

Reflection for Children's Sunday
November 22, 2020

Theme: How are the Children (in the time of pandemic)?
Scriptures: Matthew 18: 2-6, 10

Pacey: Good morning everyone. I am Pacey. I live in Swift Current with my parents, little sister Tenley, and my cat Mika. I'm in Grade 5 and go to Ecole Centennial School. I do dance lessons and learning to play the ukelele. I am happy to be living here in Canada because it is a peaceful country.

In the earlier part of the year 2020, COVID 19 started as you all know. In March, the school was closed. I missed my friends and teachers at school, so much. Visiting my family and friends, especially my grandma and Papa was not encouraged, in order to help prevent the spread of the virus. Last summer was never the same in our city, we couldn't have our dance competitions, recitals were cancelled, and there was no travelling for vacations.

Thankfully, since September, I was able to come back to school. We have to wear a mask in the hallways and on the bus, wash our hands often, and sanitize always, but I am glad to be back safe and healthy. It is great to know also that my family and friends are the same.

Around the world, kids like me, are in different conditions at this time of the pandemic.

Jackie: Pacey was right, around the world, children like her, are in different conditions at this time, due to COVID 19.

The "Save the Children" Fund based in the United Kingdom, published a poem on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4cOBUXT7PxQ> that was created by combining the words from children coming from different countries all over the world on their experiences of COVID 19. The title of the said poem was "*A Global Coronavirus Poem, Written by Children Around the World Under Lockdown.*" It was published in June, but unfortunately, what it says, is still true in November of 2020. I would like to read most parts of it to you this morning:

*The playgrounds are asking about us
There are no classes, no schools, no churches
No guests, no visitors, no parks, no friends, no peace of mind
Empty and sad streets.*

*Ramadan came and we could not go to the Mosques
 The outside world is silent
 I'm afraid that my family and friends will get sick
 I'm scared it will get to my grandparent's house and the door will be open.*

*Before, I would say to everyone "I want to be alone."
 But today, I want to be next to you
 I miss sharing the fun times and it makes me sad
 I miss being with my best friend, I miss her hugs*

*I grew tired of reading the same books
 Oh! how I missed my freedom, my freedom to be a child
 To just run and play*

*Time is becoming timeless
 Seconds, minutes, months are flying
 I want it to stop
 We are afraid, yet we are fearless*

This poem conveys, among other things, the reality for children in our present time:

1. Many children are not able to go back to school. Some of them are doing either distance or remote learning, or using modules at home, or online classes and facing the challenges of technology, weak or no wifi connection at all, and the incapability to buy or own a computer, tablet, or smartphone as a tool for learning.
2. Many parents are able to provide for the basic needs of their children which are food, shelter, and clothing, despite this crisis. Sadly though, a lot of kids go to sleep with empty stomachs - food is scarce; others have no safe place to stay in. Their parents lost their jobs or closed their small family business and have no means to provide for their children's needs.
3. Being safe and healthy is a priority at this time for all ages. However, millions of children from across the globe don't have access to health care when they get sick, and also, they have no protection from abuse and violence around them.

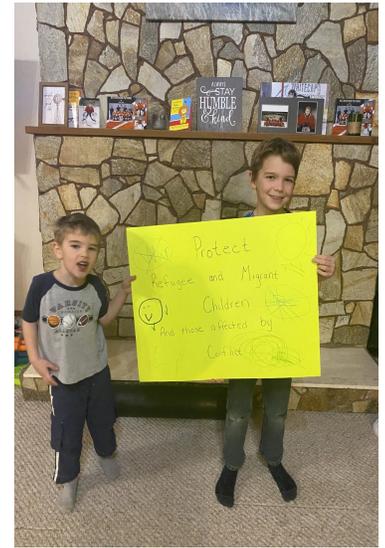
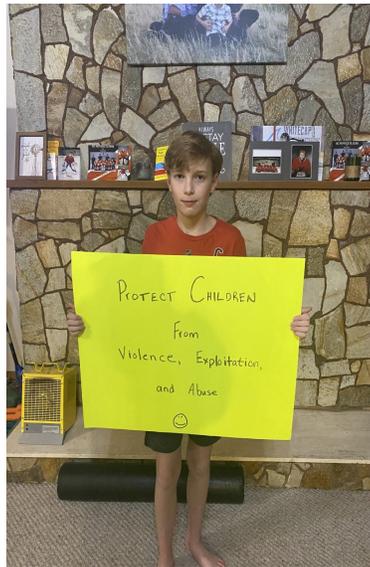
4. According to studies, related to the effect of the pandemic on children's mental health, they are also "*experiencing worry, anxiety, and fear, and this can include the types of fears that are very similar to those experienced by adults, such as a fear of dying, a fear of their relatives dying, or a fear of what it means to receive medical treatment.*"

Jesus said in Matthew chapter 18 that when the angels in heaven look down, they see the face of God in the children. He is appealing for us to not let the children be in pain, and in hardship, for they are the greatest in God's realm.

The UNICEF calls for a Global action to protect the children from the impact of the Corona Virus. Our Sunday School Children would like to show and tell you through their posters and artworks, what this "Call for Action" tells us: (PowerPoint slides of the Sunday School children will be shown on the screen)

1. Keep children healthy and well-nourished.
2. Reach children with water, sanitation, and hygiene.
3. Keep children learning.
4. Support families to cover their needs and care for their children.
5. Protect children from violence, exploitation, and abuse.
6. Protect refugee and migrant children, and those affected by conflict.





Let us go back, and allow me to continue reading the poem that I started sharing earlier:

*We've looked in our hearts and kindness, we've found
Thank you for your time, your work and for your love*

*I am happy to have more time with my mum
I draw pictures, I play and do homework
We've had social distancing picnics, social distancing walks
Social distancing hugs and social distancing talks*

*I dream of the day when masks aren't needed
I'll go to the park to skate
I'll play football outside and dance with no shame*

*The fog and the darkness, they won't win
The sun is waiting, dreaming, smiling
All this will pass, we will be fine
We will see you soon
Join me, give me your hand and let's face this
Because together, we are stronger*

In the Gospels, we are encouraged by Jesus through his parables and teachings, to notice those who are in need, to have a heart of compassion, and to live a life of love

that includes others. In these challenging times for all, as we try to do our part in showing love and care to everyone, may we not forget to include the children.

Works Cited

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