

CELEBRATE SABBATH

Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

Forbear your imperfections and strive for excellence in all you do.

Genesis 2:18-24

It is not good for man to be alone. So, God formed all creatures and brought them to man so that he may name them. He couldn't name even a single one of them to stand with him. Then God made the woman out of the same substance as man and brought her to the man. Then the man said: "This one, at last, is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh."

God made man and woman out of the same substance, in God's image and likeness and the two became one in God's image. What a wonderful way to describe the dignity of man and woman and the communion to which they are called!

Psalms 128

The Psalmist muses, "How blessed is the one who fears the Lord and walks in His ways". Blessing is on the person who is totally committed to God in obedience. He is blessed because he has no other loyalties or worries or desires. He knows that other loyalties would distract him, and he has no one else to please. The nations around him have many gods to please. Loyalty to the one true God, the God of the covenant, gives him freedom and joy. What else could he feel except feel "blessed". This "fear of the Lord" that he speaks of is the fear of missing the mark, of missing the way of the Lord, of becoming disloyal, of losing the freedom and losing this gift of God's favor, Grace.

The Psalmist goes on to count his blessings: wife being fruitful like vine in the house, children like olive shoots around the table, seeing prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of life, seeing children's children. What else could he feel, except "blessed".

Our Poet uses several images: (1) Like fruitful vine – is symbol of fruitfulness. The blessing is that this man's wife will be happy in mothering lots of children. A famous Rabbi wrote: "I never call my wife 'my wife'. I call her 'my home', she who makes a home for my children. (2) Like olive shoots – is symbol of tender growth to be carefully and tenderly nurtured. (3) Around the table - is the symbol of family, fellowship, love.

**Blessed are you, who fear the Lord,
Who walk in his ways!
For you shall eat the fruit of your handiwork,
Blessed shall you be and favored.**

Hebrews 2:9-11

Our model for all we are and all we do is Jesus who humbled himself to become a “brother” to us. He is not ashamed to call us “brothers”.

How marvelous it is that we are reminded today of our dignity and worth: He (Jesus) is not ashamed to call us “brothers”. Do all you can to maintain and preserve that dignity.

Mark 10:2-16

What God has joined together, no human being should separate.

This excerpt could give us the impression that it is about the legality of divorce or the indissolubility of marriage. Deeper reflection on this Gospel passage, together with the other two readings cited above, reveal to us that it is about the dignity of man and woman and children. It is about man and woman being made in God’s image and brought into communion with God and each other. It is about Jesus not being ashamed to call us “brothers” as the second reading says. It is about treating women with deep respect and not throw them out as commodities with a “writ” of separation. It is about the dignity of children who are totally dependant and don’t have a voice of their own that others would hear. It is about God’s ways as different from man’s ways.

The question of the Pharisee was about what the law permitted. The response of Jesus was about God’s way, God’s plan, God’s intent, and the very heart of God. Jesus took the question from social or legal requirement to God’s intent and purpose. The Pharisees concerned themselves with what the law required. Jesus concerned himself with God’s purpose for his creation.

How wonderful it is to listen to Jesus calling us again to be deeply respectful of all God’s people, men, women and children. Reflect on the dignity of all God’s people and all God’s creatures.

Saint of the Day, October 6 - St. Bruno and 22 other saints are remembered this day

Bruno was born in Cologne, Germany in 1030 of the prominent Hartenfaust family. He studied at the Cathedral school at Rheims, and on his return to Cologne about 1055, was ordained and became a Canon at St. Cunibert's. He returned to Rheims in 1056 as professor of theology, became head of the school the following year, and remained there until 1074, when he was appointed chancellor of Rheims by its archbishop,

Manasses. Bruno was forced to flee Rheims when he and several other priests denounced Manasses in 1076 as unfit for the office of Papal Legate. Bruno later returned to Cologne but went back to Rheims in 1080 when Manasses was deposed, and though the people of Rheims wanted to make Bruno archbishop, he decided to pursue a hermit's life.

Bruno became a hermit and moved on to Grenoble with six companions in 1084. They were assigned a place for their hermitages in a desolate, mountainous, alpine area called La Grande Chartreuse, by the bishop of Grenoble, whose confessor Bruno became. They built an oratory and individual cells, roughly followed the rule of St. Benedict, and thus began the Carthusian Order. They embraced a life of poverty, manual work, prayer, and transcribing manuscripts, though as yet they had no written rule.

The fame of the group and their founder spread, and in 1090, Bruno was brought to Rome, against his wishes, by Pope Urban II (whom he had taught at Rheims) as Papal Adviser in the reformation of the clergy. Bruno persuaded Urban to allow him to resume his life as a hermit, declined the Pope's offer of the archbishopric of Reggio, and remained there until his death on October 6, 1101. He wrote several commentaries on the psalms and on St. Paul's epistles. He was never formally canonized because of the Carthusians' aversion to public honors but Pope Leo X granted the Carthusians permission to celebrate his feast in 1514, and his name was placed on the Roman calendar in 1623.

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