



Daily Reflections

August 13, 2016

Scripture

Matthew 19:13-15

Children were brought to Jesus that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples rebuked them, but Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the Kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." After he placed his hands on them, he went away.

Our Scripture Reflection

In Our Gospel text from Matthew, Jesus makes it very clear to His disciples who it is that is worthy of His time and attention, the least in His Kingdom. So it should be for us, as His disciples. Those whom society says are of little worth, Jesus loves and treasures, and so must we!

Food for your Journey

When Jesus raises up a child in his arms, and tells his followers that we must become like children, his point is not about educating children, nor about encouraging the best out of children, as important as that all is.

Jesus' point is far more radical and subversive. Jesus publicly embraces a child with care, which, in itself, was a "lowly" action reserved for women.

Is it a boy or girl? The gender would have made a difference given the cultural norms, but we're not told because it does not matter to Jesus. Jesus commands his disciples to welcome children, all children, which, because children are the lowest rung, means his followers are to welcome everyone, even the last imaginable.

Everyone has a place within God's embrace, which is a drastic reversal of the norms. Jesus radically confronts the existing structures of power and privilege and piety and purity: Jesus (not Caesar Augustus) represents the God of Gods, and children represent Jesus.

We could ask, why was Jesus so attentive and compassionate toward children? He had been a child, a vulnerable, powerless, probably-jeered child.

--Br. Curtis Almquist, "The Man," the Society of Saint John the Evangelist Website. <http://ssje.org>.

Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, the values of our world so often run contrary to Your way. Give me the wisdom and courage I need to stand up for You and Your way, despite the cost. Amen.