Christ Welcomes All

The Epistle for this Sunday is part of the Apostle Paul's letter to the Romans (5:7-13) in which he advocates for mutual acceptance of all believers among ethnic and cultural varieties (including Jews and Gentiles) into the family of God, fulfilling God's promises and bringing hope to all nations. He encourages believers to warmly welcome each other as Christ accepted them, fostering harmony and mutual support. Christ's unearned grace is extended to everyone.

Paul notes that Christ became a servant to the Jewish people to prove God's truthfulness and uphold the patriarchal promises while also extending God's mercy to the Gentiles. Paul refers to four Old Testament passages from the Law, the Prophets and the writings to prove that God's plan was always to include the Gentiles worshipping alongside Israel and to live in joyful hope together.

The passage concludes with a blessing, asking the "God of hope" to fill the community with joy and peace in believing, resulting in an overflow of hope through the Holy Spirit. Therefore, let us be intentional in embracing persons from all religious and cultural backgrounds into God's fellowship, despite differences of approach or divisive dogma.

Bob Young