



Father Danny Murphy is a retired Pastor from Brooklyn NY. A gifted man with a God given talent to inspire and God's gift to us at Holy Cross Church in Vero Beach Florida. This is just one of his inspirational homilies.

Fr. Danny Murphy – 2nd Sunday of the Year 2017

Our first reading today is from the book of the Prophet Isaiah. In Church circles, when the name Isaiah is mentioned, it is almost always preceded by the adjective "great" – as in the Great Prophet Isaiah. What made Isaiah great? Well he tells us in our first reading today: "The Lord formed me from the womb and I am made glorious in the sight of the Lord." That's what made Isaiah great! And, if you and I can believe that about ourselves, then that will make us great also! "The Lord formed me from the womb. I am made glorious in the sight of the Lord." Isaiah believed that about himself. Do you believe that about yourself? On this past Monday, we celebrated the Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord. As Jesus was being baptized by John in the Jordan River, his Father proclaimed: "This is my beloved Son

in whom I am well pleased." The only reason why his Father was well pleased with Jesus is because Jesus was his beloved son. His Father said this to Jesus before Jesus performed any miracles, before he did any preaching, before he did anything. His Father was well pleased with him simply because he was his beloved son. The same is true for us, but it is a challenge for us to believe this. The same is true for us. The Father says to each of us: "You are my beloved daughter/son in whom I am well pleased." Is that the voice you hear playing in your mind and heart as you go through your life? "You are my beloved daughter/son with whom I am well pleased." Or are other voices running through your mind and heart; voices that are much more negative than that? Here's a sad story that I experienced some years ago, back in Brooklyn. A seventeen year old parishioner asked if she could use my car for her driver's license test because neither of her parents drove and they didn't have a car. When we arrived at the testing site, she introduced me to one of her classmates who was also taking the test. Her classmate's mother said to me in a loud voice in front of her daughter and everyone else: "Well, I hope your friend passes the test, I know my daughter won't. She never does anything right; she is such a disappointment." Now, you grow up in a household like that and you live in a household like that, you never heard that "the Lord formed you from the womb and you are made glorious in the sight of the Lord." Do you believe that? There might be some other voices, tapes playing in your mind; voices, tapes that affirm you for your appearance, for your accomplishments. So, if you're a good student, your parents and teachers will affirm you. If you're a good athlete, your coaches

and teammates will affirm you. If you do well in your career, your family and friends will affirm you. If you are pretty, or handsome, slim, trim, your society will affirm you. BUT (here's the big but) are they affirming you or only your appearance, your accomplishments? What happens if I don't make the Honor Roll? What happens if the promotions at work stop and people younger than I are passing me by? What happens when the cosmetics, hair coloring, the exercise, the diet can no longer hide the reality that I'm older and that I am no longer as attractive as I once was? If I'm being affirmed only because of my appearance, my accomplishments and stuff like that, that's not affirmation, that's pressure. I always have to perform well, I always have to look good, if I'm going to receive that affirmation. Do you know that many priests struggle with retirement? Could it be that for so many years the priest thought his worth was what he did rather than who he is? Could that be true with other retirees, older people? I can no longer do what I once did. Is that where my worth lies? Or is it in who I am? Parents – when your children no longer need you aren't dependent on you anymore. But, if I can believe, with the grace of God, that "the Lord formed me from the womb and I am glorious in the sight of the Lord," then I can relax, can totally relax, all the pressure is off, no matter what age or stage of life I'm at. Hopefully this homily is helpful, but even if it isn't – even if it's a bomb, a dud, I'm okay. You know why I'm okay? Because I am not a homilist, that's what I do, that's not who I am! Who I am is God's beloved child, that's who I am, and that's who you are! And that never ever changes!

Do you get that? It's hard to get...Can we say with the Great Prophet Isaiah: "The Lord formed me from the womb and I am glorious in the sight of the Lord?"