

Equality, a Family Matter



I. A LOOK AT THE THREE READINGS

FIRST READING (Gen 2:18-24)

¹⁸The LORD God said: It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a **helper** suited to him.* ^k

1st attempt (failed)

¹⁹So the LORD God formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds of the air, and he brought them to the man to see what he would call them; whatever the man called each living creature was then its name. ²⁰The man gave names to all the tame animals, all the birds of the air, and all the wild animals; but none proved to be a **helper** suited to the man.

2nd attempt (successful)

²¹So the LORD God cast a deep sleep on the man, and while he was asleep, he took out one

of his ribs and closed up its place with **flesh**.^l
²²The LORD God then built the rib that he had taken from the man into a woman. When he brought her to the man, ²³the man said:

“This one, at last, is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; This one shall be called ‘**woman**,’ for **out of man this one has been taken**.”

THE FOCUS: On the relationship between husband and wife

COMMENTARY

- God is described anthropomorphically (acts like a human being according to the Yahwist Tradition)
- Vv. 19-20 appear to be God’s failure in providing a partner of man, in reference to v. 18.
- Vv. 21-24 describes God’s second attempt to provide man’s partner.

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- The text is understood, used or is interpreted to teach the sanctity of marriage.
- Hebrew *Ish* (man) – *ishshah* (woman)
- The relationship of husband and wife is characterized by partnership (teamwork), not subjugation or domination.

REFLECTIONS

Hebrew mentality recognizes the genders, male and female.

The text tries to explain the origin of married relationship, although in the textual context, the relationship is created in view of work (*to till and keep the land*).

Marital relationship must be seen as partnership (*helping each other*).

Anyone entering this relationship must be prepared to work (to be productive).

The man (male) must be responsible. The woman (female) must help.

Both are expected to work together.

The text can also be used to remind married couples to be faithful to their partners. It teaches monogamy.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

(Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5, 6)

**MAY THE LORD BLESS US ALL
THE DAYS OF OUR LIVES.**

SECOND READING (Heb 2:9-11)

⁹(but)We do see **Jesus** “crowned with glory and honor” because he suffered death, he who “for a little while” was made “lower than the angels,” that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

¹⁰gFor it was fitting that he, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many **children** to glory, should make the leader to their salvation perfect through suffering. ¹¹He who consecrates and those who

are being consecrated all have one origin. Therefore, he is not ashamed to call them “brothers.”

THE FOCUS: Jesus and Children

COMMENTARY

- The text is a reflection on the mystery of Jesus.
- Jesus, though divine was made low and experienced death.
- Jesus is for whom and through whom all things exist, suffered to make salvation perfect.
- Jesus is instrumental in bringing children to heaven.
- He consecrates....
- He is not ashamed to call us “brothers.”
- Jesus’ performance (re gaining our salvation) is outstanding.

REFLECTIONS

Jesus is crowned with glory and honor as a result of his sacrifices.

God as he is, He is willing to lower down himself, undergo sufferings and death (extreme acts of humility).

This is His method (way) to effect salvation upon us.

Jesus worked hard for our salvation.

Our salvation consists in being brought to glory.

Our salvation consists in being addressed as “brothers” of Jesus.

To be considered as brothers/sisters of Jesus is a great honor.

Jesus establishes our common origin with him.

GOSPEL READING (Mk 10:2-16)

^{2*} “The Pharisees approached and asked, “Is it lawful for a husband to divorce his wife?”

They were testing him. ³He said to them in reply, “What did Moses command you?” ^{4b}They replied, “Moses permitted him to write a bill of divorce and dismiss her.” ⁵But Jesus told them, “Because of the hardness of your hearts he wrote you this commandment. ^{6c}But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female. ^{7d}For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother [and be joined to his wife], ⁸and **the two shall become one flesh.**’ So they are no longer two but one flesh. ⁹Therefore what God has joined together, no human being must separate.” ¹⁰In the house the disciples again questioned him about this. ^{11e}He said to them, “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; ¹²and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.”

