

When I enlisted in the Navy, it wasn't a very popular decision with my parents. It seemed every time we talked about it, we ended up in an argument. So, in the weeks leading up to my leaving, as I got ready to go, we didn't talk much.

My folks had to drop me off at the recruiting station. And as it turned out we got there a bit too early. The weather in February was brutal; so we sat in the car not saying anything. When I saw someone open the building, I grabbed my bag, and headed out of the car. I heard the front door of the car open, and my Mom say, "Wait."

I turned around, and she hugged me, and cried, and held on to me and kept kissing me.

Today is the feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

In the Gospel, we hear in the last line: "You are my beloved son, with you I am well pleased."

Several years after I was out of the Navy, I had the occasion for a silent retreat. Lots of prayer, lots of time to think. The meditation for the day was that text, "You are my beloved son, with you I am well pleased." And I was sitting in silence asking in prayer for God to reveal the meaning of this in my relationship to Him.

That scene in front of the recruiting station came into my mind's eye, and I got a bit choked up as I remembered the love my mother showed me on that day.

And then it was as if someone turned the volume up, and I was overwhelmed with a knowledge of God's love - and infinite portion of the same love shown to me by my own parents.

"You are my beloved son ... you are my beloved daughter ... you are my beloved child; with you I am well pleased."

God is saying that to each and every one of us. No matter where we may think we are with Him. God is calling from above and sending the Holy Spirit upon us.

Can we hear Him.

Sitting in the back seat of the car, on the way to the recruiting station ... I wondered if I would see my parents again. I wondered if they really loved me, especially after all the arguments. I wondered where I stood with them.

In one moment, my mother cleared all that up.

And in that retreat, God cleared it all up for me with Him, too.

We are the beloved daughters and sons of God; redeemed in Christ; and filled with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Do we realize it? Right now? In good times? In bad times?

You are my beloved child.

As we approach the altar to receive the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ — let us ask for an increased clarity of our own status as beloved sons and daughters of God.

Ask God to clear things up for you in regard to your own relationship with Him.

Ask God to show you His love for you.

And then ask for the grace to love Him in return.