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Redemption Songs: Prayers for people like us

Mark Laurent

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Two Jewish men inspired this book. 3,000 years ago king David wrote a collection of songs to express his love, hopes and fears to God. They've been collected as the Psalms of the Old Testament. Thirty years ago Leonard Cohen published a collection of 'secular prayers,' originally called The Book Of Psalms but finally published as Book Of Mercy. Reading about Leonard's process with Mercy sparked Mark's desire to do some writing. This book is a response to those two great writers and especially to God, to whom they both sing. Redemption Songs isn't a paraphrase, though from time to time that occurs. Mark started by writing responses to The Psalms, but soon found himself wandering to all sorts of places, the Psalms being good jump-off points. Mostly he didn't write them as 'songs' to be sung, though a few things that started their life as song lyrics have snuck in. The 71 songs are numbered instead of having titles, in the hope that this leaves a degree of open-ended-ness, so that God can say to you what you need to hear. Dip into them at random. May there be a few holy surprises here for you. "Oh yes," says Mark, "there's another Jewish guy I should mention; Jesus, who I've loved and been agitated by ever since I discovered him (or he me). He didn't write any songs or books, but the number of songs and books he's inspired shows no sign of coming to an end." Praise for Redemption Songs: "Mark Laurent's 'psalms' are a conversation between head and heart, full of wisdom and truth. We read the wisdom, recognise truth, and hunger for more. They are lovely and I think many people will identify with them." Joy Cowley, author, retreat leader "Redemption Songs will be a breath of fresh air, comfort and encouragement to those like me who find that the Jesus walk is a mixture of highs and lows. Mark has shown us a heart which longs for the heart of God, and the heart of God which longs for us." Anna Johnstone (author of The Jesus Walk) "I highly recommend this book. It will be invaluable for personal use, as a gift to a friend, or using it in retreat work, as I will be doing. I can imagine it being useful in any place where God is worshipped." Betty Drew-Diprose, Saint Francis Retreat Centre "Redemption Songs comes from the heart of a pilgrim on a relationship journey to the One Who Saves Us. The songs lead along a road whose cobblestones present a challenge to honest recognition. For we too walk with the pilgrim author on the cobblestones of memories and discoveries, regrets, failures, faith and blessings, confessions and yearnings, our restless hearts finding shelter in Love." Suzie McCarthy, former books editor for NZ Catholic; pilgrimage journey facilitator "Thanks for sending through the sample of your Redemption Songs. It's engaging and honest writing. I like the whole concept of composing contemporary Psalms, with high authenticity." Mike Riddell, author "Joan and I have both read the six sample psalms or songs. We like them. He has some fascinating expressions. Each provides a brief meditative window on some aspect of faith." George Bryant, co-director, Daystar Publications

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