

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY - A - JULY 6, 2014

"I GIVE PRAISE TO YOU, FATHER, LORD OF HEAVEN AND EARTH, FOR ALTHOUGH YOU HAVE HIDDEN THESE THINGS FROM THE WISE AND THE LEARNED YOU HAVE REVEALED THEM TO LITTLE ONES"

ONE THING THAT I HAVE CONCLUDED FROM WATCHING THE NEWS THIS PAST WEEK - CONTRARY TO THE GOOD NEWS OF THE GOSPEL, WHENEVER LITTLE ONES, I.E. CHILDREN APPEAR IN THE DAILY NEWS/TV OR PRINT , IT IS USUALLY GOING TO BE BAD NEWS...

OF COURSE, WE'VE BEEN HEARING ABOUT THE TENS OF THOUSANDS OF CHILDREN STREAMING INTO OUR COUNTRY FROM CENTRAL AMERICA - HONDURAS, GUATEMALA AND EL SALVADOR....

IT IS VERY SAD AND PUTTING AN INCREDIBLE STRAIN ON OUR IMMIGRATION SERVICES -TO SAY THE LEAST...

IT HAS GOTTEN SO BAD THAT THERE ARE PROTESTS AGAINST THESE CHILDREN COMING INTO OUR COUNTRY SOMETIMES WITHOUT A PARENT AND NOW THERE ARE COMPETING DEMONSTRATIONS IN CA - FOR AND AGAINST....

NOT ONLY VERY SAD BUT ALSO A COMPLEX ISSUE

WE HAVE ALSO BEEN HEARING ABOUT THE FATHER WHO LEFT HIS SON ALL DAY IN HIS CAR IN THE HEAT - OVER 100 DEGREES

- OF COURSE, THE TODDLER DIED.....22 MONTHS OLD

THE FATHER CLAIMS HE FORGOT TO TAKE HIS SON TO THE DAYCARE - BUT THERE SEEMS TO BE QUITE A BIT OF EVIDENCE THAT IT WAS DELIBERATE...HARD TO IMAGINE BUT IT SEEMS TO BE TRUE...

*WHEN WE HEAR ABOUT THE LITTLE ONES IN MATTHEW IT IS ALWAYS
GOOD NEWS....*

*BESIDES TODAY'S PASSAGE ABOUT WHAT HAS BEEN REVEALED TO THE
LITTLE ONES - LATER IN THE GOSPEL WE HEAR JESUS INSTRUCTING HIS
DISCIPLES TO "LET THE LITTLE CHILDREN COME TO ME, DO NOT STOP
THEM, FOR IT IS SUCH AS THESE THAT THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
BELONGS"*

*ALSO, LATER IN MATTHEW WE HEAR JESUS TEACHING THAT "UNLESS
YOU CHANGE AND BECOME LIKE CHILDREN, YOU WILL NEVER ENTER
THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN"*

*ALL OF THIS, OF COURSE, GIVES THE LITTLE ONES AND CHILD-LIKE
BEHAVIOR THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE STATUS IN CHRIST'S TEACHING....*

*I'VE NOTICE SOMETHING IN MY OWN LIFE AS I HAVE GOTTEN OLDER....
I NOTICE CHILDREN MORE, APPRECIATE AND ENJOY THEM MORE AS I
GET OLDER....*

*OF COURSE, I ALSO REALIZE THAT I DON'T LIVE IN THE REAL WORLD
WHEN IT COMES TO CHILDREN....*

I'VE NEVER BEEN A PARENT....I'VE NEVER CHANGED A DIAPER....

*SO, IT'S EASY FOR ME TO SOMEWHAT IDOLIZE/ROMANTICIZE CHILDREN,
I SUPPOSE*

*AT THE SAME TIME I ALSO KNOW HOW I'VE GROWN IN APPRECIATION
FOR THE JOB A PARENT DOES -*

THE JOB THAT SO MANY OF YOU ARE DOING AS PARENTS....

YOU MAY TAKE IT FOR GRANTED.....

BUT I NOTICE FROM THE OUTSIDE HOW IMPORTANT AND MAGNIFICENT THE JOB YOU DO IN SO MANY ORDINARY INTERACTIONS AND DECISIONS THAT YOU MAKE WITH AND FOR YOUR CHILDREN.....

HAVING SAID THAT - I HAD A STRIKING EXPERIENCE THE OTHER DAY - I LIKE TO THINK OF IT AS A GRACED MOMENT....

WHEN I WALK TO UD FROM MY HOUSE I WALK BY THE UD CHILD CARE CENTER...

IF I'M REALLY LUCKY AND THE LITTLE ONES ARE OUTSIDE PLAYING IT IS THOROUGHLY ENJOYABLE TO WATCH THESE PRESCHOOLERS.....

