



Daily Reflections

August 9, 2016

Scripture

Matthew 18:1-5, 10, 12-14

The disciples approached Jesus and said,

“Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven?”

He called a child over, placed it in their midst, and said,

“Amen, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the Kingdom of heaven.

Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven.

And whoever receives one child such as this in my name receives me.

“See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my heavenly Father.

What is your opinion?

If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them goes astray, will he not leave the ninety-nine in the hills and go in search of the stray?

And if he finds it, amen, I say to you, he rejoices more over it than over the ninety-nine that did not stray. In just the same way, it is not the will of your heavenly Father that one of these little ones be lost.”

Our Scripture Reflection

In the Jewish world of Jesus' day, children were not looked upon as we look upon them today. Rather than being concerned about their children's self-esteem, parents were more concerned with their child's contribution to the farm, fields and flock. Jesus teaches His disciples that they must consider themselves as lowly as little children and live humbly in response. Then and only then, will they be open and trusting of the One Who is greatest of all, their God and Lord.

Food for your Journey

It may sound strange to speak of the relationship between parents and children in terms of hospitality. But it belongs to the center of the Christian message that children are not properties to own and rule over, but gifts to cherish and care for. Our children are our most important guests, who enter into our home, ask for careful attention, stay for a while and then leave to follow their own way. Children are strangers whom we have to get to know. They have their own style, their own rhythm and their own capacities for good and evil. They cannot be explained by looking at their parents.

Many parents question the value of baptism of newborn babies. But one important aspect of early baptism is that, when the parents bring their child to the church, they are reminded that the child is not their own private property, but a gift from God given to a community that is much larger than the immediate family.

--Henri J. M. Nouwen, *Reaching Out* (Doubleday Image, 1985), 81, 83.

Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, teach me the way of humility. May I live and love as You live and love. Amen.