

27th Sunday, B cycle homily Notes 10-6-18

Challenging time to be a Catholic;

Challenging gospel:

I don't mean because of the scandal with clergy in the Church.

I mean because of Jesus' words in the gospel about divorce. As you well know, one of every two marriages in our society end in divorce.

Recently the pope said that those divorced and remarried outside the church could possibly, for pastoral reasons, be allowed to receive communion.

Clarification: The rule never applied to someone who is divorced but not remarried.

How do we wrestle with Jesus' strong words in the Gospel and the many faith-filled divorced and remarried Catholics who seek communion with the Lord in the Eucharist?

To get in an insight, let's begin with the words in today's first reading. (quote the reading) The union of man and woman is a living symbol, a reflection, of the unity of who God and what we are called to be. God can never be divided. God is one. Hear O Israel , the Lord our God, the Lord is ONE." Not many, but one!

Unity with all human nature is what the Kingdom is all about.

Union is who God is! and what Jesus expected from all who were to be part of the Kingdom of God.

From the beginning of creation, division from God from one another was never in the cards for God.

Jesus would say, “The father and I are one.” (Jn 10:1)

“Live in me, and I in you.” (Jn 15:7)

Divorce is alien to who Jesus IS and how he views the Kingdom which he is announcing. He had no way of seeing people other than united to one another and His Father.

Divorce had no place in the kingdom.

Yet, Jesus also had mercy on everyone he met.

God had mercy on Moses and the Israelites.

On King David, on Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,

In the gospels, Jesus had mercy on the blind, the lame, the deaf

He had mercy on tax collectors, and prostitutes,

Jesus had mercy on ALL sinners.

In fact, many scripture scholars say the main quality of God in the Bible is his mercy.

So how do we, the people of the Kingdom, put together Jesus' strong statement on divorce, with his consistent expression of mercy?

We are all still growing into the consciousness of God and what it means to live in the Kingdom.

How many people when they get married are spiritually mature?

Many people make decisions before knowing what it means to be IN GOD, TO LIVE AS MEMBERS OF THE KINGDOM? How many people live with partners who have not consciousness of being one in the Lord?

That is exactly what Pope Francis and the bishops struggled with in a recent world synod of the bishops on family life where the issue++ concerning divorced and remarried people and the possibility of them receiving communion, being in UNION with the Lord through communion.

It is an ongoing question in the Church as we grow in our consciousness of God... a God who wants paradise for us, that is, wants us to be in perfect communion with God, with others and with nature... and at the same time offering mercy for all who stumble in their growth towards paradise. Lord, may your Kingdom Come...and until it comes, may you shower your mercy upon us.