

Saturday of the Nineteenth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Mt 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.

“Children were brought to Jesus that he might lay his hands on them and pray.”

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Today, we are presented a scene to contemplate that is unfortunately, a very real one now-a-days: “Children were brought to Jesus that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples rebuked them” (Mt 19:13). Children are especially loved by Jesus; but we, with our typical and characteristic reasoning of “adult people”, do not let them get close to Jesus and to the Father: —When they grow up, if they wish, they will choose...! What a huge mistake!

The poor ones, that is, those needy, those who have nothing, are the object of a special predilection by the Lord. And children, infants, are indeed very “poor”. They are poor in age; they are poor in formation... They are defenseless. This is why, the Church —our “Mother”— has decided that parents should bring their children as soon as possible to the baptism, so that the Holy Spirit may inhabit their souls and they may join the warmth of the community of believers. This is how it is stated by the Catechism of the Catholic Church as well as by the Code of Canon Law, legislators of a maximum rank of the Church (which, as in any other community, must have its own legislation).

But no! When they are grown up! This way to proceed is a piece of nonsense. Otherwise, we can ask ourselves: —what will this child eat? What his mother will give him without specifying what he would prefer. —Or, what language will the child speak? The same as his parents (in other words, the child will never be able to choose any other language). —Which school will this child attend to? Wherever his parents will decide to take him, without waiting for him to define which studies will

he prefer...

—What did Jesus eat? What his Mother, Mary, gave him. —What language did Jesus speak? His parents'. —What religion did the Infant Jesus learn and practice? That of his parents, Judaism. Afterwards, as an adult, thanks to the formation his parents had given him, He founded a new religion... But, first, that of his parents, naturally.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

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"The great saints worked for the glory of God, but I'm only a little soul; I work simply for His pleasure" (Saint Therese of Lisieux)

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"We must learn to see with a child's heart, with a youthful heart not hampered by prejudices or blinded by interests" (Benedict XVI)

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"By living with the mind of Christ, Christians hasten the coming of the Reign of God, "a kingdom of justice, love, and peace." They do not, for all that, abandon their earthly tasks; faithful to their master, they fulfill them with uprightness, patience, and love." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, n° 2.046)