

O.T. XXVII SUNDAY-GEN. 2:18-24; HEB. 2: 9-11; MARK 10: 2-12 (2-16) October 4<sup>th</sup> 09.

One afternoon, according to an old Sufi tale, a man named Nasruddin was sitting in a cafe, drinking tea with a friend and talking about life and love. "How come you never got married, Nasruddin?" asked his friend at one point. "Well," said Nasruddin, "to tell you the truth, I spent my youth looking for the perfect woman. In Cairo, I met a beautiful and intelligent woman, with eyes like dark olives, but she was unkind. Then in Baghdad, I met a woman who was a wonderful and generous soul, but we had no interests in common. One woman after another would seem just right, but there would always be something missing. Then one day, I met her. She was beautiful, intelligent, generous and kind. We had everything in common. In fact, she was perfect." "Well," said Nasruddin's friend, "what happened? Why didn't you marry her?" Nasruddin sipped his tea reflectively. "Well," he replied. "It's a sad thing; seems she was looking for the perfect man." In today's gospel Jesus reminds us that an imperfect man has no right to divorce his equally imperfect wife whom God has given him as His perfect gift.

In today's gospel the Pharisees were trying to trick him, to see if he would criticize the Mosaic tradition and alienate the people. But Jesus used the occasion to declare unequivocally that the bond of marriage comes from God, not man, and that it is permanent and indissoluble: *"What God has joined, man must not separate"*.

Jesus' stand: Jesus does not claim to introduce a new teaching. He reminded the Jews that his doctrine went back to the original intention of God. Citing the book of Genesis, Jesus proved that God made us male and female and commanded that *"the two shall become one flesh."* He then drew the conclusion that *"they are no longer two, but one body"* – partners with equal rights. He declared that no man was allowed to separate what God had joined together (Mt 19:6).

*The Catechism of the Catholic Church* summarizes the Church's teaching: "Divorce is a grave offense against the natural law. It claims to break the contract, to which the spouses freely consented, to live with each other till

death..... Divorce is immoral also because it introduces disorder into the family and into society.

Disagreement is bound to arise even among the best couples. Let Christ be the great peace-maker in the family; and prayer is the best medicine to heal all differences. The family that prays together stays together.

### Jokes of the week.

#1: "My husband and I divorced over religious differences. He thought he was God and I didn't."

# 2: A 98 year-old man and a 95 year-old woman went to a lawyer to get a divorce. "How long have you been married?" he asked. "75 rough and rocky years," they said. "Then, why have you waited so long to file for divorce?" They replied, "We had to wait for the kids to die!"

# 3: "The secret of my success in my married life and in my business is the same", said, Henry Ford on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his wedding, "I don't change models every now and then; instead I stick on to one and try to improve it".

**Just an information:** *During the last three years the divorce rate in the U.S has gone above 43%. Each year 2.5 million more couples get divorced. A greater number of divorces occur within the Christian churches than in marriages made outside the church.*

*The U.S. Census for the year 2000 reveals that 9.7 million Americans live with unmarried partners of the opposite sex while 1.2 million Americans live with same-sex partners.*