

The Joy of Children

Matthew 19:14-But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. (KJV)

Jesus Christ loves children and identifies children with the Kingdom of heaven. Followers of Jesus Christ hold, cherish and care for children with utmost love. God's Holy Church is filled with joy when an abundance of children is present. Every person was once a small child and benefits from being as a child. (Mt.18:3) Children maintain a certain innocence which adults can constantly learn from.

Mark 9:37-Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me. (KJV)

Children have an innocent view of the world unhampered by learned prejudices. Little children welcomed and filled with love are quick to love and to forgive. God's Holy Church welcomes children at infancy to experience Holy Baptism. The Lord God's love for children extends throughout the birth and growth process. Infant children have the joy to unite with Christ by receiving His Body and Blood.

Luke 1:17-And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. (KJV)

The Lord is mindful of the great responsibility parents have in caring for children. Love for sons and daughters is properly expressed throughout the life cycle. The Church nourishes, strengthens and guides parents through life's stages. Healthy parish communities will enrich the lives of the participating families. The parish priest serves to foster great love for children within the parish.

John 16:21-A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. (KJV)

Great joy exists in a parish when many children are part of the Divine services. Parish leaders have reason to hope when children are active participants in church. Children nourished and raised in the faith become the parish leaders of the future. God's Holy Church is strong and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. (Mt.16:18) The Lord provides the children necessary to sustain the Church through the ages.

Acts 2:39-For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the LORD our God shall call. (KJV)

The Church continues until the Second Coming of the Christ and Final Judgment. The way adults treat children in the present has a bearing on the Final Judgment. Parishes have the responsibility and the opportunity to enrich the lives of children. Joy occurs when every individual innocently experiences Christ as does a child. Grown adults in the world have much to learn from the innocence of children.