

27th Sunday (B-2021)
St. Patrick - Milford

There are many jokes and one-liners concerning marriage which come from today's First Reading. "The two become one and the rest of their lives they work out which one they will be." "God put man asleep and then gave him the woman to fruitlessly and eternally try to wake him up." Funny for a moment but this reading is too serious to remain a joke. God created all living things, but the highest creation is the human person. This person was presented with all the other forms unlike his own and was dissatisfied. God saw this dissatisfaction, as God saw everything, and saw it as "good". Yes, that is what I meant to write! God saw that human beings would search for completion, satisfaction and saw this searching as "very good".

In fashioning "woman", God gave the man a closeness to himself, but the difference and distinctiveness of woman man would form the framework for the real meaning of human love - a revelation of God's love, but not a substitute or replacement for that love.

Man and woman will "cling" to each other in every way while embracing their search for true union toward God. Longing is a blessing ... and God's love desires us to experience finite love as so many ways to put the puzzle back into its original union. In short, Genesis is the story of the necessity for "order in relationship" and how God is working things out.

The Pharisees have a "big question" for Jesus in today's Gospel. Divorce is the topic, but the question is intended to provoke Jesus into countermanding the Law of Moses. Jesus answers by going back before Moses by quoting lines from our First Reading for today. The trap which the Pharisees set failed. We do not hear any more on the topic. There is a little discussion afterward in the house however. Jesus finishes His teaching in the presence of His disciples.

The Church has always taught that divorce, when that is the arbitrary dissolving of a true union in marriage, is against the order of things. Sometimes, divorce happens—painful and terrible as it is—but it in no way is the sum total of who a person is.

The label "divorced" does not define a person. Some people who are divorced may feel like they are walking around with a big "scarlet 'D'" on their forehead. For those who may be divorced, it is essential to focus how God sees you. He always sees you as his beloved with all the gifts, talents and potential he gave you, especially the specific purpose in life you have to fulfill. It's the love of God that will carry you through this difficult time. Another extremely important but challenging task is forgiving those who have hurt you. It is essential if you want to heal from divorce. There are no shortcuts, no half-measures when it comes to this. It can seem impossible to forgive someone for causing such devastation; however, you'll never move forward if you don't find a way to forgive. You will always be a victim. The key is to ask God for the grace for the will and desire to forgive because we cannot do it on our own. Last but definitely not least, the cross of divorce can change a person for the better. This cross is an immense opportunity to grow emotionally and spiritually and to become a stronger, wiser person in the end.

Marriage and any true loving relationship between a woman and a man is a gift from God which keeps on giving. A loving relationship, blest in Marriage, is a covenant of continuing God's creation.

The two commit themselves to bringing forth life within the other. They say “Yes!” Our love of one another will mirror the love of God for His Church ... and I will assist God in creating with you. I will accept your assisting God’s loving and creating.

This is how God intends to put the puzzle together with all these strange-appearing pieces with various angles and dents. Jesus, by blessing the little ones, invites all of us to lives of “growing up” and “growing-within”. Little ones love what’s new, different, and puzzling. These readings are not directly a denouncement of divorce, nor a statement about the necessity for everyone to marry. The readings are about God’s ways of loving and creating us and the necessity of our being available to His ways.

“The Lord is good to those who hope in him, to those who search for his love.”