

# 14<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

## St. Matthew 11:25-30

Our Lord often referred to children. In this Gospel He says, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants." In another place He says, "unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven," and "let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs." And when He enters Jerusalem on Palm Sunday it is the children who cried out, "Hosanna to the Son of David."

But why do children take such a prominent place in our Lord's teaching, especially why He emphatically and repeatedly says that only those who are like children will enter the Kingdom of Heaven? Today when we place a great deal of emphasis on maturity and knowledge and expertise it is odd to think of the immature and the uninformed and the weak as role models. Maybe it is their utter and unashamed reliance on their mother and father for food and shelter and clothing and love. They are not embarrassed to go to their mother and father for food because they know very well that is where food comes from. They are not ashamed to go to them for a hug because it is natural for their mother and father to give them affection. To become like children, to be infants rather than wise and intelligent, means that we must surrender ourselves completely and unabashedly to God, our Father. To do this is not weak or insipid or cowardly. It is, in fact, a reclamation of our original condition—our condition before the sin of Adam and Eve. It is a return to our place as creature before the creator, as son and daughter before our Father. Who can know what they have made better than the one who made it? Who can love a child more

than their own mother and father?

When our Lord speaks of the wise and intelligent in this Gospel he means the scribes and the Pharisees and all others who reject Him. Their pride means that the significance of Christ's deeds and the presence of God's kingdom is hidden from them. And it is pride that is among the greatest of sins, because it is pride that prevents us from being who we are created to be. Pride means that we don't want to be a son or a daughter. And if we are not a son or a daughter then we have not, in fact, never had, a mother and a father. Because when our Lord speaks of children He means His disciples—those who listen and recognise His significance. Those who are not afraid to admit that they do not know and they not understand it all.