

Speaking of Jesus Christ as a man, perhaps there is not any one trait in his character so remarkable or so prominent as his singular fondness for young children. And there is consolation in this example, when the cold hearted philosopher, wrapt in the fancied dignity of apathy, would ridicule us for similar attachments. To listen with intense pleasure to the lisping prattle and, not unfrequently, the deeply interesting questions of innocent children, may appear beneath the dignity of *mighty man*, who prides himself on being the father of science and of letters; but, certainly, to feel high delight and deep interest in such occupations, was not inconsistent with the dignity of the MIGHTY GOD, the EVERLASTING FATHER.

The above cited passage from St. Mark's Gospel is certainly a most striking instance of this remarkable trait in the human character of Jesus Christ, and most beautifully does our Church apply it in the exhortation immediately following, which we shall presently lay before our readers.

In the 18th of St. Matthew's Gospel, we find our Lord declaring, *Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth ME.* And he mentions it as a heinous crime to *offend*, that is, to throw any stumbling block or impediment in their way, to prevent their access to Him—*whoso shall offend one of these little ones it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were drowned in the depths of the sea.* In the 10th verse of the same chapter, he represents children as the peculiar objects of the care of guardian angels—*Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, that in Heaven THEIR ANGELS do always behold the face of my Father.* In the 14th verse, he declares they are the especial objects of God's parental care—*It is not the will of your Father which is in Heaven that one of these little ones should perish.*

At our blessed Redeemer's last appearance in the temple, previous to his sacrifice of himself on the cross, his gracious ear was delighted, and his benevolent heart was affected by the hosannas of lisping childhood; and when the haughty and envious Scribes and Pharisees urged him to silence these humble offerings of adoration, he reminded them that David had prophesied of this very event, when he exclaimed, in the 8th Psalm, *Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise.*

Not did this tender regard, which so strongly marked his character throughout life, die with him on the cross, nor was it left in his grave. We find recorded, in the last chapter of St. John's Gospel, a very pathetic instance of this singular affection subsequent to his Resurrection. Addressing himself to Simon Peter, he demanded, with affectionate earnestness, *Simon, son of Jonas! lovest thou me more than these?* And when that apostle, in reply to this pathetic question, appealed to his divine Master's omniscience; our Lord, fully convinced of his sincerity, immediately pointed out a method by which he might,