

## Homily Notes for October 7 2018, 27<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Time

Readings: Genesis 2:18-24, Psalm 128:1-6, Hebrews 2:9-11, Mark 10:2-16

Biblical fundamentals of Christian marriage and its relevance for our days.

**1. Summary:** Today's readings focus on the importance of marriage, and therefore of the family. Let us learn from all these readings how important marriage is to God. We can have wonderful, loving, caring and long-lasting marriages if we follow the Wisdom of God concerning marriage.

**2. Introductory call to gentleness and compassion.** Many of us have not done well in family life and marriages, yet I must give clear guidance from the Scriptures and from God. I encourage each of us, in whatever our marriage or family situation is to seek to do God's will and to put things in order in the best way possible. I want everyone in the St. Boniface Community to work together in an encouraging and supportive manner to help everyone achieve as close as possible the standards of God.

**3. First reading: Two ends of marriage: the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of children (CCC 1601).** This reading from the creation story of Genesis is the foundational passage for understanding the will of God for marriage and family. This passage demonstrates that one of the two primary ends of marriage is providing for the good of the spouses and the second is that of the procreation and education of offspring.

This is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings (cleaves) to his wife, and the two of them become one flesh.

**4. This is the fundamental biblical teaching on the nature of marriage.** "The two shall become one flesh." The unity that is created is very powerful. See five additional references to this foundational passage.

Mal 2:13-16: "This also you do: the altar of the Lord you cover with tears, weeping and groaning, because he no longer regards your sacrifice nor accepts it favorably from your hand; And you say, "Why is it?" Because the Lord is witness between you and the wife of your youth, with whom you have broken faith though she is your companion, your betrothed wife. Did he not make one being, with flesh and spirit: and what does that one require but godly offspring? For I hate divorce, says the Lord, the God of Israel..."

Matt 19:5-6: "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate.

Mk 10:5-6: "But Jesus told them, "because of the hardness of your hearts he wrote you this commandment. But from the beginning of creation, "God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, no human being must separate."

I Cor 6:15-20: "Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take Christ's members and make them the members of a prostitute? Of course not! Do you not know that anyone who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For "the two" it says, "will become one flesh.... Avoid (sexual) immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the immoral person sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been purchased at a price..."

Eph 5:21, 28-31: "Be subordinate to one another out of reverence for Christ....So husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one hates his own flesh but rather nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. "For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."

**5. Same sex unions.** This also explains why Christians must oppose the error of same-sex unions. We will not call it marriage. It cannot produce children and is described repeatedly in Sacred Scripture as seriously sinful. For these references see my study sheet: "The Bible and the Catechism on Homosexuality."

**6. The Responsorial Psalm** expands the marital theme of the first reading and the Gospel to include the whole family. Note that this is founded upon "the fear of the Lord."

"Blessed are you who fear the Lord, who walk in his ways... May you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life! May you see your children's children. Peace upon Israel."

**7. Second reading: On the importance of suffering in the Christian life.** This passage does not deal directly with marriage but illustrates the very important role that sacrificial love (especially suffering) is central to the model that Jesus has given us. In relation to marriage this means that imitating Jesus in his suffering is essential for the successful living out of the marriage covenant. St Paul reminds us:

“For 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*”(Heb 2:10).

**8. Application in marriage:** This means we are willing to do whatever is necessary in order to maintain the marriage and help our spouse gain heaven. This almost certainly means that we must suffer at one time or another. It also means that we can never enter such a relationship in order to get just what we want. Before people get involved, way before getting married, they need to discern this. But if we are already in it, God wants us to deal with it responsibly.

**9. Gospel: The two essential properties of marriage: unity and indissolubility (CCC 1614-1616).** This passage identifies indissolubility as essential to Christian marriage. Here Jesus reaffirms God’s initial intent for marriage which Moses had compromised out of compassion for the hardness of people’s hearts and out of a desire to protect women of that culture. Jesus also makes very clear that remarriage after divorce engages the persons in adultery. This is why the Catholic Church maintains the Marriage Tribunal to help to determine if a marriage was validly formed in the first place. If a valid marriage was not formed in the first place (for a variety of possible reasons), then an annulment can be given. An annulment is an indication by the Church that a marriage was not genuinely formed at the beginning.

**The other essential quality of marriage is unity – only one spouse, no other relationships.**

**10. The Good News of this Gospel message is that we can have wonderful, loving, stable and rewarding marriages if we follow God’s precepts and we can heal marriages that are in trouble.**

**11. The prophecy of Fatima:** Lucia, the oldest of the Fatima visionaries, died in 2005. Before her death she had another message from our Lady in which She said,

“Satan will attack first the priesthood, next the youth and finally the family. **The final battle** between the Lord and reign of Satan will be about marriage and the family. Don’t be afraid, because anyone who works for the sanctity of marriage and the family will always be fought and opposed in every way, because this is the decisive issue.

**12. The relevance of this for our time is shown in the confirmation hearings for the Supreme Court.**

Have you noticed the excessive emotional reaction to this appointment to the Supreme Court? A “witness” can be called “credible” even when all of the accuser’s handpicked witnesses denied any knowledge of the alleged event? Did you notice that the protesters to this candidate to the Supreme Court had posters with a blank for the name to be filled in? It didn’t make any difference who the candidate would be. Anyone would be opposed.

**13. Let us be clear that that final battle over the family is going on right now in our culture.** Geraldo Rivera very clearly stated what is at stake when he observed that the protests had nothing to do with the nominee’s qualification. What matters is whether the nominee might jeopardize the right to have an abortion. The platform of the Democratic Party includes support for contraception, abortion, gay rights, same sex marriage and “mercy” killing! The platform of the Republican Party opposes all of these evil and ungodly practices! I urge you to take this into account when you vote in the next election. Please note that this is information to help you make your decisions. I have not told you how to vote.

**14. What do you think God wants us to do to prepare for, strengthen and protect our marriages and our families?** I urge you all to read over these citations.

1. First, I believe that we need to work on our marriages and our families to put them in order and to give a good testimony to the world.
2. Second, we need to develop our church programs for the formation of our youth, marriage preparation and marriage enrichment so as to strengthen family life as much as possible.
3. Third, we need to be involved in our community, our state, and our nation to promote godly values and incentives for supporting marriage and the family life.
4. Fourth, we need to be serious in prayer for this area, pleading with God for guidance and help.

