

27th Sunday OT Year B
October 3-4, 2015

Building up the Family in Faith

Readings: Genesis 2:18-24; Hebrews 2:9-11; Mark 10: 2-16

While today is Marathon Day here in the Twin Cities, and a beautiful one at that- it is also a major inconvenience for us here at the Cathedral. Thank you for making the effort to attend today! It is also Respect Life Sunday in Catholic Churches throughout this nation, as well as the opening of the Ordinary Synod of Bishops important discussion on Marriage and Family. These topics are far-reaching and vitally important to Catholics and all people of good will. This past Friday, I was privileged to participate in the blessing of a new life care center, Abria Pregnancy Resources, slated to open its doors in one week on University Ave. and Vandalia in St. Paul. What a joyous, upbeat group of people who volunteer there.

There is only a willing spirit to help women in need; there was no judgmental attitude, no finger wagging, only a helping hand in a spirit of love. This is at the heart of the pro-life movement and this is what will win hearts and ultimately change minds.

We in the Church want to do all in our power to promote, preserve and defend the sacrament of matrimony and to prepare our young couples so that they may know and understand the nature of a sacramental marriage and be prepared to enter into it with full knowledge and after sufficient reflection. I now begin preparation by thanking them for choosing marriage in the Church, realizing that there are many easier routes to go, w/out Six sessions, Retreat, NFP classes, etc. Archbishop Dolan (NY) noted that only 50% of Catholic young people are getting married in the Church.

Our Scriptures set out the basis for marriage as a gift from God towards the union of love that brings together man and woman for life in a holy union. Jesus then takes the institution of marriage and

bestows upon it a special grace, thereby lifting it to the dignity of a sacrament. The permanence of this union is so clearly set out in Scripture that it is difficult to see how it could be questioned. Saint Paul in the Letter to the Corinthians exhorts the faithful that “nothing is wanting to you in any grace, waiting for the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ.” We have all that we need in Christ for a fulfilling life, one that is respectful of the gift of life.

The best way to prepare for a successful happy and holy marriage is to live a virtuous single life first and to teach our young people to respect life beginning at an early age. We assist young couples in the best possible way to understand and appreciate the depth of sacramental marriage. Prior to this, we want to invite our teenagers to live a life of virtue, to foster friendships with others whose families share the same commitment to the faith.

I maintain that this is all about fostering a culture of life, centered upon Jesus Christ. But it is equally important to send of message of personal support to those who for various reasons have experienced difficulties in their marriage. You remain close to the heart if the Church in what must certainly be a painful situation. The Church shows compassion for all in these situations, and acknowledges that sometimes one spouse had little or even nothing to do with a breakup. Those who are separated and divorced are not second-class members of the Church or in our parish.

Make no mistake about it. Solid and fruitful family life is at the very core of our beliefs as Catholics and forms the very foundation for the future of our parish. We pray for an outpouring of grace upon the Synod Fathers to clearly and pastorally uphold the dignity of marriage and its indispensable role in the life of the Church.