



Homiletic Guide – The Adventure of Commitment

October 6, 2024 – Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: Genesis 2:18-24 – It is not good for the man to be alone.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 128:1-2, 3, 4-5, 6 – May the Lord bless us all our lives.

Second Reading: Hebrews 2:9-11 – He who consecrates and those who are being consecrated all have one origin as “brothers.”

Gospel: Mark 10:2-16 – God made them male and female... What God has joined together no human being must separate.

The following notes are provided as a leadoff for your reflection—it is not necessary to address every bullet point in your homily. With that in mind, here are some thoughts to ponder:

- Today’s readings offer profound insights into who we are as human beings, and how we are called to live in communion with others, starting in our families. In our world today, **we are faced with a culture that no longer holds marriage as a sacred, lifelong bond, entered into for the good of the couple and the procreation of children.** This reality affects us all:
 - Married couples see close friends and relatives going through divorce and wonder: would we be better off without each other or with someone else?
 - Singles wonder whether they will ever find someone to whom they can make a lifelong commitment in marriage, or they may grow frustrated trying to live a chaste life in a culture that does not value sexual integrity.





- People who have left an abusive marriage understand that they made the right choice; even Pope Francis says that “In such cases, separation becomes inevitable. At times it even becomes morally necessary.” (Amoris Laetitia, 241) Yet they wonder whether they will ever find a healing, loving, lifelong relationship.
- Many couples settle for living together without commitment, often to the detriment of the children that may come into their relationship, and some opt for a civil ceremony without the benefit of sacramental grace.
- Those whose longing for love is experienced within an enduring same-sex attraction wonder how our Lord’s teaching can possibly be Good News for them.
- In contrast, **Jesus holds marriage in the highest regard—much higher than the Jewish and Greek cultures that surrounded him.** In today’s Gospel reading, he presents God’s design for marriage as the “one flesh” union of a man and a woman, joined in a faithful, exclusive, and lifelong covenant that is naturally open to bringing children into the world.
 - Jesus once scolded the Pharisees for their hypocrisy: “They tie up heavy burdens, hard to carry, and lay them on people’s shoulders, but they will not lift a finger to move them.” (Mt 23:4)
 - Sustaining a lifelong commitment in marriage is not easy, and both the Jews and the Greeks established ways to handle situations when human frailty led to the breakdown of a marriage. Considering that in his earthly life Jesus never married, should we say that Jesus was being hypocritical by his own standards?





- Not at all! First of all, through his sacrifice, Jesus modeled how married couples are to love each other: “Love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” (Jn 15:12-13)
- Second, Jesus’ act of offering himself exemplifies the total and definitive self-offering that is made in marriage. That is why he is described as the bridegroom (Jn 3:29)... and we the Church are his bride (Eph 5:32)... and this Eucharist we celebrate is the wedding banquet, a foretaste of the wedding feast we will enjoy unto everlasting life with our divine spouse in Heaven (Rev 19:7-9).
- Third, Jesus himself makes possible what the world increasingly sees as impossible. Through the grace of the Sacrament of Marriage, nourishment at the Table of the Lord, and the gift of the Holy Spirit, we are constantly made new with the assurance that “God is faithful and will not let you be tried beyond your strength; but with the trial he will also provide a way out, so that you may be able to bear it.” (1 Cor 10:13)
- The ***Radiate Love Marriage Initiative***
 - The Catholic Church throughout California is progressing along the year-long Radiate Love initiative to deepen our appreciation for the gift of Marriage.
 - Jesus says “I am the way, and the truth, and the life.” (Jn 14:6) In the depths of our hearts, we all want more—we long to be refreshed with the living water of salvation (Jn 4:10-15) that transforms the imperfections in our lives into a radiant love for the world to see. This year represents an invitation to drink deeply from the well of Christ’s grace, whatever our state in life might be:
 - Married couples, make time this year to grow together as a couple and take advantage of the many helps, tools, and ministries the Church offers to accompany your lifelong journey together—see www.radiatelove.info.



- Parents, have intentional conversations with your children about what it means to live a life of love following the example of Jesus.
 - Couples living together, Christ absolutely loves you and wants to give you the abundant life he has promised. Don't settle for the insecurity of an uncommitted life, but be patient with yourselves. Christian marriage calls us to a mature commitment and a disposition to model the love of Christ in good times and bad. The adventure is unknown, but the rewards are great—set your eyes on Him and move forward in faith, one step at a time. If you need guidance, make an appointment—the Church is here to help.
 - The same invitation applies if you have already experienced the loss of a marriage through divorce. The annulment process can serve not only to ascertain whether your marriage was lacking in some essential aspect, but also to bring healing and growth for new life.
 - Equally, the adult children of divorce may find healing from their difficult childhood experiences through resources such as [Life-Giving Wounds](#).
 - If you experience same-sex attraction or gender discordance, know that God loves you more than you could ever ask or even imagine ([Eph 3:14-21](#)). The door to eternal life has been freely opened for us all, at great personal cost by Christ himself! Open your heart to the grace of following Him, seeking what is good and true (*Veritatis Splendor*, [62-64](#)), and participating in community for friendship and support—see [Eden Invitation](#).
- Highlight any activities that the parish will be sponsoring in the coming months. **Emphasize that *all* are invited to explore the monthly resources on the website**, especially those for marriage enrichment or designed for faith sharing at home.





Note for homilists: This Homiletic Guide is intended to help you encourage your people to invest in their marital relationship, share the faith with their children, and open their hearts to recognize the ways the Lord is leading them to radiate love out to the world, especially through the witness of a lifelong commitment to one another. The Marriage Fact Sheet 2024 offers some important background information for your review, but not necessarily to include in your homily. The social trends regarding marriage in California are not great right now, but it is important to be positive, practical, and personal.

This Homiletic Guide is one resource among many others designed for your parish ministries or your parishioners' home use. You may want to take some time to familiarize yourself with the resources for October (bulletin insert or announcement, prayer card, blessing, intercessions, videos, etc.) on the Radiate Love website: www.radiatelove.info. In particular, be sure to make use of the Intercessory Prayers and the Blessing for Married Couples after Communion at all weekend Masses.

