

Sunday Sermon July 5, 2026

We hear some of the marvelous wisdom of Jesus in today's Gospel. It's a little prayer, where he says: "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants." What has been hidden from the wise and intelligent has been revealed to children...

I know a man who is a brilliant scientist. He is a university professor, and he knows more about Lake Superior than just about anyone else in the world.

Each spring he and his team deploy about a dozen buoys around the lake. They are outfitted to collect data on temperature, turbidity, currents and storms. He deploys a torpedo-like submersible drone that cruises the depths and rises to the surface to transmit for several months each year.

Back in his office he has gigabytes of data in his computer. Ice cover, lake levels, currents and temperatures. He has been studying the lake for decades, and he and his colleagues learn more about this great lake each and every year.

They seek to uncover the mysteries hidden in the depths. But he will tell you that the more they learn, the more they discover, the more they realize how little they know and that draws them further into the mystery.

One hot August afternoon I was walking along the shore, and I noticed the professor sitting on a bench, looking out at the vast, sun-kissed, beautiful expanse of the lake. He had a pleasant smile on his face as he drank it all in.

He was watching a little boy play in the waves. His grandson. The little boy was filled with delight, running and jumping into the waves as they crashed into the shore. Tumbling and laughing, the waves would knock him down, and he'd get up and run toward them again. The professor watched him with peaceful contentment.

I paused and reflected on the scene. The brilliant scientist who knows more about this lake than perhaps anyone else in the world, and this little boy jumping in her waves, delighting in the refreshing coolness of her majesty.

I think this might be what Jesus is getting at with his saying about the mysteries being revealed to children.

There is an awful lot that we can learn and know about God and the ways of God. We can study scripture, church history and the lives of the saints. We can plumb the depths of theology and learn from brilliant theologians what concepts like being “eternally begotten of the Father” and “true God from true God” mean.

But the more we learn and understand, the more we are drawn into the mystery, like the scientist studying the Great Lake. So complex, so much to know, and yet really understanding and appreciating her can be as simple as splashing in the waves. Both the scientist and his grandson get it. Both are drawn into, and transformed by, the mystery.

I have many books about God on my shelves. Books are good, informative, and inspiring. I learn a lot from those books. But I have learned a lot about God by praying with someone who’s ill, listening to someone who was grieving, being forgiven by someone I hurt.

I have experienced God in deep and profound ways singing songs around a campfire, doing a craft with Nora at Messy Church, watching dolphins play in the waves, seeing a little child light up when told how precious she is in God’s sight, saying prayers of thanks at the end of the day.

With open eyes, mind and heart, one can learn a lot about God and the ways of God, and that learning reveals how much more there is to the mystery.

What little children remind us is that we have to take off our shoes and jump in the waves. That knowing and loving God comes down to the simple things: being kind and gentle, caring, grateful and generous, compassionate, understanding and forgiving, and always, always loving one another. Simple things, even if they are not always easy.

Among all the theology books that occupy my office shelves, there’s a little book by Robert Fulghum that contains some wisdom. It’s entitled: “All I really need to know I learned in Kindergarten.” It begins with this:

“ALL I REALLY NEED TO KNOW about how to live and what to do and how to be I learned in kindergarten. Wisdom was not at the top of the graduate-school mountain, but there in the sandpile at Sunday School. These are the things I learned:

Share everything.

Play fair.

Don't hit people.

Put things back where you found them.

Clean up your own mess.

Don't take things that aren't yours.

Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody.

Wash your hands before you eat.

Flush.

Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you.

Live a balanced life—learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some.

Take a nap every afternoon.

When you go out into the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands, and stick together.

Wonder. Remember the little seed in the Styrofoam cup: The roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows how or why, but we are all like that.

Goldfish and hamsters and white mice and even the little seed in the Styrofoam cup—they all die. So do we.

And then remember the Dick-and-Jane books and the first word you learned—the biggest word of all—LOOK.”

Some wisdom from Robert Fulghum. Mirrors what Jesus is telling us about approaching God, approaching our faith, with the eyes, mind and heart of a child.

I'll conclude with a little piece from Br. Kieth of the Society of St. John the Evangelist. He wrote about the word “notice” - notice

He said: “No one has ever seen God, but we can witness love’s movements. Think of hearing leaves rustling in the wind, or seeing gravity pull an apple from a tree to the earth. We cannot directly observe the forces of wind and gravity, but we can notice their effects. God is made visible in the world through love and through ordinary, imperfect people’s choices to say ‘yes’ to love.”

May it be so - Amen