

## Devotion for the week leading to the 2nd of August 2020

*This service is written for Stretton Park and McDonald Wing in Maffra, Laurina Lodge in Heyfield and Royal Freemason's in Sale, but with the intention of being available for any who are interested for their private use.*

INTRODUCTION From Psalm 17, verses 6 & 7

I call on You, O God, because I know that You will answer me. Listen to me and hear my prayer. Show me the wonder of Your great love. You save those who take refuge in You.

HYMN No. 1 - All people that on earth do dwell

*You can read the words to yourself, or out loud. If you remember the tune well enough you can sing it yourself. You can, of course sing just the first, or the first and last verses.*

BIBLE READING - From Genesis 32 : 22 - 31 Jacob camps out for the night on his way to meet Esau. He struggles and wrestles all night with God, or maybe with an angel, and demands a blessing.

PRAYER

Sometimes, Lord God, we struggle. Not really like Jacob did, but we struggle just the same. Sometimes we struggle to see you at work in the world when so much seems to be going wrong. Sometimes we struggle in our faith. Sometimes we struggle within ourselves. We ask that we would know your presence with us, O Lord, in the struggles of our lives. Be with us, we ask, in our doubts and our cares. Be with us in our worries, and when we feel low. Be with us when we find the tasks of daily living a struggle. We do not struggle with you for your blessing as Jacob did, but we pray for your blessing in our struggles, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

HYMN No. 28 - How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds

READING - Matthew 14 : 13 - 21

The story of the feeding of the 5,000 beside the lake

REFLECTION

This story really starts a little before the start of today's reading. John the Baptist, Jesus cousin, had just been beheaded. It happened at King Herod's banquet, where Herodias' daughter danced and Herod promised her anything she wanted. She was Herod's niece. She asked for the head of John the Baptist on a plate.

Jesus had heard of the news of his cousin's death and had wanted to get away and lie low in the countryside while he decided what to do next. He wanted to be alone, but people followed him. They probably did not realise the mental strain he was under. Despite all of this, Jesus still spoke to them and healed those who were sick.

It became late, it was tea time, and the people were still with Jesus out in the countryside. The disciples made the sensible suggestion of finishing up the meeting so that the people could go and get something to eat for tea in town.

What followed then was a miracle of food. It was either the physical miracle of multiplying the little food they had, or it was the miracle of people caring and sharing what they had brought with them.

There are important messages in this story. For us, it shows the development in faith of the disciples. We see them showing concern for the welfare of people who are there. We also see that, even though they don't understand all that is going on, they still do as Jesus asks and prepare the people to receive food. Even though they don't know what is going to happen next, they still do as Jesus says.

HYMN No. 18 - Trust and obey

#### PRAYER

Be with us, O Lord, as we go on in life. Help us when we don't know what is going to happen next. Help us to put our trust in you. May we be aware of the needs of others, like the disciples were. May we be willing to assist in ways that we can, so that things can work out and everyone can be cared for.

Help those who work to care for us, and be with the people who work to keep us all safe, locally and across our State and our Nation. Be with our friends and family, those who can visit and those who are not able to. Be with all those who are in need and those who are sick, we pray through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, For ever and ever, AMEN

HYMN No 16 - To God be the glory, great things he has done

#### The BLESSING

May God hear you when you call, and show you the wonder of His great love,

And may the blessing of the almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit

be upon you and remain with you always, Amen