

### Mark 10:2-12

Some Pharisees approached Jesus and asked, 'Is it against the law for a man to divorce his wife?' They were testing him. He answered them, 'What did Moses command you?' 'Moses allowed us' they said 'to draw up a writ of dismissal and so to divorce.' Then Jesus said to them, 'It was because you were so unteachable that he wrote this commandment for you. But from the beginning of creation God made them male and female. This is why a man must leave father and mother, and the two become one body. They are no longer two, therefore, but one body. So then, what God has united, man must not divide.' Back in the house the disciples questioned him again about this, and he said to them, 'The man who divorces his wife and marries another is guilty of adultery against her. And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another she is guilty of adultery too.'

According to the Book of Deuteronomy, a man could give his wife a bill of divorce and dismiss her from his house. There was no provision in Jewish law for a woman to divorce her husband. It was a law which left women vulnerable. In reply to the Pharisees Jesus declares that what the law allows is not what actually what God wills. Jesus places the focus on marriage. His vision of marriage is of a profound union between a man and a woman, a communion of faithful love. It is no coincidence that immediately after this passage Jesus gives us a story about children, about parents bringing children to Jesus for him to bless them. Marriage between a man and a woman is a tried and tested way in which children can grow up to be loved, as well as being given stability and security. No other setting has been proven better for the nourishing and flourishing of children. Marriage is understood as a communion of faithful love between a man and a woman, the fullest expression in human form of the communion of love between the Lord and us.

#### Prayer after Communion

Grant us, almighty God, that we may be refreshed and nourished by the Sacrament which we have received, so as to be transformed into what we consume.

## TWENTY SEVENTH SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME

Year B

6<sup>th</sup> October 2024



Jesus' teaching about divorce and remarriage can be a challenging one for many people. The Church continues to uphold the strong and positive teaching of Jesus that God intends for a man and woman to make a lifelong commitment to one another in the Sacrament of Marriage. Many of us, however, know people whose marriage has not been a lifelong commitment. The example of Jesus teaches us that we are called to act with compassion and love in our relationships with all, and especially when people are hurting because of difficulties in their relationships. Most importantly, we remember that when marriages thrive, it is a sign of God's grace at work

#### Opening Prayer

Almighty ever-living God, who in the abundance of your kindness surpass the merits and the desires of those who entreat you, pour out your mercy upon us to pardon what conscience dreads and to give what prayer does not dare to ask.

### **Genesis 2:18-24**

The Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him a helpmate.' So from the soil the Lord God fashioned all the wild beasts and all the birds of heaven. These he brought to the man to see what he would call them; each one was to bear the name the man would give it. The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of heaven and all the wild beasts. But no helpmate suitable for man was found for him. So the Lord God made the man fall into a deep sleep. And while he slept, he took one of his ribs and enclosed it in flesh. The Lord God built the rib he had taken from the man into a woman, and brought her to the man. The man exclaimed: 'This at last is bone from my bones, and flesh from my flesh! This is to be called woman, for this was taken from man.'

This is why a man leaves his father and mother and joins himself to his wife, and they become one body.

God created man from the earth and God created woman from the side of man. This account has often been misinterpreted to suggest the subordination of woman to man. The translation 'helpmate' is not an accurate translation of the Hebrew word. Something like 'indispensable partner' would be better. The text suggests that the woman is to stand alongside the man as his equal. She corresponds to him exactly, as the man affirms, 'bone of my bones', 'flesh of my flesh.' But if the man names the animals, suggesting a certain authority over them, he simply recognises the name of the woman as '*ish-shah*', the female version of himself. The primary relationship between the man and the woman is adult to adult. The text proclaims that from the beginning God intended men and women to interact with mutuality and partnership, a mutuality which finds its fullest expression in marriage, a 'man leaves his father and mother and joins himself to his wife, and they become one body.'

### **Psalm 127(128)**

*O blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways!*

*By the labour of your hands you shall eat. You will be happy and prosper.*

*Your wife like a fruitful vine in the heart of your house;  
your children like shoots of the olive, around your table.*

*Indeed thus shall be blessed the man who fears the Lord.*

*May the Lord bless you from Zion in a happy Jerusalem all the days of your life!*

*May you see your children's children. On Israel, peace!*

### **Hebrews 2:9-11**

We see in Jesus one who was for a short while made lower than the angels and is now crowned with glory and splendour because he submitted to death; by God's grace he had to experience death for all mankind.

As it was his purpose to bring a great many of his sons into glory, it was appropriate that God, for whom everything exists and through whom everything exists, should make perfect, through suffering, the leader who would take them to their salvation. For the one who sanctifies, and the ones who are sanctified, are of the same stock; that is why he openly calls them brothers.

Jesus became incarnate and suffered, thus for a time becoming lower than the angels. It was all for our sake and our salvation. Sorrow, sufferings, and death in our fallen state are necessary conditions of human life; and He who was to be the Saviour of men must share their nature and sad experiences, in order that He might overcome the power of death, the instrument of Satan, that He who was sinless Himself might satisfy for the sins of His brethren and be a rescue for those who are tempted and sorely tried.

**Alleluia, alleluia! Your word is truth, O Lord:  
consecrate us in the truth. Alleluia!**

*(Gospel overleaf)*

### **Prayer over the Offerings**

Accept, O Lord, we pray, the sacrifices instituted by your commands and, through the sacred mysteries, which we celebrate with dutiful service, graciously complete the sanctifying work by which you are pleased to redeem us.