

PRAYER

Loving God we give you thanks, that through your coming among us as Jesus Christ, we can assuredly approach you with confidence. Amen.

READING from the Letter to the Hebrews chapter 4 verses 15 and 16

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are yet without sin.

Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace in time of need.

REFLECTION

Some of us, depending of the theology of the people who taught us the faith, might have been given the impression that God is a fearsome deity watching for us to slip up and ready to punish. That is certainly not the view of the writer of The Letter to the Hebrews. We are not sure of the identity of the author of this correspondence but the message is clear. We are the people of a caring God. For example, the reminder that our God recognises the need for rest and caring for ourselves. A God who came among us to share and experience our humanity in its good times and its bad times and its ordinary times in Jesus Christ. Hence the writer of Hebrews can confidently state that, through Jesus, we are the people of a God who understands us; a God whom we can approach, not as grovelling supplicants, but loved people with our heads held high. People, empowered by the Holy Spirit to be part of God's action in making the kingdom a reality on earth as it is in heaven.

HYMN

God of all power and truth and grace, which shall from age to age endure,
whose word, when heaven and earth shall pass ,remains and stands for ever
sure.

Give me a new, a perfect heart, from sorrow free, and doubt and fear:
the mind which was in Christ impart, and let my spirit know you near.

The Reverend Jim Foley (retired) Castlemaine Uniting Church 5472 4604

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