

A Quick Reflection on Marriage

My Reflection on the readings of the 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B – Oct 7, 2018

First Reading: Genesis 2:18-24

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 127 (128)

Second Reading: Hebrews 2:9-11

Gospel: Mark 10:2-16

I have just four quick points on Marriage

First Point: Marriage is a Divine Institution. Hence, it is to be ruled by the Divine Law.

Marriage is a Divine Institution. It was God who instituted marriage, not man, not any society. It was God. Our first reading clearly points this out. And, because Marriage is a divine institution, it is to be ruled by the Divine Law, by what God wants. Not simply what I want, what society wants, or what culture wants, or what any other authority (Aunt Serena Column, my friends, etc) wants. If your marriage is ruled by any laws contrary to the Law of God, those laws are null and void. And such marriages are lived in disobedience to God. Jesus clearly points this out to the Jews in the Gospel. We need to understand the figure of Moses to the Jews. Moses was the law giver, or properly, the one who brought the commandments from God to them. As such, he was a powerful figure and authority for the Jews. Hence, Jesus ask them what Moses commanded them and corrects Moses that divorce was not the command of God. Jesus went ahead to reaffirm the command of God on marriage and press it home as the only valid rule over marriage.

Hence, those thinking that the Church is just being troublesome and obstinate or outdated for her stance on marriage. It is not the Church. The Church has no authority to change the Divine Law. No pope or bishop, etc has the power to change the Divine Law on marriage. So, those saying who is a priest that he should tell me how to live my marriage, it is not the priest, he has no such authority. It is the Divine law that rules marriage. It is either you live your marriage in accordance with the Divine Law or not. It is between you and God and you would be judged accordingly.

Second Point: Love is primarily a decision, not merely feelings.

Is love a decision or a feeling? We live in a society today that brainwashes us constantly to believing the wrong things, and to have wrong notions. A society that attempts to deaden our conscience and presents evil things as good. They are not good. This misleading society has misled us to believing that love is a feeling. Our musicians and poets and writers, etc., have spoken as though love is primarily our good feelings and emotions. It is misleading and wrong. Love is not primarily an emotion, it is primarily a function of reason and will. Thus, it is primarily a decision. When we say, we love God, it is not an emotion, or a sexual one at that. No. It is a decision, and affirmation of the will.

So, the love we profess at wedding is primarily a decision, not merely feelings. On your wedding day, you stood in the presence of God and made a decision to care and nurture each other till death. It is a

promise, a decision you made in the presence of God. Thus, you must work every day at renewing your decision. It requires work. You have to keep working at your marriage, your love, your decision, your understanding of each other, your acceptance and re-acceptance of each other, your affirmation and re-affirmation of each other.

This is not to say that feelings are not important or not in the equation at all. They are in the picture but they are not the central player there. We live in a society that tries to give feelings such a central role. No. What makes us human is primarily reasoning, not feelings. So, in love, feelings could be present, but it is primarily a decision. Feelings or emotions are too unstable to base something as important as love on. We all know that our emotions or feelings fluctuates from time to time. A mother's care of her children is not based simply on feelings. What of the days she is tired and frustrated by the child or unhappy about the child, is she justified to throw the child out? No. She continues to work at correcting the child and working ways of making the child better. All because of the Love of the mother for the child.

Love is that way. And it requires continuous work and effort. Mother Theresa said: If we want a love message to be heard, it has got to be sent out. To keep a lamp burning, we have to keep putting oil in it. Love is like the lamp burning, we must keep putting oil in it. If the oil goes out, the light goes out. So, we must keep working at putting oil in the lamp.

A comedian once said that if you see a man come down from the driver's seat to open the door of his wife, it is one of two things. It is either that they are newly wedded or the door is faulty and could not be opened from inside. Funny, isn't it. But it should be like that. It should not be such that the love is greatest at wedding and becomes to undergo the law of diminishing returns. No, the love is supposed to grow and mature as the marriage progresses. This can only happen if the couple keep working at their decision. Those little, small things that they do for each other, that they enjoy, they should not let it die but keep growing it and fanning it to flames.

Third Point: Status has changed; Live up to your new status.

At wedding, your status changes. You are no longer the same. You are no longer a bachelor or spinster. You are no longer alone, single. You are now two as one. This must reflect in your life style and your decisions. You can no longer just take decision alone, but now as two in one. The couple must confirm things and decision by their partner.

For example, if you like going to pepper soup joint, buy it and bring it home or take your wife there, if she would like to go there. Don't spend your entire time gossiping at the hair salon, go home to your husband.

Don't keep friends and relationships that don't recognize and help your new status. Cut if off. There is no managing it. If any friend or family member would not recognize and be useful to your new status, cut them off. You must succeed. Don't allow anybody let you fail.

More so, if there are problems or misunderstanding, fix it and look for solutions. Don't try to run away or stay away. Who is going to fix your family for you? Appreciate your home, whatever you have there, whether plenty or few. Don't be look at another person's own or staying at another person's place to

enjoy plenty because you lack that at home. Be content. If you would not be content with little, you would not be content or satisfied even with plenty.

Fourth Point: Help each other to attain Salvation.

If there is one goal of marriage, it is this: to assist each other and the children to attain salvation. Never be a block in the path of each other's salvation. Don't make yourself the reason why your partner is always mad, angry, bitter or cry. Never. God would not take it lightly with you, if you do. Remember Luke 17:1-2 (Matthew 18:6-7), don't cause any to sin or falter. It would better if a large millstone be tied around your neck and drown rather than do that.

Also, don't advise or encourage each other to commit sin or in corruption. That is not why God brought you together. Is the union of God or of the evil one?

Pray together (morning and evening). A family that prays together, stays together. No, "I am tired". Strengthen each other and help each other grow. Remember, where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there (Matthew 18:20). The family prayer must be a unity prayer, a prayer where we are united. Not a prayer where we are scoring cheap points at each other, praying and throwing accusations at each other or telling each other their faults. If there is misunderstanding, talk about it and settle it. Prayer is not the place to be pointing fingers at each other.

Also, share your faith together. Let there be faith sharing among couples, in the family from time to time. Help each other grow in faith. If there is something that is not clear, then ask the priest as a couple to clarify it. Help each other grow in faith. Encourage each other in the work of God; Join Pius societies and be active in Church. Pray the Rosary constantly and hand your family over to the protection of St. Michael the Archangel.