

Reading 1

Genesis 2:18-24

The LORD God said: "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a suitable partner for him."
So the LORD God formed out of the ground various wild animals and various birds of the air, and he brought them to the man to see what he would call them; whatever the man called each of them would be its name.
The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of the air, and all wild animals; but none proved to be the suitable partner for the man.

So 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. The LORD God then built up into a woman the rib that he had taken from the man.
When he brought her to the man, the 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 'her man' this one has been taken."
That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one flesh.

Reading II

Hebrews 2:9-11

Brothers and sisters:
He "for a little while" was made "lower than the angels," that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

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. He who consecrates and those who are being consecrated all have one origin. Therefore, he is not ashamed to call them "brothers."

Gospel

Mark 10: 2-12

The Pharisees approached Jesus and asked, "Is it lawful for a husband to divorce his wife?" They were testing him.
He said to them in reply, "What did Moses command you?" They replied, "Moses permitted a husband to write a bill of divorce and dismiss her."
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."
In the house the disciples again questioned Jesus about this. He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."



*Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time***Scripture Background**

Today's Old Testament reading describes the creation of all living things as God intended them to be. Man and woman are made as partners. God formed every animal of the field and bird of the air and none of these were suitable companions for man. So, God caused man to fall into a deep sleep and while he was sleeping, God removed one of his ribs and made it into woman. Man awakes to find woman, his true partner at last, and bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. In this account of creation God creates man and woman side by side as equals. This reading implies that companionship and the attraction that can exist between two human beings is good and God-given.

In today's gospel reading the Pharisees ask Jesus about divorce. Jesus responds with a discussion about creation and God's original intentions for man and woman. Jesus describes the union of husband and wife as lasting because the two are united and become one flesh.

In this gospel reading, Jesus teaches us about the sacredness of marriage. When two people respect, honor and care deeply for each other, when they give unselfishly to one another and forgive each other's imperfections, their union reflects the very love of God.

1. Do you think that marriage is sacred? Explain.

2. Do you think that equality is important to relationships? Why or why not?

3. What can happen to a relationship if one individual thinks that he or she is less or more important than the other?

Marriage, Divorce, and Annulment

Throughout our lives we grow in our ability to live as God intended. The story of creation tells us that God intended for man and woman to live for the good of each other. Marriage is an intimate partnership of life and love. Such a partnership provides an atmosphere of safety and respect so that each person can freely reveal and share who he or she is.

Catholics believe that married couples by their self-giving to each other share in the very love of God. Binding oneself to another for life is possible only through the grace of Christ. The love of man and woman is made holy in the sacrament of marriage, and becomes a sign for the world of God's everlasting love.

4. Think of the married couples that you know. How does their union reflect God's love?

5. What ingredients do you think make up a good marriage?

6. Is it possible for a husband and wife to be best friends?
