83):6 'Blessed is he who finds in you his strength and decides in his heart the holy journey' (CEI 1974)

ⁱⁱ C Lubich, Word of Life, Dec 2006