

## **Mark 10:14**

**“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.”**

When afflictions visit us, and especially when someone near and dear to us is taken away by death, we poor mortals are generally at a loss. What do we think about this death, this loss? We are tempted to say: *“Why, God do you do this?”*

But who are we to criticize our divine Maker? The apostle says: **“But who are you, O man, to talk back to God?” Romans 9:20** Who are we to tell the Almighty ruler of heaven and earth how he is to govern this world – aren’t we just dust and ashes? Do we know what is for our own good? Do we not often find that we are mistaken in our opinions and judgments? No, my friends, the only correct and proper thing for us to do in such distress is to say with Job: **“The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised.” Job 1:21** For after all, affliction does not take God away from us but rather brings him all the nearer. God wants us to trust in him and firmly believe that his dealings with us are just and right. His way may be painful and hard to bear for the present but will prove beneficial in the end. To strengthen you in this comforting belief let me call your attention to the words of our beloved Savior Jesus Christ, which we find written in **Mark 10:14: “Suffer the little Children to**

**come unto me and forbid them not for of such is the kingdom of God.”**

You know the occasion when the Lord said these blessed words. You have often seen the picture of the Lord Jesus seated in the middle of a group of children of different ages. He is laying his hands upon them and blessing them. It was on this occasion that his disciples reprimanded the parents that brought their children to Jesus. The disciples told the parents to go away with their children and not to trouble Jesus. They could not see what Jesus wanted to do for the children that were brought to him. After all, so thought the disciples, the children could not benefit from his preaching because they were too small to understand as their mental faculties were not developed enough to understand his words. And what are we told of Jesus? He was much displeased at what he saw his disciples doing and said to them: **“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.” Mark 10:14**

We see that Jesus is the greatest friend of children and that his desire is that parents should bring their children to him for a blessing. And it is more than a desire – it is a commandment given to all parents. Children, as well as grown ups, are sinners that are born in sin and in need of Jesus and his salvation. For this same reason Jesus says: **“I am the way and the truth and the**

**life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” John 14:6**  
And we know that we are saved by faith in Jesus: **“Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.” Romans 10:17**

We now ask: what about children who are not old enough to understand what they hear? In his wisdom, God has given us the Sacrament of Holy Baptism whereby children in sin are cleansed and made into a new creature. By the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, he makes children his own and gives to them forgiveness for their sins. He creates saving faith in their hearts and thereby gives them eternal life. From the day that your child was baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Ghost - from that day forward, that child belongs to Jesus and is an heir of his glorious kingdom.

The voice of Jesus will say to you: **“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them,” Mark 10:14** It was the day before yesterday that Jesus came and took the ransomed soul of your child to himself in heaven. He did not want the child to remain any longer in this wicked world of sin and trouble - but rather took his soul away from all pain and misery and placed it into his Paradise. In his heavenly mansions there will be no more death, sorrow, crying or pain - but only glory, happiness and pleasure forevermore.

Now you have a token in heaven by the departure of your dear child. You have been connected with heaven more closely and more intimately than you were before the child's death. Certainly you must know and feel that more now than ever - that heaven is your true and everlasting home. Oh continue then in your baptismal faith so you might be reunited in heaven. Believe in Jesus the Savior who says: **"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die."** John 11:25 May the Lord grant us all his grace to believe his Word and lead godly lives here in time and hereafter in eternity.