

HOMILY FOR SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

1. A tension in Christianity has been sexuality, such as Jansenism and Puritanism
 - a. a lot of it goes back to a heresy called Manichaeism
 - i. Manichaeism taught that the spiritual is good and the earthy is evil
 - ii. God is the highest good because he is pure spirit,
 - iii. since sexuality reproduces earthly matter, it becomes the lowest evil
 - iv. in this view marriage was looked down as a necessary evil because at best it legalized evil actions
 - v. the holiest person would have been the celibate scholar who dedicated himself strictly to thought
2. the true message of Christianity is expressed in today's readings
 - a. Jesus is attending a wedding in Cana in Galilee, with his disciples and his mother
 - b. the extra crowd of disciples probably put pressure on the wine at the feast
 - c. Mary notices that the couple is about to be embarrassed by running out of wine
 - d. she goes to Jesus and points this out
 - i. Jesus reaction is interesting, first he objects it's not yet his time
 - ii. Mary does not seem to be disturbed by his words at all, she goes to the servers and says do whatever he tells you
 - iii. Jesus is pressured by his mother to work a miracle and so he transforms the water into wine
3. John's Gospel like all good literature has several levels of meaning
 - a. his actions imply an approval of weddings
 - b. the transformation of water into wine symbolizes the new meaning
 - c. marriage is not simply a legal relationship between two people
 - d. marriage now becomes a sacrament, a symbol of God himself
 - e. In marriage two people form an indissoluble bond and become one
 - f. our belief in the Trinity is that the father and the son have such deep love for each other that their love itself is a person
 - g. John has said elsewhere that it God is love
 - i. the father the son and the Spirit are so united with each other that they are love itself
 - ii. human love in the sacrament of marriage becomes a sign and a Revelation of God to us
4. another aspect of marriage is that it is not limited to two people
 - a. first of all marriage unites to families not just legally but in a very real way
 - b. we are the composite of our parents and they are the composite of their parents
 - c. when I do marriage preparation, I like to ask the couples to do a fantasy
 - i. imagine the relationship between their mutual parents
 - ii. I.e., Imagine the groom's father married to the bride's mother and the bride's father married to the groom's mother
 - iii. imagine the challenges that would occur in these relationships
 - iv. often they quickly recognize that these same challenges would be the challenges that they are already starting to experience in their own relationship
 - d. that fantasy in itself shows that marriage is about much more than just the two people who exchange consent
5. marriage also symbolizes the relationship between God and us as his people
 - a. God speaks through Isaiah to reassure his people suffering in exile
 - b. he tells them that there will be a day of vindication
 - c. " no longer shall people call you *forsaken*, you shall be called my *delight* and *espoused*
 - d. he goes on to say the Lord delights in you and makes your land his spouse
 - e. as the young man marries a virgin your builder shall marry you as a bridegroom rejoices in his bride so shall your God rejoice in you
6. As Members of the Church, we are the bride of God, the promise made to Israel continues to us because the Church is the new Israel
 - a. so we see marriage is not a necessary evil but rather a beautiful symbol

- b. for those like myself who are celibate, we are called to be in a committed relationship to God and to his church
 - c. it is a spiritual relationship not in the sense of being away from the earth but rather another way of imaging that relationship that God has with with His people
7. marriage requires unity, faithfulness and fruitfulness
- a. two people are called to become one
 - b. they only become one by promising to be faithful to each other
 - c. there unity and faithfulness produces a love that overflows beyond them
 - d. the fruitfulness may be expressed in children, but will not be limited to children
 - e. fruitfulness is about making the earth actually loving place, the garden of Eden
 - i. a place where we can experience the presence and wonder of God
 - f. whether in the sacrament of matrimony are the commitments of celibacy we are called to be children of God and symbols of his love
8. each of us should rejoice in our calling, recognizing every vocation has its challenges
9. in our vocation we come to know that God has chosen us, he rejoices in us and wants us to be filled with joy