^{13f}And people were bringing **children** to him that he might touch them, but the disciples rebuked them.^g ¹⁴When Jesus saw this he became indignant and said to them, “Let the **children** come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ^{15h}Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a **child*** will not enter it.” ¹⁶

THE FOCUS: Union of Husband and Wife and Children

COMMENTARY

- The Gospel text is divided into two parts: vv. 2-12, Divorce and 13-14, Children.
- In the first part, we find Jesus disapproving divorce, invoking the text in Genesis (First Reading). Jesus adds that those who divorce and marry again commit adultery. A divorcee is not entitled to marry again.
- The second part presents Jesus’ tenderness to children. Again taking cue from

last Sunday’s Reading (children = new converts, new comers), we take seriously these people for such as these belong the kingdom of God. We must be childlike to enter the kingdom of God.

REFLECTIONS

Jesus affirms the sanctity of marriage. To do this, he invokes the pre-Mosaic law in Genesis (*although Gen itself is Mosaic according to the Jews.*)

Precisely, the man leaves his mother and father and cleaves to his wife, the two become one flesh.

No human has the right to separate what God has joined together. Marriage is an act of God. No one should foil his plan on marriage.

Divorce is a no-no to his followers. It defeats the purpose of God.

Equally important in the gospel is how we treat children in our communities.

These are not useless members, or liabilities. We should accept them with open arms.

They represent the excited group, eager to learn, to be nurtured and to discover other people.

They qualify for the kingdom of God; they make us qualified to enter God’s kingdom.

II. TYING THE THREE READINGS TOGETHER DEVELOP YOUR HOMILY/SHARING

The First Reading is about marriage, woman being a helper to man.

The Second Reading talks about Jesus’ sacrificing for our salvation.

The Gospel Reading affirms the sacredness of marital relationships and importance of children.

How to compose your homily/sharing

Begin by sharing your observations on married couples and their children. (+ and -)

+ happy to have intimate relationships

+ happy to have children

- hard to maintain a family, if you have no job

- hard to relate with the partner if one is insecure, emotionally unstable, busy always, always with the *barkada* (friends)

Then proceed to develop what God demands of married couples based on the readings:

The husband and wife are meant to live together as long as they live. Married life is not just for procreation but also for support in work. Not wanting to work defeats the purpose of marriage. (*First Reading and Gospel*).

Like Christ, each one must go down and serve, or sacrifice for the other (*Second Reading*).

How do we communicate Christ’s teachings in the midst of the challenges of married life and childcare? Divorce, legal separations, marriage without wanting to have children, too many children, poverty, false teachings on marriage, live in, failure to be intimate, wife / child battering, sexual abuse, low morals, STDs, artificial contraceptives, abortion, etc...

Introduction of non-traditional concepts of marriage / parenthood: same sex marriage, single parenthood, surrogate motherhood.

Christ’s teachings can be communicated through:

Pre-Cana conferences

Papal encyclicals (*Familiaris Consortio*)

Family code

Marriage counseling

Good teachings of the Family Life Movements, Couples for Christ, Pro-Life Movements

Jesus Christ is clear in his teachings on married life. (No to anything that destroys family life and the well-being of children.)

To end: In this eucharist, Jesus comes down to us to be with us. He comes to strengthen us in our difficulties building our families and nurturing our children. Our marriage will work provided that we too make some necessary sacrifices. Our reception of the eucharist is a sign that we conform to Christ’s teaching on marriage and child rearing.

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III. OUR CONTEXT

1. On October 7, 1571, the triumph of the Battle of Lepanto was attributed to Mary. In the Philippines, the triumph against the adversaries in the Battle of Manila Bay was also attributed to our Lady of the Rosary whose feast celebrated on October 7.

2. The increasing number of street people in Metro Manila. What does this tell you about family life? (HM)

PRAYER FOR MY FAMILY
