

Reflections

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Matrimony And Divorce

...therefore a man will leave his father and his mother, and the two will become one flesh. So, they are no longer two, but one flesh. Well then, what God has bound together, man will not separate...

In the time of Jesus, no Jew questioned the right to divorce, since Moses had allowed it. What the Rabbis of that time discussed was the motives for divorce: whether it was reason enough that the woman burned the food or that the husband found another woman more beautiful.

Regardless, divorce was granted very easily. Pharisaic morality was based on the non-admitted inferiority of the woman who was considered property of the male. In light of this pharisaical legality, the Lord poses God's original project exactly as it is described in Genesis. Union of the male and female expresses human fulfillment and happiness.

I believe this era – moreso than previous eras – has a greater need to meditate on this Gospel because in this Gospel, Jesus solemnly affirms the character of matrimony and the indissoluble unity of the spouses. And it is not about a law imposed on spouses. Rather, it traces the way to human happiness: it reveals that the familial and conjugal relationship is an inexhaustible source of creation and joy.

The changing of spouse gives the illusion of renewal, but it is nothing more than a new beginning destined to failure with the same obstacle as always.....selfishness, laziness, sterility of those who are unfaithful.

Often, the indissolubility of matrimony is understood and experienced as an obligation which limits the freedom of the spouses. But Christ has abolished the "law" and has given his life while opposing the "legal" licentiousness of the Jews. He did not invent any new obligation. The only thing He did was express the profound desire of love.

Because all authentic love wants to be eternal, it creates fidelity, demands commitment, aspires for discovery, pretends never to end, wants to grow and develop itself endlessly. No one who truly loves sets a deadline. No love exists by quotas or for periods of time. And, therefore, we have to cultivate love daily, we have to renew it permanently.

The true meaning of indissolubility is not, therefore, to prohibit a separation. Its value is fully positive: they will never finish knowing or loving each other. The nature of love and matrimony consists in developing indefinitely and in renewing without ceasing. When a human being begins to feel loved, he/she begins to change, to blossom, to discover himself/herself and to unfold without exhausting his/her resources.

Already Father Joseph Kentenich, founder of the Schoenstatt Movement, said this when he defined fidelity as: "creative and vigorous preservation of the first love." And he referred not only to conjugal/married love, but to all forms of love: paternal love, maternal, filial (childlike), fraternal.....

One must work daily to create marriage/matrimony. Indissolubility is not a pillow on which the spouses may sleep, rather it is a calling to renew and enliven their love daily.

Dear brothers and sisters, I invite you to renew the great loves in your life: love for family, spouse, children, siblings and brothers and sisters in community.

Questions for reflection

1. Am I committed to strive daily for marriage/matrimony?
2. What is my opinion on the indissolubility of marriage/matrimony?
3. How do we strengthen love in the family?

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