

Easter Offering Lent Reflection – Sunday 28 February 2016



Title: Whoever accepts a little child in my name accepts me.
Written by Anne Browse.

Bible Passage: Matthew 18: 2-5

Jesus called a little child to him. He stood the child before the followers. Then he said, 'I tell you the truth. You must change and become like little children. If you don't do this, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. The greatest person in the kingdom of heaven is the one who makes himself humble like this child. Whoever accepts a little child in my name accepts me.'

Reflection

Jesus placed a child in the midst of a group of people and talked about values and priorities.

- Reflect on your aspirations, your hopes and dreams for the children in your community or family.
- Consider the safeguards we put in place to protect the young and vulnerable in our own society.
- Think about how attitudes to children have changed since the days of your own childhood.



Unlike children in our society, Dalit children are not valued. Like many Indian people they live in extreme poverty and are made to work or to scavenge to contribute to the family income. Others discriminate against them because of the occupations which are forced on their parents, such as the dry-scavenging of toilets. They are vulnerable to sexual assault, often by family members or friends. Their future prospects are limited by low educational achievements. Lack of nutrition results in stunting, limited physical growth, whose effects are lifelong. These problems inevitably roll on to future generations.

Hymn reference: StF 693

Beauty for brokenness, hope for despair,
Lord, in your suffering world this is our prayer.
Bread for the children...

Praying with the Church of North India - Children's voice: We are abused, we are unsafe. Protection within the family and vigilance in society is insufficient. Low health status, illiteracy, violence and crime has made us vulnerable. We ask, what does the Lord require of us?

We respond: We ask the same question, as we look at the luxury in which our own children are privileged to grow up, the educational possibilities open to them, the care and the nurture which surrounds them. We pray for justice to come to Dalit children and that they might be protected and given respect and dignity. In the name of Christ. Amen.

These Lent reflections are written to link with the 2016 Easter Offering Dedication Service, used by most circuits in the Methodist Church in Britain during the weeks following Easter. Orders of service and other resources can be found at www.mwib.org.uk