

## Devotion for the week leading to the 6th of September 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 also being available for private use.*

From Psalm No. 149

Sing a new song to the Lord. Let the people of God rejoice in their creator. The Lord takes delight in His people, He brings salvation to the humble and rejoicing to the saints. Praise the Lord

HYMN No. 10 - Praise to the Lord, the almighty, the king of creation

*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.*

### PRAYER

We thank you, O Lord for your love and care for us. We thank you for the wonderful world you have created for us to be a part of. In this time of coming spring, the first trees are blooming and the birds start to look for nesting places. We appreciate again the beauty of the natural world, your world. Help us to be a good part of that world. May we do what we can to be a positive influence, and may we encourage others to do their best as well. This we ask through the loving name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

HYMN No. 22 - All things bright and beautiful

BIBLE READING - Matthew Chapter 18, verse 15 to verse 20

### REFLECTION

In today's reading we have the words of Jesus that are repeated in the teachings of the early Church later in the New Testament.

Jesus said that if you have a problem with someone else, or with what they have said or done, talk it over with them first, just between the two of you. If you can't sort things out that way, get a couple of other people, and talk through the issue again with the other person with them there. Only after you have done all of that, should you cut the other person off.

This is good advice. From the very start, the way Jesus speaks indicates that we should be talking, listening and discussing rather than arguing and yelling. If someone has upset you, it is best to tell them the truth from your point of view. Say something like : I was upset when you did or said what you did or said. Then perhaps explain what had upset and maybe why, then give them a chance to explain why they did or said what they did. They may apologise. They may explain what they did in a way that you can understand. The two of you may well be able to come to terms about the issue.

If only things could always be worked out that easily. That is not always the case. If you could not come to an understanding together, arrange to talk it over again, with a couple of

other people present. Ask people who are calm and logical, people who will help you both to talk through to a solution. Both of you should take turns in having your say, without the other person interrupting, so you can both hear the other's point of view. You should talk from your point of view, saying things like "I did that because....." Or "when you said that, I felt....." Talking like that helps stop accusations and arguments and lets us see the other person's reasons and hurts. If that has not bought about a reasonable agreement, and the issue is really important, then you may best keep out of each other's way, for a while at least.

In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus says that people may be excluded from the Church if a sin against another person is serious and the sinner won't take responsibility or ask for forgiveness. That, of course is the most extreme situation. What Jesus is outlining is that we should keep small problems small. How would it be if there was a full Church meeting to excommunicate someone just because one person had mis-heard the other. Keep small issues small. Don't publically embarrass others, but try to understand the other person's point of view.

HYMN No. 11 - The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord.

#### PRAYER

We thank you, O Lord, for the people around us, for those who care for us, and for our friends. We pray for all those who are sick, for those who are afraid, for those who are not safe. We pray for our families and for all those who help us in our daily lives. Keep them all safe, happy and well. We pray for those without jobs and for all those in need, here in Australia and across the world. We take a moment to pray for those special situations and people that trouble us..... All these things, 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 31 - Jesus loves me this I know

#### The BLESSING

May God guide all that you say and do,

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