Sermon: Two issues in this reading:

[1] **Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them** (Mark 10.14) Who are the little ones today?

The little ones represent those who would seem last in the eyes of society.

Today - less likely to be children! More likely - those in rest-homes, mentally ill, refugees, beneficiaries.

TEXT is saying that though such people do not fit in very well in our society, they have a place in Kingdom of God.

This connects with what James had to say about welcoming not just the rich.

To those whose health, wealth, intelligence and social standing are good, this can come as a shock. Why do we strive so hard if there is no extra benefit?

[2] **Whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it.** (Mark 10. 15)

What is the difference between a childish faith and a childlike faith?

There is some evidence that someone who went to Sunday School as a child is *less* likely to start attending church as an adult than one who never went to Sunday School!
Many adults reject the faith because their Sunday School faith does not stand up to modern adult conditions. Their faith got stuck as a childish faith and never developed or matured as it should.

This is quite different from a child-like faith which does not demand all the answers before acceptance, but comes with humility before the unknowable.

At our AGM it might seem that the important people are those whose names are mentioned, and that they have a special place in the parish. Our reading tells us this is not so – all are important, all have a place both in this parish, and more importantly in K/G. May God help the Parish Council to remember!