

PRAYER OF APPROACH, CONFESSION, & THE LORD'S PRAYER

We are here, O God... We are present, O God... listen to our hearts...

Our world has been exploding, of late... or is it that we're awake to the explosions?...

the world around us and our personal lives intersect... there is fear all around, and it lives deep within us too... there is rage and outrage all around... it lives deep within us too... There is helplessness and despair all around... it lives deep within us, too...

There is so much about tomorrow that seems so uncertain right now, O God... Even as we may convince ourselves that our little pocket of life can be safe and secure and secluded from all the chaos and unrest around us... we know this is an illusion... and it is a dangerous illusion if it encourages in us an apathy, an indifference or an attitude of "it's not my business" or "it doesn't relate to me in any immediate way" or "I'm fine and those I care about are fine, and so I'm not going to worry about it" or "what's worry going to do but just keep me up at night and keep me from positive, happy thoughts..."

We're better than that, O God... You made us for better than that... Let us not settle for a lesser humanity, O God... We are responsible for our neighbour, O God... and our neighbour's welfare and well-being is also our own... We are all inter-connected, and this time of Covid-19, this time of protests and this time of accelerating climate events reveal this to us ever more starkly...

Hear us now as we confess to you, O God... we don't need words for you to read what is in our hearts... We confess those ways we settle for less and aim for less because we are afraid and overwhelmed and tired and bored and indifferent... listen to our hearts' confession in the silence...

We are needed, O God... We need to be committed to change... for the sake of black siblings and all those marginalized and oppressed because they don't fit the dominant skin colour and culture and sexual orientation and gender definitions... We need to be inspired and empowered to change, O God... for the sake of our planet and all life in it... Give us faith that change is possible, even now in this 11th hour... Give us faith that we can see good things come within our embodied time here on earth...

We are here to worship and pray and listen for a revelatory word, O God, because we need it... now... And we pray this way because Jesus inspired us to... and we pray now the prayer he taught as a template for prayer, saying...

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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;
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil;
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever...

May the Peace of Christ be with you all... And also with you...

Please share some peace with those around you... and imagine sharing such peace with all those protesting right now, those grieving, those struggling, those despairing... May the peace of Christ find them and us... Amen.