Homily by Fr Peter 2012-04-29.pdf

IS THERE ANYTHING THAT COULD STOP YOU FROM LOVING AND CARING ABOUT YOUR CHILDREN? NO MATTER HOW LOVING THEY MAY BE TOWARDS YOU, HOW MUCH DISAPPOINTMENT THEY MAY HAVE GIVEN YOU, COULD YOU EVER STOP REALLY LOVING THEM? DEEP IN YOUR HEART IS THERE ANYTHING THAT YOU WOULD NOT WISH FOR THE BEST FOR YOUR CHILDREN?

FOR MOST, THAT IS NOT A VERY CHALLENGING THOUGHT. IT IS BOTH NATURAL AND EXPECTED.

HOLD ON TO THOSE THOUGHTS AND IMAGES.

NOW THINK ABOUT HOW YOU RESPOND TO GOD.

WE ARE TOLD IN GOD'S WORD TO US TODAY THAT IS EXACTLY THE SAME RELATIONSHIP GOD HAS WITH EACH ONE OF US: " THINK OF THE LOVE THAT THE FATHER HAS LAVISHED UPON US, BY LETTING US BE CALLED GOD'S CHILDREN; AND THAT IS WHAT WE ARE." WHAT A RADICAL, AMAZING STATEMENT! HOW AWESOME THAT WE ARE

CHILDREN OF THE ETERNAL, ALMIGHTY GOD. HOW EXTRAORDINARY THAT THE CREATOR OF THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE IS MY DAD!

TO PARAPHRASE JOHN: THINK OF THE LOVE THAT MY DAD HAS LAVISHED UPON ME BECAUSE I AM HIS CHILD.

BEING HIS DAUGHTER, HIS SON, IS A REALITY THAT GOD WANTS EACH OF US TO KNOW, NOT JUST IN OUR HEADS, BUT TO EXPERIENCE EMOTIONALLY. EVEN WHEN, AS ALL CHILDREN DO, WE DON'T FEEL PARTICULARLY LOVED, WE CAN RELY ON HIS COMMITTED, CARING AND ACCEPTING LOVE. AS THE PSALMIST SAYS TO US TODAY: "THIS IS THE WORK OF THE LORD, A MARVEL IN OUR EYES." IT IS COMPLETELY INDEPENDENT OF US OR OUR FEELING WORTHY OF SUCH LOVE. IT IS THE REALITY OF GOD TOWARDS ME.

THIS IS EXPLAINED TO US IN JESUS/GOD BEING OUR GOOD SHEPHERD. A SHEPHERD WHO LOVES AND CARES SO MUCH AS TO DIE FOR THOSE IN HIS CARE.

JESUS SAYS:"I KNOW MY OWN." HOW WELL DOES HE KNOW US? IN THE SAME WAY AS THE FATHER KNOWS JESUS, AND JESUS KNOWS THE FATHER, THAT IS HOW WELL JESUS KNOWS US. THE FATHER HAS THE SAME RELATIONSHIP WITH ME AS HE HAS WITH JESUS. HOW EXTRAORDINARY! YET HOW MUCH WE NEED THAT RELATIONSHIP.

BECAUSE WE ARE ALREADY THE CHILDREN OF GOD NOW, WE CAN ENJOY THE BLESSINGS OF HAVING SUCH A DEVOTED AND CARING FATHER. AND WHEN WE FACE DIFFICULTIES OR FEEL ABANDONED, WE CAN BE UPHELD BY KNOWING THAT WE SHALL SEE HIM FACE TO FACE AND BE LIKE HIM BECAUSE WE SHALL SEE HIM AS HE REALLY IS. NOT HOW I IMAGINE HIM TO BE, OR HOPE HE IS LIKE I WANT HIM TO BE. AS HE REALLY IS.

AGAIN THE PSALMIST: "I WILL THANK YOU FOR YOU HAVE GIVEN ME THE ANSWER: YOUR LOVE FOR ME HAS NO END."