

## **Meditation on Psalm 117:1-2**

*Praise the Lord, all you nations!*

Psalm 117 is the shortest of all psalms, a song of praise to God. The reason for praise is God's steadfast love. Psalm invites all peoples of the earth, rather all creation to honor God's gracious presence in the universe. God manifests his will and purpose in creation and that everything created is in relation to one another or belongs to each other! Psalm invites all to build a relationship of wonder, hospitality or care in creation [includes, outer-space, planets, stars] because, it is out of love that God said, 'let there be' and all that exists came to be! Psalm echoes Israel's confession of 'God's steadfast love' [Exodus 34:6] in their Exodus experience. Israel experienced God's merciful love in forgiving their sins when they rebelled against God and in the covenant God established with the people to manifest his compassion! God chose Israel to be a light for all, for the world to come to know the true God who fashioned heaven and earth.

Psalm 117 expresses our belongingness to God, a Lenten theme. During Lent, we thank God for his merciful/forgiving presence to us; we praise God for embracing us in his love in the gift of Jesus Christ, the Son of God and granting us the grace of eternal life in his Easter! Such praise is a joyful relating to God, source of life, a longing to remain in God, in his friendship. Praising heart is transformed by the warmth of God's coming to a person's life. Praise leads to intimacy and union with God. Giving praise to God is to trust in the saving, redeeming will of God for us!

God loves and guides the world. God's faithful love as manifested in human history and creation must be the model for love between humans and how we relate to God. Praise must be integrated with listening and following God's word for the world. Vision of God's love for all he created removes prejudice and discrimination in the name of race, nationality, language, economic power, etc. Christians are called to be a light to the world, transcend all barriers and with the attitudes of Christ relate to people and the world.

*Father Jose*