



Prayer

Loving Father,
help us to be instruments of Your will on earth. For the times
we disrupt Your will, we ask forgiveness. Let us see
Your hand in our lives each day. Make us Your instruments.
Amen.

Commentary

1st Reading: Wisdom 6:12-16

Over the last three weeks, we have considered the vocations to ordained ministry and religious orders. This week, our readings offer us a look at the other Sacrament of vocation - Marriage.

The Church has always taught that the goods of marriage between a man and a woman include Fidelity and Procreation. However, surrounding these two goods is the desire for a domestic church; which includes a spousal relationship with God, family, and Church.

The domestic church is the primary purpose for a wedding within the Church. Couples who understand the value of a domestic church, know that their marriage is a Vocation. They know it isn't just about two people living together. After all, anyone can do that. And many do.

Developing a domestic church does not happen after the wedding. It should happen before; even during the time of courtship.

Our First Reading is a call for all God's people to have a courtship with Wisdom. God himself is "sitting at the gate," waiting for us to abide in His love.

If couples begin their relationship with God in mind, their courtship, engagement, and marriage will be fruitful. It will be a true vocation in the life of the Church and for the good of the world.

Question

What is the purpose of celebrating marriage in the Church?

Commentary

2nd Reading: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

As the Church winds up its liturgical year this November, the readings take on an end-of-the-world theme. Before the final Sunday, the Feast of Christ the King, and before the new season of Advent, the readings focus on the return of Christ in glory.

This of course, is what we believe. Christ has died, is risen, and will come again.

St. Paul reminds the Christian faithful in Thessalonica that those who have died in the Lord, along with those who remain, will be "caught up" with the Lord when he returns.

Paul encourages the faithful not to lose heart but to "console one another" with the Good News that the one who is wedded to us will never abandon us.

Of the seven sacraments within the Church, the vocation of marriage best expresses the fidelity that God has for his faithful. The Church herself is often referred to as the Bride of Christ. And, though Christ will return to His bride, He also remains with us—through the sacraments—until the end of time.

Marriage is a mirror image of God's love for humanity. In good times and in bad, and in sickness and in health, God will love us and honor us all the days of our lives. He will never abandon us. He will be wedded to us forever.

Question

How do you see the Lord as Spouse of the Church?

This is the fourth of a four-week series,
All In!

Information: dphx.org/Christ-in-our-neighborhood

All In!

Vocations Series

Commentary

Gospel: Matthew 25:1-13

While St. Paul reminds us that the Lord will return in glory to take us to Himself, there is still a requirement for those who choose to be wedded to Him. We are called to be faithful to Him as well.

Faith is not just a belief that Jesus the Lord exists. The word *fides* (as in *semper fi*) means to have a FAITH-ful relationship with Christ always. Christ is wedded to us and we are wedded to Him.

For this reason, our Gospel reminds us to be like the faithful virgins who are always vigilant, faithful, and whose hearts are for the bridegroom alone. The foolish virgins are like those who were never really committed to the Lord. They claim the name Christian, but have not claimed the love and fidelity that goes with that name.

Christian marriage between a bride and groom is a beautiful vocation within the life of the Church when spouses remain faithful to each other, are open to the possibility of children (for love begets love), and remain faithful to the Lord as the source of their love. Infidelity toward each other, their children, or the Lord, breaks down the domestic church and the marriage ceases to be a proclamation of the Good News — or a mirror image of the faithful love God has for us all.

Question

What does a domestic church look like for you?

This Week's Task

Take time to read the wonderful documents from the USCCB website on marriage. It offers great insights, not only for those who are married, but for all within the faith.

You can view the USCCB documents here:

<https://www.usccb.org/search?key=marriage>

Group Prayer

The group prays the following Prayer from the U.S. Bishops:

O God, who in creating the human race willed that man and wife should be one, keep, we pray, in a bond of inseparable love those who are united in the covenant of marriage, so that, as You make their love fruitful, they may become, by your grace, witnesses to charity itself.
Through Christ our Lord,
Amen.

Continue with Psalm 63

Psalm

My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

O God, you are my God whom I seek;
for you my flesh pines and my soul thirsts
like the earth, parched, lifeless and without
water.

R. My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

Thus have I gazed toward you in the sanctuary
to see your power and your glory,
For your kindness is a greater good than life;
my lips shall glorify you.

R. My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

Thus will I bless you while I live;
lifting up my hands, I will call upon your name.
As with the riches of a banquet shall my soul be satisfied,
and with exultant lips my mouth shall praise you.

R. My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

I will remember you upon my couch,
and through the night-watches I will meditate on you:
You are my help,
and in the shadow of your wings I shout for joy.

R. My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

Conclude with an Our Father