

KIT @ KIPPAX

Staying Connected while Physically Distant

Tuesday 23 June 2020

Today's Gospel Matt: 7: 6, 12-14

You are the Light of the World

A few years ago at the Seattle Special Olympics, nine contestants, all physically or mentally disabled, assembled at the starting line for the 100-yard dash. At the gun, they all started out, not exactly in a dash, but with a relish to run the race to the finish and win.

All, that is, except one boy who stumbled on the asphalt, tumbled over a couple of times and began to cry. The other eight heard the boy cry. They slowed down and looked back. They all turned around and went back. Every one of them.

One girl with Down's Syndrome bent down and kissed him and said, "This will make it better." All nine linked arms and walked across the finish line together.

Everyone in the stadium stood, and the cheering went on for several minutes. People who were there are still telling the story. Why? Because deep down we know this one thing: What matters in this life is more than winning for ourselves.

What truly matters in this life is helping others win, even if it means slowing down and changing our course.

"A CANDLE LOSES NOTHING BY LIGHTING ANOTHER CANDLE".

This beautiful story appeared in COMPACT February 2005. It was a contribution from a parishioner. Today it is submitted by Pauline Greig.

Addendum to this story:

Origins: The story is more true than not, although its primary point has been grossly exaggerated. According to folks at the Special Olympics Washington office, the incident happened at a 1976 track and field event held in Spokane, Washington. A contestant did take a tumble, and one or two of the other athletes turned back to help the fallen one, culminating in their crossing the finish line together, but it was only one or two, not everyone in the event. The others continued to run their race.



**GOD UPHOLDS HIS CITY FOR EVER.
PSALM 47:9**

The story is thus not about an entire class of "special people" who spontaneously tossed aside their own dreams of going for gold in favour of helping a fallen competitor, but rather one about a couple of individuals who chose to go to the aid of another contestant.

Unfortunately, this tale as it is now being told helps further a stereotype that deficiencies in intelligence are compensated for by unfailingly sweet natures and a way of looking at the world in childlike wonder. Special Olympians train long and hard for their events and are every bit as committed as athletes who compete in any other athletic endeavours. The Special Olympics are not a casual get-together organized to give less fortunate members of the community a day to socialize and perhaps run in a foot race or two. They're highly organized sporting events taken very seriously by all involved, with each competitor striving to do his best. It's about trying. And succeeding.

The Special Olympics oath is....

**"LET ME WIN. BUT IF I CANNOT WIN,
LET ME BE BRAVE IN THE ATTEMPT."**

<https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/special-olympics-linked-arms-race-finish/>

*That which is Christ-like within us
shall be crucified.
It shall suffer and be broken.
And that which is Christ-like within
us shall rise up.
It shall love and create.*

A Common Prayer – Michael Leunig