

Lesson 10

KEEP UP THE MARITAL PURITY



We read in St. Matthew's Gospel the conversation of Jesus with the Pharisees on the importance of marital faithfulness. Jesus makes it very clear that in marriage, husband and wife become one. "They are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate". (Mt 19:6).

Marital Relationship in the Old Testament

The book of Genesis makes it clear that it is God who leads men and women to marital relation and family life. God created men and women to complement each other. Since it is not good for man to be alone, God desired that they should live as partners (Gen. 2:18). They accepted each other as 'the bone of one's bone and flesh of one's flesh' God blessed them by giving them children.

The people in the Old Testament regarded marriage as an ideal state of life. They knew that it was a very sacred covenant. Because of that, they compared the relationship between God and Israel to that of a marital relation. We read the prophets comparing unfaithful Israel to an unfaithful wife. The Jews considered unfaithfulness in marriage to be a grave sin.

Marital Relationship in the New Testament

In His public life, Jesus performed His first miracle at the marriage feast at Cana. The presence of Jesus at this feast has great significance. This presence points to the good that the couple receive in marriage. Marriage turned out to be an effective sign of the presence of Christ.

St. Paul presents the relation between Jesus and the Church as the model of marital relation “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her (Eph 5:25). Marriage points to the covenant between Jesus and the Church. Matrimony is the sacrament of that covenant. The couples receive abundant grace through this sacrament.

Indivisibility of Marriage

Marriage is a life-long relationship. It is more than a covenant between a man and woman. In marriage, man and woman become one in Jesus. Since God binds them, it cannot be broken. This is termed the indivisibility of marriage.

Broken Family Relationships

Marital relation is the most sacred among human relations. In the modern world, family ties are broken because they neglect the sacredness of marriage. Marital purity is mainly broken through unfaithfulness. Married couples should be totally dedicated to each other.

When we see wealth, beauty etc as the basis of marital relation, family relationship is easily broken selfless love should become the basis of family relationships.

If we do not have respect and pure love for our life-partner, family relations will become weak. Since the couple lack mutual love and respect, they find it difficult to take up joyfully, the sufferings and difficulties of family life and to forgive each other.

Couples are called to live as one body and one mind in the midst of all their sufferings. It is selfish motives that tempt a person to think of divorce. **Divorces affect the security and strength of society. It is the children who suffer most of the evil effects of divorce. They lose the protection and love which they ought to get from their parents.** Jesus taught clearly that divorce is not permissible. He said: "What God has joined together, let no one separate" (Mt 19:6).

Marital Purity

The couples enter into a sacred life through marriage. Total mutual commitment is their way to holiness. They give their bodies, minds and souls as a gift to the other. Hence, a third person should not enter between them. This is what the commandment 'Do not covet another's wife' indicates. This is a commandment to keep up marital purity. This commandment reminds us to love your life partner fully. St. Paul reminds us that one who loves his life partner as one's own body, loves himself (Eph. 5:28-29).

The backbone of the Church and society are good families. Hence let the Christian couples build up the body of Christ-the Church by being pure in their marital relationship.

Let us Pray

Bless the couples, O Lord' to understand the dignity and purity of married life and to live united with you in mutual love and unity.

Read the Word of God and Narrate

Gen. 2:22-24.

Word of God for our Guidance

“Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God” (Mt 5:8).

Let us Do

Discuss what are the things necessary to make marital relationships strong?

My Resolution

I will pray daily for the sanctification of families.

Find out the Answer

1. What did Jesus say to elucidate the indivisibility of marriage?
2. What is the type of relationship pointed out by St. Paul to compare marital relation?
3. What is the main reason for the breaking of family relationships in the modern world?
4. Who suffers the evil consequences of divorce most? Why?
5. Good families are the backbone of the church and society- Illustrate.