

*maranatha*

Reflections

# *The Innocents*

*What on earth are We  
doing to our Children?*



*Jesus says "anyone who welcomes one  
little child like this in my name,  
welcomes me". (Matt. 18.5)*

They come  
as gift  
beyond all price  
small, weak  
defenceless  
and alone.  
They come  
each known  
and named  
and loved  
by You.  
They come,  
each special,  
into the place  
of safety  
to be nurtured  
protected  
and prepared  
for the next stage  
of their journey  
when, though separate  
they still remain  
dependent,  
vulnerable,  
crying out  
for care  
support and  
love.  
You,  
who made them  
entrust them  
to us  
in all  
our human frailty  
placing them  
directly  
into our hands.  
You hold us  
accountable  
for each  
precious life,  
responsible  
for these  
Your little ones  
made carefully  
in Your image,  
reflecting  
Your beauty  
Your divinity  
Your glory.  
And in their coming  
into our midst  
they feel and know  
the warmth  
or coldness  
of our welcome,  
the peace  
or tension

of our response,  
embracing  
the joy and love  
and tenderness  
or are repelled  
by the strange  
chilling insecurity  
rejection  
and neglect.  
And in those  
early days  
and years  
a high drama  
is being  
played out.  
The imprinted  
images and sounds  
and words  
will remain  
deeply held  
in memory  
over all  
the coming years,  
the happiness, the pain  
the trauma and delight.  
And we -  
are we aware  
of the blessings  
we can give  
and injuries  
inflict?  
Do we see  
the fierce battle  
which soon rages  
for the heart  
and mind  
and soul  
of each of these  
Your little ones?  
Are we blind  
to the dark wild jungle  
through which  
they will walk,  
surrounding them  
ever ready  
to corrupt  
abuse,  
exploit,  
consume?  
Do we know  
the seeds  
now sown  
in fertile  
minds and hearts  
will bring forth fruits  
of blessing  
or destruction?

Do we care  
that the marks  
now being imprinted  
in the soft clay  
of innocent lives  
may in truth  
be the vicious wounds  
of a cruel, godless world  
inflicted before  
our very eyes?  
Is it nothing  
to us  
that soon or late  
a wild, ferocious harvest  
will be reaped  
and that  
its agony, violence,  
corruption and rottenness  
will be placed at our door?  
- attributed to us?  
Do we imagine  
that we will not  
be held responsible  
for the trail  
of misery and suffering  
of the innocents?  
Can we deceive ourselves  
that a loving God  
stands by uncaring?  
Can we turn away  
from the truth  
that ultimately,  
inevitably  
we will each have  
to give account  
of ourselves  
and each face  
the judgement of  
almighty God?  
And then the question  
will surely be put:  
'Why  
as I came to you  
in these  
my little ones,  
crying out  
for food  
and nourishment,  
why  
did you feed me  
poison?  
Why?'

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© The Maranatha Community,  
102 Irlam Road, Flixton, Manchester M41 6JT  
Tel: 0161 748 4858  
www.maranathacommunity.org.uk  
info@maranathacommunity.org.uk