
18 Saturday

SATURDAY 19th Week in Ordinary Time

Ezekiel 18: 1-10, 13, 30-32

Ps 50: 12-15, 18-19

Matthew 19: 13-15

In contrast to the challenging teaching Jesus was giving about the kingdom of God and the demands of being a disciple, this section of St Matthew's gospel ends with the low-key incident that is today's gospel reading. Whatever may have been peoples' reaction to His teaching, and to His explanation of the demands of the Law, they at least recognized that here was someone really extraordinary. So they brought their small children to Jesus, asking for His blessing and prayer over them. They recognized that these small children were special, and not only symbolically.

In perhaps typical adult fashion (and of course they were all men), the disciples tried to stop people bringing their children along..... they would be a nuisance, distracting from the "serious" business of Jesus' ministry. But Jesus told them not to do that, but in contrast welcomed the children. For to Him, they were the most ready to grasp what the kingdom of heaven is about. Their straightforward, uncomplicated attitude made them better hearers and learners than their parents.

In today's world, and within the Christian community, there are many divisive issues between people, things that are disputed and discussed. Really to understand our faith, we do need to exercise our minds and judgement. We listen to the teachings of the church, trying to understand and form our consciences. But what's more important is being in touch with God. Like those little children that day, being touched by the hand of Jesus and being blessed by Him is what gives us grace, makes us fit for the kingdom of heaven. For it is to such "little ones" that the Father has revealed the mysteries of the kingdom.