

14th Sunday in Ordinary Time: July 5, 2020

St. Vincent De Paul Church, Baltimore

Reflection on the Gospel: *Matthew 11:25-30*

Matthew certainly packs in lot of substance in today's six verse passage. There are basically three separate themes.

1. In the first two verses Jesus praises the Father. Jesus avoids the so-called wise and the learned for the humble. The gift of knowledge provides many benefits, but it also has the potential of blocking the mind to receive what the spirit needs for growth. The apostles, primarily fishermen, were open to the Word of the Jesus. They saw Jesus' gentle nature and his miracles. They believed.

To be childlike is to be open to discover the hidden things of the heart. To a young child everything is a wonderment. Watch a toddler examine a leaf or see herself in the mirror and you are observing their sense of awe.

2. The next verse presents a mystery. We cannot know God the Father in the same way as the Son does. Nor can we know the Son as the Father knows as they are one and divine in nature. But Jesus wishes to reveal the Father to us. What a gift that Jesus shares with us if only we are open to this!

3. The final verses seem especially pertinent to us today. Today our burdens include the isolation and uncertainty caused by the pandemic, partisan divide and civil unrest. We are weary and overwhelmed and Jesus calls us to himself. It does seem problematic when Jesus invites us to take up his yoke. But he does this to share our burdens. He will be walking alongside us. He has not promised that our burdens will be immediately lifted but that we will be given respite.

Our heartache may remain, emotional pain may persist, our concerns may linger. However, Jesus calls us to himself and provides comfort and strength and the gift of abiding peace. When I've been pondering these final verses of this Gospel, I think of the chorus to "Be Not Afraid" —

Be not afraid: I go before you always. Come follow me and I will give you rest.
Amen.

Joan Fulton