**27th Sunday OT Homily**

Today’s Scripture readings are about the bond of love that marriage creates between a man and a woman, a bond that God intends to be permanent. These readings challenge the spouses to practice the fidelity of their ever-faithful God, honoring their holy covenant commitment before Him.

The first reading, taken from the book of Genesis, explains the original plan of God concerning marriage. It teaches us that God made man and woman for each other. For that reason, in marriage they are no longer two but one, united by an unbreakable bond. The reading also describes the institution of marriage and shows that monogamy was the intention of God from the very beginning.

The Responsorial Psalm (Ps 128) expands the marital theme of the first reading and the Gospel to include the children born of the union. Since the children enrich the lives of their parents, the Psalmist prays: “May you see your children’s children.” Marriage itself is a blessing, and children are blessings for their parents, the Church and the society in general.

The second reading, taken from the Letter to the Hebrews, reminds us that Jesus became one of us. As one of us, Jesus “tasted death for everyone.” He was not only the Sacrifice, but also the High Priest. We are now Jesus’ brothers and sisters, bonded with Him, and through Him bonded with God. Therefore, Christ became the Savior of all people, and received all of us as brothers and sisters. Even though Jesus’ prohibition of divorce can be a source of suffering for those who face difficult married lives, Paul suggests that we have to accept pain as Jesus did, and that part of suffering will for us the way to glory.

Today’s Gospel gives Christ’s explicit teaching on marriage and divorce, **the Divine origin of marriage, the sacredness of family life, and the indissolubility of marriage.** These are difficult messages to preach in a society that embraces co-habitation and ignores both the rising divorce statistics and the dangerous consequences of divorce. The Gospel teaches that **family life is sacred**, **that husband and wife are partners with equal rights**, and that **the destruction of the family by divorce is producing the destruction of society.**

Both spouses need to work hard to create a good marriage: Marriage requires that they should become the right persons for each another as God-given gifts (a husband as a gift to his wife and a wife as a gift to her husband). **Marriage is a union based on committed sharing, and forgiving, sacrificial, love**. It requires many adjustments; much generosity, and great good will, to forgive and ask for forgiveness; sincere cooperation in training children and raising them as practicing Catholic Christians; and daily strength from God obtained through personal and family prayers, at least weekly when it is not possible to do it daily, participation in the Parish liturgy, etc.

We need to reach out with Christian kindness to the divorced and to troubled families. The Parish Community needs to accept these brothers and sisters with respect, compassion, sensitivity, love, and support, sharing their pain from a failed marriage (It is very painful to fail a marriage). It is our duty to encourage them to listen to the Word of God, to attend the Sacrifice of the Mass, to persevere in prayer, to bring up their children in the Christian Faith”.