

## Boxing Day Sermon 2021 Year C

So today our readings are focussing on family. Our gospel is focusing on Jesus being a challenging small child to look after. As his mind is so clearly on higher things. Clearly, he is so fully human and fully divine that he was a difficult child to raise.

In our Old Testament reading, we meet Samuel for the first time, we have heard about his dedication and later his oblation to the Lord, of the beginning of his journey with Eli.

Both these families look very different and last year, on the 27th of December, I preached about what family means today, and how family can help one another in dreadful times such as these. I will attempt to approach this subject with a fresh mind and heart.

Now, this may seem a little odd, but I began to think about these readings within the context of vocation. Both Jesus and Samuel have holy vocations.

Samuel is given into the service of the temple, living with Eli and beginning to realise his calling there too. Samuel became a key component in the transition from the rules of Judges to Kings. Samuel is known as a Priest, Prophet, Judge and wise leader of Israel. This was his calling. This was what he gave his life to be. Samuels parents recognised this from a young age and gave him to the temple. In his later years, Samuel coronated Saul and instituted the Kings of Israel. This is perhaps his most significant role, as Saul sets up the line of Kings that will eventually lead to Christ. In Matthew 1 we hear the genealogy of Jesus traced all the way back to King David. The genealogy also makes clear that King David was descended from Abraham, but that is a separate point. Samuel institutes the Kingly line that foreshadows and leads to the Messiah, and that is a very important calling within the history of the bible and the Christian church.

Next to the person this whole season is dedicated to. Jesus. Jesus was another Priest, Prophet, King and Leader. All of these roles are significant. Jesus is the ultimate priest, who performs the world-changing sacrifice for all mankind. Christ is the final priest of the old order and the first of the new, ordaining his disciples to an order of priesthood that continues to this day. Arguably to this church, and Fr. David.

## Boxing Day Sermon 2021 Year C

Jesus is also a prophet, who tells us of things to come, and what the Kingdom of God is like. Jesus fulfils many prophecies and performs many miracles, such as the prophets of old, by Gods power, performed. Jesus is a prophet who comes to tell us what we have to look forward to, and the best way to live our lives today.

Christ is the King. Known by many as the King of the Jews, but also the Servant King. Jesus has the lineage of the Kings of Israel, directly from Samuel, the connecting strand of our readings today. Even today we try to follow his example of servant-hearted priesthood. Christ's model of humble Kingship is the model we can aspire to. Jesus is the King today, tomorrow and forever. Christ is cosmically important and always will be.

Jesus is also our leader and teacher. He has told us the best ways to live our lives and told us to love one another and live peacefully. 2022 years of spiritual and theological teaching have been derived from the teachings of Christ as understood by his disciples.

But why is all this relevant to the holy family? Why is all of this relevant to the Christmastide we are now celebrating?

As our epistle from 1 John says, we are children of God, this is what we are! We are the inheritors of Christ's Priesthood, of his prophesy and teaching. We need to take his example and live by it. Loving those we find it hardest to love. God lives in those who follow this example, and they live in him. We know all of this through the Holy Spirit that God and Jesus left with us. If we shape our lives in Christ's image we can live the way Christ intended. Christ has no body now but ours. No hands, no feet on earth but ours. We are the priests, or could be Priests, every one of us! We are the prophets, we can all look to the future and see what needs to change. We are the leaders, who can make that change happen, and work to make the Gospel known in every community on earth. We are the servant kings, who can make that change happen every day by loving and serving our neighbour.