

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters:

If God is for us, who can be against us?

He did not spare his own Son

but handed him over for us all,

how will he not also give us everything else along with him?

Who will bring a charge against God's chosen ones?

It is God who acquits us.

Who will condemn?

It is Christ Jesus who died, rather, was raised,

who also is at the right hand of God,

who indeed intercedes for us.

What will separate us from the love of Christ?

Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine,

or nakedness, or peril, or the sword?

No, in all these things, we conquer overwhelmingly

through him who loved us.

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life,

nor angels, nor principalities,

nor present things, nor future things,

nor powers, nor height, nor depth,

nor any other creature will be able to separate us

from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Word of the Lord. *R. Thanks be to God*

Commentary

This reading concludes a long opening section in Paul’s letter to the Christian community living in Rome. He preaches that the Gospel announces salvation for all peoples whether they are Jews or Gentiles. Then he offers reflections on our justification to God. Thus, the questions in this passage sound a bit like a back-and-forth argument. It is Christ whose death and resurrection has justified us and now intercedes on our behalf before God (vs. 34). A love that Christ demonstrates by dying for all of us is a bond of love that cannot be broken by anything – earthly, supernatural, or otherwise (vs. 38-39).

The Church offers a sacramental marriage, something different and in addition to a civil marriage. Sacraments are an encounter with and a participation in the life of Christ Jesus. Couples who marry in the Catholic Church root their relationship in this inspiring vision of Christ’s love. It is a love that unites and a love that is unbreakable. Husbands and wives who share this strength of love can be as confident as St. Paul knowing that when hardship, suffering, and difficulties arise, their love will help carry them through. No hardship from the heavens or from earth, from creatures, rulers, or angels can destroy their marriage bond. Christ’s love was victorious, and any love that imitates his will share in the same gift.