

25B

The other day I came across these amusing short prayers put together by little children.

"Dear God, maybe Cain and Abel would not hate each other so much if they had their own rooms. It works with my brother – sincerely Larry"

"Dear God, we learned at school that Edison made light. But in our R.E. lesson they said that you did it. So I bet he stole your idea. Sincerely, Donna."

Dear God, thank you for the baby brother but what I prayed for was a puppy - Joyce

St Theresa was once asked to put into a sentence what she thought holiness to be. She said, "holiness was a disposition of the heart which makes us humble and childlike in the hands of God, conscious of our own weakness, but confident to the point of boldness in the goodness our Heavenly Father". She must have been inspired by today's gospel passage.

She saw as the surest way to Heaven what she called, 'spiritual childhood'. Just as small children rely exclusively on their parents or guardians, so we should have that same unbounded trust in God. When putting everything into His safe hands, especially things which worry us a lot, there should be no hesitation at all on our part that He will look after us.

Little children don't worry about where the next meal is coming from or whether they will have a bed for the night. Neither do they dwell on the past or fret about the future but live in the present. If we did the same vis-à-vis our Heavenly Father a lot of our worries would dissolve into thin air. Nothing would get to us. Jesus tells us "Do not worry about what you are to eat or drink or wear, or how you look or what people think of you – it is

the pagans of this world who have set their heart on these things".

The first Reading mentions the godless. The problem with them is that they have no Heavenly Father to trust in. Sigmund Freud believed that God is figment of our imagination. God is just our conceptual longing for a heavenly father who doesn't exist. He is an imaginary being we wish were there, to protect us the way our earthly father did when we were children. For him God is like a father for childish adults, so to speak.

Unbelievers often disparage people who believe by trying to undermine their faith and trust in a Heavenly Father. They tell them to grow up and live in the real world. This point is also brought out in the First reading as follows: "let us lie in wait for the religious man or woman since they annoy us".

To shake our faith some people dismissively say that religion is the underlying cause of conflict in our world. St James tells us today that's not true. He says "the wisdom that comes down from above", that is from Our Heavenly father, "makes for peace, is kindly and considerate, is full of compassion and shows itself by doing good".

If we adopt a childlike stance before God, the wisdom which we receive from above will indeed take precedence over our own limited perception of things and set us on the road to authentic holiness.