

Sunday, October 3, 2021

27th Sunday in Ordinary Time

The Joy of Marriage

“But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.’”

- Mark 10:6

A joyous time for a church community is celebrating the Sacrament of Marriage with their parishioners. I often see many of our local clergy on social media with pictures of newlyweds, and most couples have photos and videos of their special day. We even read in the Gospel of John how Jesus performed a miracle at the wedding feast at Cana by changing water into wine. Unfortunately, for some, as time passes, the joy of marriage can turn to sadness and hurt, and the couple eventually separates.

A reality today is that many couples have divorced. The reasons for the separation are varied, but in the end, the two parties are usually left picking up the pieces. If you have not been through a divorce, you likely know someone who has, and the fallout can have lasting impacts on family as well as friends. Unfortunately, there is a lot of false information and misconceptions regarding the place of divorced persons within the Church. There are a couple of things to keep in mind.

Being civilly divorced should not prevent you from coming to Church and receiving the sacraments, as long as you have not entered into a new relationship.

However, after a divorce, many will eventually seek another relationship, fall in love, and want to marry again. There is a process that is necessary for a Catholic who was originally married in the Church, is divorced, and desires to marry again. It is called the annulment process. You should contact your parish priest or deacon to discuss how this process works.

Please know that the Church is always here to welcome you home and to assist you in dispelling any misconceptions you might have about marriage and divorce. Again, if you have questions about your marriage, past relationships, and getting right with God, talk to your local parish priest or deacon. They can answer any questions you might have so that you might have that peace of mind that only God can give you.

- Bishop Gregory Parkes