

**You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you. (Ps 16[15]:2)**

This month's Word of Life is taken from the book of Psalms which contains some of the finest prayers attributed to King David and others: they are fruit of God's inspiration and teach us how to turn to him trustingly. We can all find ourselves expressed in the Psalms: they touch the soul intimately and express the deepest and most intense human feelings: doubt, grief, anger, anguish, despair, hope, praise, thanksgiving and joy. That is why they can be pronounced by every man and woman during all ages, from all cultures and at every moment of life.

**You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you.**

Psalm 16 was a favourite of many spiritual authors. For example, St Teresa of Avila commented: "Nothing is lacking to those who possess God: God alone is enough for them!" Father Antonios Fikry Rofaeil,<sup>1</sup> theologian of the Coptic Orthodox Church, noted: "This is the psalm of the resurrection, so the Church prays it in the early hours ... since Christ rose at dawn. This psalm gives us hope in our eternal inheritance, so it is often entitled "golden", meaning that it is a golden word, a gem of Holy Scripture."

Let us try to repeat it, thinking about each word.

**You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you.**

The words of this prayer enfold us, we feel that God's active and loving presence encompasses everything about us and about creation: we perceive that he gathers up our past, our present, and our future. In him we find the strength to confidently face the sufferings we encounter and the serenity to lift our gaze and see hope beyond the shadows of life.

So how can we live the Word of Life this month? Here is C.D.'s experience: "Some time ago I began to feel unwell, so I underwent a series of medical examinations which required a great deal of waiting. Finally, I found out what was wrong with me: I had Parkinson's disease.... it was a huge blow! I was 58 years old: how could I have Parkinson's? I asked myself why it was happening to me. I taught Motor and Sport Sciences and so physical activity was part of me!

I felt I was losing something too important. But then I thought back to the choice I had made when I was young: "You, Jesus crucified and forsaken, are my only good!"

Thanks to the medication I immediately started to feel much better, but I don't know exactly what will happen to me in the future. I decided to live in the present moment. After

the diagnosis, quite spontaneously, I wrote a song: I wanted to sing to God saying "Yes, my soul is filled with peace!"

The words of this psalm also resonated deeply in the soul of Focolare founder, Chiara Lubich. She wrote: *"These simple words will help us to trust in him and will train us to live with Love. Always more united to God and filled with him, we will continually lay down the foundations of our true selves as beings made in his image."*<sup>ii</sup>

During the month of June, we can be united in raising a "declaration of love" to God and radiate peace and serenity around us.

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<sup>i</sup> Fr Rofaeil is a member of the Coptic Orthodox Church and has ministered in Egypt & Canada. See the St-Takla.org website for more of his writings.

<sup>ii</sup> C.Lubich. Word of Life June 2001