



Christ in Our Neighborhood

Prayer

Father, we believe that Jesus Christ is Your Only Begotten Son and, through Him, we have eternal life. By the power of the Holy Spirit, who makes Christ known, may we always abide in Your love and find our place with You in heaven. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Commentary

1st Reading: Genesis 2:18-24

As we consider the question, “Who Am I?,” we might rightly add to that, “Who am I in relation or communion with God and others?”

Our First Reading brings us back to the beginning where we were destined to be in communion with God and each other. Born from the earth and breath of God, Adam was in communion with the Lord and creation. Born from the side of Adam and through the power of God, Eve became his suitable partner.

Genesis gives us a wonderful image of what it means to be in perfect communion. Man and wife are to be one flesh, thus providing a perfect icon or mirror image of God’s oneness with us. This perfect communion of man and wife will only be surpassed by God becoming perfectly one with us through Jesus, who took on our flesh.

Truly, in Christ, God and humanity “become one flesh.”

Question

How do you see the Sacrament of Marriage as a mirror image or icon of God’s communion with us?

Commentary

2nd Reading: Hebrews 2:9-11

God loves us so much that with us He chose to “become one flesh.” The Book of Hebrews reminds us that the Word of God (Christ) became “lower than the angels,” so that he “might taste death for everyone.”

27th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Becoming one in flesh with us was just the beginning of our perfect communion with God. The same is true for marriage. At Engaged Encounter weekends, couples are reminded that a wedding is for a day, but a marriage is for a lifetime. Though they consummate their marriage on

day one, they have many more days to “love and honor, in good times and bad,” until death do they part. Only when Jesus showed us the depth of his suffering and sacrificial love — in good times and bad — would we come to believe the depth of God’s love for us.

Becoming lower than the angels, our God consecrates us and “is not ashamed” to call us brothers or sisters. Jesus Christ is our brother and he will remain in us. He does not abandon us.

Question

In what way do you show the depth of God’s love through your Christian life?

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Commentary

Gospel: Mark 10:2-16

The image of marriage in this week's readings continues in the Gospel of Mark. When asked about the dilemma of divorce, Jesus leads the crowd to the beginning of creation where God made humans both male and female and as suitable partners.

If men are from Mars and women are from Venus — as the author John Gray would have it — yet still find a way to be “one flesh,” imagine how mysterious it is for our Creator God to “become one flesh” with His creation and to remain with us even to (and through) His death.

God does not divorce us, because God is now one with us. God who is divine takes on our humanity so that we who are human could take on his divinity. This divine-human marriage does not end in divorce, but remains forever. If Christian marriage is to be a mirror of God's marriage to us through Christ's life, death, and resurrection, then we may truly say “Amen” to Jesus' command: “What God has joined, no human being must separate.”

Question

How are you making a committed effort to remain in marriage with God?

This Week's Task

The Sacrament of Holy Matrimony is more than a man and wife sharing a life together. It is a Sacrament of Vocation and mirror image of God's marriage to us.

If you or someone you know are not married in the Church, consider seeking out a priest or deacon to discuss the purpose and value of the Sacramental vocation of marriage.

Prayer

Each member is invited to consider — in silence — a married couple who is in particular need of prayer. After a period of silence, the group prays the following:

Father, through Your Son, You have made an everlasting bond with humanity.

May those who are called to the sacredness of marriage reflect Your love for us all.

Bless couples who are struggling in their vocation and strengthen their love for each other. Amen.

The prayer continues with Psalm 128

Psalm

Response: May the Lord bless us all the days of our lives.

Blessed are you who fear the LORD,
who walk in his ways!
For you shall eat the fruit of your
handiwork;
blessed shall you be, and favored.

R. May the Lord bless us all the days of our lives.

Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine
in the recesses of your home;
your children like olive plants
around your table.

R. May the Lord bless us all the days of our lives.

Behold, thus is the man blessed
who fears the LORD.
The LORD bless you from Zion:
may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem
all the days of your life.

R. May the Lord bless us all the days of our lives.

May you see your children's children.
Peace be upon Israel!

R. May the Lord bless us all the days of our lives.

Conclude with an Our Father