# Saturday of the Seventh Week in Ordinary Time

**Gospel text (*Mk* 10:13-16):** People were bringing children to Jesus that he might touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this he became indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the Kingdom of God like a child will not enter it." Then he embraced the children and blessed them, placing his hands on them.

***"Let the children come to me"***

Fr. Josep Lluís SOCÍAS i Bruguera
*(Badalona, Barcelona, Spain)*

Today, children are the news. More than ever before, children have a lot to say, even if the word "infant" means "he who does not speak". We can better appreciate that in electronic devices: they know how to switch them on and off, how to use them properly and, even how to teach us, adults, to correctly use them. A noted reporter used to say that, "even if infants do not speak it does not mean they do not think".

In this fragment of Mark's Gospel, we find several considerations: "People were bringing children to Jesus that he might touch them, but the disciples rebuked them" (Mk 10:13). But the Lord, who did not mind relating to everybody, did connect with infants even more so. This is why, when Jesus saw this, he became indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these" (Mk 10:14).

Charity must follow priorities: it begins with those who are the neediest. And, if everybody has the right to approach Jesus, infants are the first ones to enjoy this privilege: "Let the children come to me; do not prevent them" (Mk 10:14).

We should realize, however, that when helping those who are needier, we happen to be the first ones to benefit of it. This is why the Master warns us: "Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it" (Mk 10:15). And, in corresponding to the simplicity and openness of those children, "Then he embraced them and blessed them, placing his hands on them" (Mk 10:16).

We must learn the art of embracing the Kingdom of God. He who is like a child can easily perceive that everything is a gift, a grace. From our smallness we should be open to receive. And, "to receive" God's favor, we must listen and contemplate with "receptive silence". St. Ignatius of Antioch said to the

Ephesians “It is better for a man to be silent and be [a Christian], than to talk and not to be one. (...) He who possesses the word of Jesus, is truly able to hear even His very silence, that he may be perfect, and may both act as he speaks, and be recognized by his silence.’’

## *Thoughts on Today's Gospel*

- “It is easier to become angry than to restrain oneself, it is more fitting to be persistent in punishing our own impatience and pride than to correct the boys. We must be firm but kind, and be patient with them. I give you as a model the charity of Paul which he showed to his new converts.” (Saint John Bosco)

- “From the bosom of his Mother, Jesus accepts to run all the risks of selfishness. Today also children, and unborn children, are threatened by selfishness. Today our individualistic culture also refuses to be fertile; it takes refuge in a permissiveness that levels downwards, although the price of that non-fertility is innocent blood.” (Francis)

- “Remain simple and innocent, and you will be like little children who do not know the evil that destroys man's life.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, nº 2517)