

A Savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord

A Christmas Message from Our Pastor...

Do you want to be my friend? I distinctly heard this question as I passed through St. Patrick Catholic Elementary School on my way to the church one morning. It was a question that a young boy, maybe 6 years old, posed to a classmate as they waited in the school yard for the morning bell to ring. I did not want to stick around to find out the response to the question. It was a sacred moment, a moment of vulnerability that I just happened to be privy to as I hurried on to morning mass.

Friendship: what an important part this plays in the relationships of our lives! Where would we be without friends? Different from acquaintances, or collegial interactions at work, or kinship through family, or membership in a club or sports team, being in a friendship speaks of what that initial question opened up for me when I passed the two students. Friends share a special bond that speaks of vulnerability, honesty, calling out what is good and honourable in the other, sharing joys and struggles, being there for each other. Friends get into each other's interiors. Friendship is spiritual. I know from my own experience I can certainly agree with the saying in the Book of Sirach that, "A faithful friend is a sturdy shelter; he who finds one finds a treasure." (Sir 6.14)

Why do I dwell on this the value of friendship? It strikes me that, as we come into the mystery of the Incarnation and sit with it during this Christmas Season, among the various reasons that God came to be one of us in the person of Jesus, friendship surely is one of them. Yes, salvation, redemption, inaugurating the reign of God are all there in the carols we sing. But, what about friendship? Does not God simply want to be our friend? God is love and in creating us in His image, he uniquely creates us for love – to love and to be loved. Friendship is beautiful way of loving. There is a divine friendship between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. God wants that for us. It strikes me that in coming to us in human flesh, a baby lying in a manger, God asks us very simply, very purely, "Do you want to be my friend?" How will we answer?

On behalf of St. Patrick's clergy and pastoral team, I would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year!

Fr. Dominic

