



# Child Protection Sunday 2020

24th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

Sunday 13 September 2020



## Homily Notes

This Sunday marks the end of NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION WEEK. We are celebrating it in all our parishes today. It reminds us of the commitment by our Archbishop to make every part of the Perth Archdiocese safe for children and how we all can help to make this happen. We read in the Gospels about the tender love Jesus had for children and how he made them in their simplicity and trustfulness a model for adults in their relationship to God, a model of how we should open ourselves to God's love.

Let us hear again some of the things Jesus did say about children. In Luke, chapter 9 the disciples were arguing about who would be the greatest in the Kingdom of God. Jesus brought a little child beside him and said, "Whoever welcomes this little child welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me, for the least among you is truly the greatest."

In Luke, chapter 8, people were preventing little children from running to Jesus. He replied, "Let the children come to me and do not stop them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." His message was clear, simplicity and trust opens the heart to God. He went on. "Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child, will not enter it."

Again, Jesus spoke of the joy of bringing a child into the world. We read in John chapter 16 "A woman in childbirth is in distress because her time is at hand, but after her child is born she no longer remembers her suffering because of the great joy a child is born into the world. Jesus wants us to trust him that our suffering now can be turned into joy."

Let us not forget the fury in Jesus words if a child is led astray or harmed or, as we recall this week, abused. We read in Matthew chapter 18, If anyone should cause one of these little ones who believe in me to stumble or fall into sin, it would be better for him to be thrown into the depths of the sea with a large millstone around his neck. " Jesus who blessed children when they came to him was outraged that they could be harmed spiritually, physically, sexually or in any way.

We have heard these warnings before and need to respond to the challenge with true commitment.

Today we also thank the safeguarding officers for their constant vigilance and support here and across other parishes. We are grateful to our priests and leaders in the church for their renewed commitment to the safety of the young in our Archdiocese.

This is a time for reflection to see what else may be required by all of us in our work for God's kingdom of love and peace.

We reflect that children all belong to a family whatever difficulty they may be facing. Modern society is not all that kind to families today. They often need the help of other families to cope. Specialist services are needed but the closest to families are other families in the neighbourhood who are ready to help in a non-judgmental way. We need to make our parishes stronger Christian communities and we need to listen to the voices of our young people so we can be united as members of the Body of Christ, the Church. Its lifeblood is the lifeblood of Jesus himself.