

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WANT SO MUCH IN YOUR LIFE THAT YOU WOULD GIVE AWAY ONE OF YOUR CHILDREN SO THAT YOU COULD HAVE IT? THINK ABOUT THAT.

WOULD YOU SACRIFICE ONE OF YOUR CHILDREN SO THAT YOU COULD GET SOMETHING? YOU FIND SUCH A THOUGHT AWFUL BEYOND IMAGINING. YET THAT IS WHAT GOD DID. HE WANTS US TO KNOW HOW MUCH HE LOVES US. THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT HE DID.

ST. PAUL TELLS US THAT “GOD LOVES US SO MUCH THAT HE WAS GENEROUS WITH HIS MERCY.

BECAUSE IT IS BY GRACE THAT WE HAVE BEEN SAVED: NOT BY ANYTHING OF OUR OWN, BUT BY A GIFT FROM GOD”. AND THAT GIFT IS JESUS, HIS SON. “THAT WAS TO SHOW US HOW INFINITELY RICH HE IS IN HIS LOVE FOR US.”

GOD GAVE ME THE GREAT GIFT OF HIS SON, WHO CAME INTO OUR WORLD FOR ONLY ONE REASON: HE CAME TO DIE IN ORDER TO PROVE HOW MUCH HE LOVES ME.

I HAVE AN IMAGE IN MY HEAD THAT WILL NEVER LEAVE ME. OUR SISTER SUFFERED A BRAIN HAEMORRAGE AND WAS ON LIFE-SUPPORT. WE SPENT MANY DAYS AT HER BEDSIDE WAITING TO SEE WHAT WOULD HAPPEN. THE TIME CAME WHEN SHE WAS DECLARED BRAIN DEAD AND LIFE SUPPORT WAS TO BE TURNED OFF. DAD PRAYED IN DESPERATION: TAKE ME, AND SPARE HER.

THAT IS MY IMAGE OF A FATHER'S LOVE FOR HIS CHILD. THAT IS THE IMAGE OF GOD'S LOVE FOR ME IN HIS SON JESUS DYING IN MY PLACE.

THAT IS THE GENEROSITY OF GOD'S GIFT, HIS GENEROSITY OF MERCY, THE RICHNESS OF HIS GRACE TOWARD ME.

THIS IS WHY IT IS SO IMPORTANT FOR US TO GET ALL THIS “REDEMPTION TALK” INTO A HUMAN CONTEXT. TO GET IT FROM OUR HEAD INTO OUR HEART. TO REALISE IN A REAL LIFE SITUATION WHAT IT IS THAT GOD HAS DONE FOR ME.

AND WHAT, THEN, SHOULD I DO? HOW CAN I SHOW ANY KIND OF RECOGNITION AND AWARENESS OF WHAT GOD HAS DONE FOR ME? ST. PAUL PUTS IT VERY SUCCINCTLY: LIVE THE GOOD LIFE AS FROM THE BEGINNING HE HAS MEANT US TO LIVE IT.