

'Let the Children Come to Me'

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CALL TO PRAYER

LEADER: Jesus, the Son of God, entered the world to live as one of us, as a child in Mary's womb. He welcomed children when others would rebuke them and held them up as a sign of the Kingdom of God. As we listen to the Word of God, let our hearts and minds be open with the peace and innocence of childhood.

READING 1: Isaiah 11:1-3, 6

But a shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse, and from his roots a bud shall blossom. The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: a spirit of wisdom and of understanding, a spirit of counsel and of strength, a spirit of knowledge and of fear of the Lord, and his delight shall be the fear of the Lord. Then the wolf shall be a guest of the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; the calf and the young lion shall browse together, with a little child to guide them.

Pause

READING 2: Luke 18:15-17

People were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them, and when the disciples saw this, they rebuked them. Jesus, however, called the children to himself and said, "Let the children come to me and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it."

Silent or Shared Reflection



RESPONSE: Psalm 91:1-4, 9-12, 14-16

(Recite alternately)

You who dwell in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty, say to the Lord, "My refuge and fortress, my God in whom I trust."

God will rescue you from the fowler's snare, from the destroying plague, will shelter you with pinions, spread wings that you may take refuge: God's faithfulness is a protecting shield.

You have the Lord for your refuge, you have made the Most High your stronghold. No evil shall befall you, no affliction come near your tent.

For God commands the angels to guard you in all your ways. With their hands they shall support you, lest you strike your foot against a stone. Whoever clings to me I will deliver; whoever knows my name I will set on high.

All who call upon me I will answer, I will be with them in distress; I will deliver them and give them honor. With length of days I will satisfy them and show them my saving power.

LEADER: Let us pray together.

ALL: Lord God, may we be a refuge for those who come to us for care. Jesus came into the world as a child, and he welcomed children as a sign of the Kingdom of God. May we see in the youngest and most vulnerable patients the face of Jesus, God's child, and gather them into our

arms with love and compassion.

May we be as children in our trust in God's love. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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