

Homily Christmas Day, 2025

'You are my child and I am your Father.'

I so want this homily to be uplifting and inspiring befitting of Christmas Day.

We all have our Christmas Day Meal preferences and there are things that we don't like. I, for example, as a child hated Brussel sprouts but as an adult I have grown to love them, if they are not over cooked. Today's Gospel of the genealogy of Jesus was not one of my favourites, a long boring list of names of ancestors of Jesus' line. However, after prayerful reflection I began to understand the richness of the message of this 'list'. The passage is the genealogy of a broken family, a messy family. Even some of its greatest figures were 'messed up'. Abraham doubted God and had a child by his concubine. King David was an adulterer who eventually committed murder and tried to cover it up. Tamar, Judah's daughter-in-law cleverly secured her lineage by tricking Judah into impregnating her. A broke family indeed and a broken humanity who needed a Saviour.

Most of you will know that I considered my Mum a very wise woman. She would always tell us, wherever we were going, 'Remember who you are and whose you are.' She was reminding us not only of the responsibility we had to the Murphy family but especially that we are 'Children of God, made in The Father's image and likeness.' I sometimes look out at communities as they gather for liturgical celebrations and I see those very children of God, saints but I also see that some are carrying heavy burdens: addiction; broken relationships; illness; family problems; financial difficulties etc. We are all broken in some ways. If we were brutally honest, we all need a Saviour.

Recalling that Gospel passage we see Jesus asking the disciples to cross to the other side of the lake and a storm gathers, tossing the boat this way and that. Some of the disciples are sea-sick some fearful, others doubting and yet again others stress-filled and cowering in the bowels of the small vessel. That boat is much like humanity today, torn this way and that, seeking, in vain, happiness in all sorts of vanities, a humanity in need of a Saviour.

As you visit the crib in church this Christmas Day, or as you gaze on one at home, consider the reality of the extreme poverty before you. The stable stinks, it is cold and only fit for animals – it is a farmyard barn. Yet into this awful poverty and 'messiness' enters the Saviour of the world. Our sometimes aching and heavy hearts can reflect the Bethlehem stable. Jesus today asks us to allow him to enter the inn our 'messy' hearts as our Saviour. He simply wants to say to us, 'Remember **who you are** and **whose you are** - you are a child of God and even in your 'messiness' you are made in The Father's image and likeness. TODAY a Saviour is born for YOU.

How stunningly beautiful is that!