

Lent Day 30
Tuesday March 15, 2016
Colombo, Sri Lanka

Reading: Mark 10.13-16

People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.

Reflection

It is interesting the way we hold things, isn't it? The thing I have only has value, or has more value if less people have it. For example, I would feel really cool and privileged if I owned and drove a Ferrari. Now, suppose I owned and drove a Ferrari, but then noticed my neighbours did too. As long as it was my direct neighbour, I'd feel like we were special. But, if I noticed a lot of people, and people from other neighbourhoods, maybe neighbourhoods that I wouldn't live in, also had Ferrari's — suddenly mine isn't so cool and I don't feel so special anymore. I might even feel like a Ferrari isn't really worth having.

That's basically what's happening with the disciples here. They are insiders. They are on the ground floor of this kingdom movement and they are going to make sure things stay important. In our culture we have a certain perspective on children which these disciples didn't have. Children were like property. It's not that they weren't important or cherished, those things were done differently. Kind of like once upon a time we threatened and spanked our children, now we don't. We still loved them and cherished them, just differently. So when children come the disciples want to keep them away — Jesus is too important; they are too important.

But, when Jesus says the kingdom of God is for everyone, he means it! These children too are being called to enter the kingdom and Jesus is overjoyed that they are coming. The disciples are going to have to, like the religious leaders, get used to the wrong people being welcomed into the kingdom.

Now, you and I, probably, don't try to keep people out of the kingdom of God. We, likely, think everyone is welcome in. But how often do we keep people out by our silence? I know there are times when I should have spoken but decided not to either because I thought they wouldn't be interested or I'd feel foolish talking about Jesus. But we are to be ambassadors — announcers — of the kingdom. We are to, like Jesus, welcome all and sundry and not keep these little ones from him.

Prayer

God of generosity and grace, forgive us for keeping others away from your kingdom. Thank you for the grace that you showed to us in welcoming us in and let us be ambassadors for you.
Amen.