

Childlike Faith

The gospel for this coming Sunday (Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost) is Mark 10:2-16. There are two narratives in this text.

In verses 2-12 we see the Pharisees coming out of Jerusalem to where teaching was teaching. They were not there to listen to his teachings but to try to catch Jesus in a doctrinal miss step. The topic they choose was “divorce.”

The Pharisees attempt to entangle Jesus in a religious controversy. Some (the House of Hillel) thought that divorce was acceptable for any and every reason, even to the point of a man growing tired of his wife. Others (the House of Shammai) taught that divorce was permissible only in the case of infidelity. Jesus responded that it was a matter of hardness of heart (sinfulness) that caused Moses to concede permission for divorce. Jesus teaches that divorce was not God’s plan; it was not serving God’s purposes.

In the midst of this (vv. 14-16), mothers were bringing children to Jesus so that he might touch them. The disciples, once again, are not on the same page as Jesus and they try to shoo away the parents and their children. To say that Jesus was upset, was putting it mildly. He was “*indignant*” (v.14). This meant that he was deeply distressed and displeased.

In verse Jesus goes on to say: “*Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God.*” With a double command, Jesus ordered the disciples to cease their interference. The disciples’ Law was countered with Jesus’ loving Gospel voice, which allows all of us to run to Him, trust Him, depend upon Him, and love Him.

Little children are invited to Jesus, even if they are so young as to need to be carried. We cannot prevent the children from being with Jesus. It is our responsibility as Christian parents and as his Church to make sure that they are brought to him. He gives them faith in the water and Word of Baptism.

The Kingdom of God is the gracious rule and reign of God in the hearts of men for Jesus’ sake.

Whoever you are, to enter the kingdom, you must become as a little child—not in the sense of “innocence” (as if children were sinless) or ignorance, but in simple trust in, and dependence on, the Father’s care.

Prayer: Lord, thank you giving me a faith that trusts you for everything. Help me to continue to look to you for grow in my trust in you as I look forward to a day when I can be with you forever. Amen