

**Kids help Kids (18 June 2023)**  
**Meditation on Matthew 25:40**

*"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' (Matt 25:40)*

Many people in Germany are worried about their own future. We are still doing reasonably well, but we may soon have to do without because we can afford less. We are now thinking about how we can save enough so that it will last longer for us. For us!

Our sermon text is a teaching that Jesus gives his disciples as his time with them is coming to an end. It's obviously a message he wants them to remember. This is what Jesus tells his disciples: "As you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you did it to me." (Matthew 25:40)

In their last days together, Jesus explains to his disciples what is important in his kingdom, namely helpfulness and mercy. Jesus is saying that whenever we help someone in need – whether it is giving a hungry person something to eat, or giving a drink to a thirsty person, or being welcoming to a stranger, or looking after someone who is sick, or visiting someone in prison – whenever we do this, we are taking our place in God's kingdom.

But what is a "little brother" or a "little sister" anyway? These are people on the margins whom we have lost sight of and whom we no longer see. They're people who are hungry and thirsty and poor and can't keep up. They are strangers who do not connect with our groups; they are sick and helpless or even in prison. Or they are judged by us for what they are and do. The Bible is full of stories in which Jesus meets these people.

Jesus stands with these people. He brings them out of anonymity when he says: "What you do for these people, you do for me!" That means that if we take care of other people and help them, then we meet Jesus. This is an important message that we absolutely need to hear today.

Now imagine Jesus standing among people in a South African township. In Soweto there are many people who are affected by HIV and Aids. In many families, the parents have died, leaving children not only struggling with the loss of their parents and having to fend for themselves, but also with the stigma attached to Aids patients. These children are left alone and marginalized by society. Here in Soweto, we hear the words of Jesus loud and clear: "As you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you did it to me."

Twenty years ago, the words of Jesus inspired a woman to do something. She set up Ikageng Itireleng to help the many children and young people in Soweto who are left to fend for themselves without the support of parents. The message that the staff of Ikageng convey to the children is "You are not alone!". There are food parcels so they won't go hungry; there is a support network of caring people; there is psycho-social help in support groups; and there is the chance to improve one's own situation in the long term through education.

"What would Jesus do?" That is the question we should ask ourselves. Jesus showed us how to do this. Let us try to see Jesus in all people who need help. He doesn't leave us alone – we can now show "You are not alone!"