



Third Sunday in Easter

Protecting Children

Matthew 18:2-6

At that time the disciples approached Jesus and said, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" He called a child over, placed it in their midst, and said, "Amen, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever receives one child such as this in my name receives me."

April Is Child Abuse Protection Month

Matthew 18:2-6

The Catholic Church is committed to ensuring the safety of children and young people and providing pastoral outreach to victims and survivors of sexual abuse by clergy. The Church's mission to protect and heal stems from the Gospel: the life and teachings of Jesus Christ provide us with the perfect foundation for our efforts to create safe environments for children. Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these" (Mt 19:14).

"We remain ever vigilant in the protection of children and the outreach to those most harmed by sexual abuse. The Church cannot become complacent with what has been accomplished."

— Former USCCB President Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz, 2015 Annual Report on the Implementation of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People

For more information and resources on preventing child abuse in your community, visit <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth-protection/child-abuse-prevention-month.cfm>.

A Prayer for Healing for Victims of Abuse

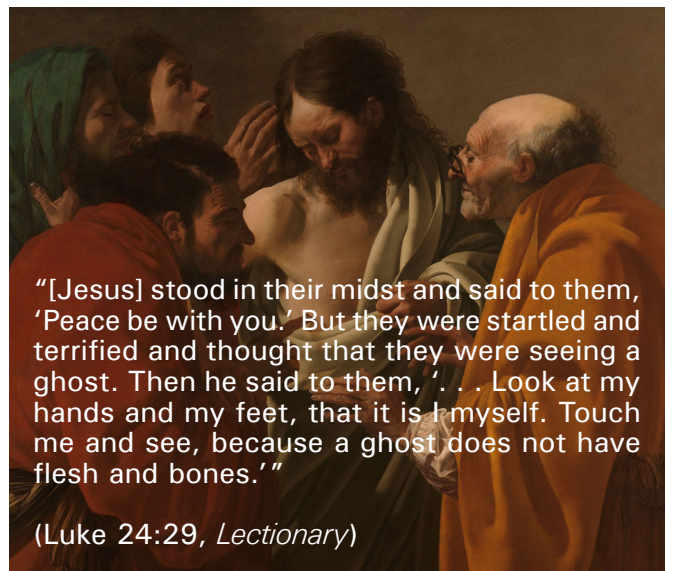
God of endless love, ever caring, ever strong, always present, always just: You gave your only Son to save us by his Blood on the Cross.

Gentle Jesus, shepherd of peace, join to your own suffering the pain of all who have been hurt in body, mind, and spirit by those who betrayed the trust placed in them.

Hear the cries of our brothers and sisters who have been gravely harmed, and the cries of those who love them. Soothe their restless hearts with hope, steady their shaken spirits with faith. Grant them justice for their cause, enlightened by your truth.

Holy Spirit, comforter of hearts, heal your people's wounds and transform brokenness into wholeness. Grant us the courage and wisdom, humility and grace, to act with justice. Breathe wisdom into our prayers and labors. Grant that all harmed by abuse may find peace in justice. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

Amen.



"[Jesus] stood in their midst and said to them, 'Peace be with you.' But they were startled and terrified and thought that they were seeing a ghost. Then he said to them, '... Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones.'"

(Luke 24:29, *Lectionary*)



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