AND NOW DURING THE SUMMER WHEN I GO OVER TO THE RECPLEX FOR MY CARDIO WORKOUT IF I'M LUCKY THERE WILL BE ONE OF THE CAMPS OF LITTLE ONES GOING ON AND I CAN OBSERVE THEM A LITTLE AND MARVEL AT THEIR ENERGY, SPONTANEITY AND INTERACTION....

AND RECALL IN AMAZEMENT THAT I WAS LIKE THEM AT ONE TIME - BACK IN THE 1940'S - EARLY 50'S - ISN'T THAT TRULY AMAZING....

ANYWAY - ONE DAY I WAS DRIVING AWAY FROM THE RECPLEX AND THERE WAS A GROUP OF THESE "LITTLE ONES" WITH THE COLLEGE AGE LEADERS COMING TOWARDS THE RECPLEX AS I'M DRIVING AWAY - I LOOK OVER AT THESE AMAZING AND BEAUTIFUL LITTLE ONES - PROBABLY 6-8 YRS OLD WALKING, BRIMMING WITH ENERGY AND EXCITEMENT TOWARDS THE RECPLEX AND THIS IMPULSE JUST CAME OVER ME - TO GENUFLECT - TO GENUFLECT IN FRONT OF THEM.....

NOW WASN'T THAT WEIRD???

OF COURSE, I DIDN'T STOP THE CAR AND GET OUT AND GENUFLECT IN FRONT OF THE-IT HAPPENED SO FAST-SO FLEETING AND A SURPRISE BUT THAT WAS THE IMPULSE THAT CAME OVER ME....

I GUESS THERE ARE SEVERAL POSSIBLE REACTIONS WE COULD HAVE TO SUCH AN EXPERIENCE....

SOME MIGHT SAY I SHOULD LOOK INTO A PSCHYIATRIC EVALUATION....

MAYBE I'M EXPERIENCING THE ONSET OF EARLY DEMENTIA - SOME MIGHT EVEN SAY IT'S NOT EARLY....JUST DEMENTIA

I LIKE TO THINK OF IT AS A GRACED MOMENT - CERTAINLY NOT

SOMETHING THAT CAME FROM ME - MY EGO - NO - IT CLEARLY CAME TO ME - OUT OF THE BLUE - AND IT WAS MORE THAN A THOUGHT -IT WAS AN IMPULSE I FELT THROUGHOUT MY BODY -

AS IF I WAS GENUFLECTING THERE IN THE CAR BEFORE THOSE CHILDREN

I THINK THE MESSAGE WAS CLEAR -

THERE ARE MANY MORE THAN SEVEN SACRAMENTS

AND YOU DON'T NEED TO GO TO CHURCH TO FIND A TABERNACLE....

THERE ARE SACRAMENTS AND TABERNACLES ALL AROUND US

MANIFESTING THE DIVINE....

YOU ARE LOOKING FOR THE DIVINE IN YOUR LIFE?

THE DIVINE SPIRIT IS RIGHT THERE IN FRONT OF YOU - EXPRESSED IN THE BEAUTY, THE VIBRANCY, THE INCREDIBLE POTENTIAL OF THAT

CHILD, THE MIRACLE OF THOSE CHILDREN - SO ORDINARY BUT ALSO SO EXTRAORDINARY -

IT DEPENDS ON WHAT YOUR EYES ARE ABLE TO SEE - EVEN IF IT'S ONLY FOR A FLEETING MOMENT.....

THE TABERNACLE IS SO OFTEN RIGHT THERE IN FRONT OF YOU IF YOU HAVE THE EYES TO SEE IT.....DON'T MISS IT.....

GET ON YOUR KNEES.....

EVEN IF YOU HAVE BAD KNEES AND YOU ARE IN YOUR CAR....

HOW WE AS INDIVIDUALS AND AS A CULTURE TREAT OUR LITTLE ONES, OUR CHILDREN IS INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT....

I WOULD EVEN SAY THAT THE MATURITY OF AN INDIVIDUAL AND THE QUALITY OF A CULTURE DEPENDS ON HOW IT RELATES TO ITS YOUTH....

IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT FOR US ADULTS TO REMEMBER "UNLESS YOU CHANGE AND BECOME LIKE CHILDREN, YOU WILL NEVER ENTER THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN"

EVEN MORE OF A REASON TO TREAT OUR LITTLE ONES WITH CARE AND LEARN FROM THEM.....

AND REMEMBER OUR CHALLENGE TO BECOME MORE "CHILD-LIKE", I.E. MORE TRUSTING AND OPEN-MINDED - A SENSE OF WONDER LIKE THEM - THEN WE ARE ABLE TO NOTICE THE SPIRIT'S GENTLE BUT REAL TOUCH IN OUR LIVES....

SO TODAY, IT SEEMS TO ME, WE COME AWAY WITH A CHALLENGE, A QUESTION....

WHAT MUST I DO TO BECOME MORE LIKE A "LITTLE ONE"???

LET US CONSIDER THAT QUESTION IN A PRAYERFUL MANNER AS WE

PROCEED IN THIS EUCHARIST.....

