

## Pastoral Reflection

### Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

For ten weeks this summer I soaked up lessons on living in God's reign from my two year old grandson. What a gift to see through the eyes of wonder, delight, gratitude, and present moment awareness. Matteo often reminded me, "Don't worry Busia.\*" Sometimes he'd reassure me as he was roaring like a lion and I was reacting in fear. (Everyone should know lions know won't hurt their Grandmas.) Sometimes he'd reassure me as I was worried about some future possible trouble that his present moment wisdom knew was a waste of this present moment. "Don't worry Busia." Recently Matteo (aka Dumper) and his Dziaja\* (aka Scooper) were sweeping up dirt from our camper floor and dumping it in the trash can. Scooper got excited and accidentally dumped. Scooper apologized to Dumper for doing his job. Matteo responded. "That's OK Dziaja. It happens sometimes."

Matteo waves hello and good-bye to the birds he sees, reminding me that the plants and animals are our sisters and brothers. In contrast to the disciples vying for status, Matteo knows we are family with all of creation. We are all part of the circle. This living in God's reign.

Just as Matteo, so fresh from God, knows the heart of God, the same is true of all the world's children. May we nurture the children in our families, our neighborhoods and our world, and advocate for the food, shelter, health, education and peace they need, so that their gifts can flourish for the good of all.

Madonna Kuciejczyk-Kernan

\*Busia is the Polish affectionate term for Grandma

\*Dziaja is the Polish affectionate term for Grandpa

My husband Tom had the following insight about this reading.

Jesus is trying to get his disciples to grasp how inverted is reality compared to how we tend to see things with our ego eyes. In the beginning of this Gospel we hear the One carrying all of creation into fullness say that he's going to be put to death, to be seemingly destroyed. But then in His resurrection it will be revealed that He and His way have prevailed. As the

story continues Jesus counters their ego assertion of self- importance, teaching them that it's upside-down, inside-out, or totally backwards from what they're thinking. First you have to serve everyone else. The child is one without power, importance, or rank. Jesus is teaching them that that is how he will come to them and not just him but the One who sent him.

So how does this teaching apply to us and our lives? It tells us that when we follow our ego impulses toward self-importance above others, we head in the mistaken direction; the ultimate lasting value of our lives simply has nothing to do with that. God comes to us, and we come into our fullness, by letting that go to focus on simply acting justly, loving tenderly, and walking humbly.

Tom Kuciejczyk-Kernan