

TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

LECTIONARY #140

READING I Genesis 2:18-24

A reading from the Book of Genesis

The LORD God said: "It is not **good** for the man to be **alone**. I will make a suitable **partner** for him."

So the LORD God **formed** out of the **ground** various wild **animals** and various **birds** of the air, and he **brought** them to the man to see what he would **call** them;

whatever the man **called** each of them would be its **name**. The man gave names to all the **cattle**, all the **birds** of the air, and all wild **animals**; but **none** proved to be the suitable **partner** for the man.

So the LORD God cast a deep **sleep** on the man, and **while** he was asleep, he took out one of his **ribs** and closed up its place with **flesh**.

The LORD God then built up into a **woman** the rib that he had taken from the man.

When he **brought** her to the man, the man said:

"**This** one, at **last**, is **bone** of my **bones** and **flesh** of my **flesh**; this one shall be called '**woman**,' for out of '**her man**' this one has been taken."

That is why a man **leaves** his father and mother and **clings** to his wife, and the **two** of them become **one flesh**.

A narrative reading. Bring a sense of excitement to this well-known story; it's full of unexpected surprises.

Convey the love and concern God has for the man.

Keep your pace up; God is very busy working and creating.

Notice the man is given an important role in creation.

Pause at the end of this line.

With amazement.

Let the man's joy shine through in your voice, eyes, and face.

Don't overemphasize the two syllables in the word "woman"; pronounce it normally.

Pause at the end of this line.

READING I The Creator seeks the creature's good. The author expresses this in anthropomorphic terms, presenting God as a potter who works to perfect his craftsmanship. The creation of the human is not yet concluded: what is needed is to live in union with another human being. Among the animals the human does not find companionship of equal rank, and so God creates the woman from the very cell of the man. Thus there exists complementarity between the two. In this passage we appreciate the interior

life of the person who acknowledges his loneliness. Although isolation is presented as a possibility and a fear (more than as a real situation), from the consciousness of his own solitude the human being can appreciate communion with others as a good. The language suggests an affinity between man and woman and a supportive and nurturing relationship between two persons. Such complementarity does not exist in the same way between humans and animals.

The rare Hebrew term translated "deep sleep" refers to a suspended state when a person is open to supernatural incentives (see Genesis 15:2; 1 Samuel 26:12; Job 4:13; 33:15; Isaiah 29:10), as if God suspended the life he had infused in the man to remodel him and embark on the future in a new way: two persons, man and woman, not just one. The story of the formation of the woman from the man's rib teaches that the two are of the same nature and possess equal dignity; both

For meditation and context:

TO KEEP IN MIND

A *didactic* text makes a point or teaches something. Help your assembly to follow the argument and understand what's being taught.

A didactic reading. Think of someone you know who is suffering. Bring them this message: Jesus is their brother in suffering because he suffered too.

Keep your pace up throughout; if you go too slow the meaning will be lost. Pause very briefly before the two quotes to set them apart.

Drop your voice on this parenthetical phrase.

We have the same origin and have experienced the same suffering as Jesus.

Good news! Smile with your voice, eyes, and face.

A narrative reading. Jesus always teaches out of love, not fear. That distinguishes him from the Pharisees; make sure that distinction comes through in your proclamation.

With suspicion.

Simply.

come from the same clay out of which God fashioned the human being.

READING II

Suffering, sacrifice, and glory are all designed for humans, because Christ died to make humankind what we are meant to be. He died to rid us of frustration, bondage, and weakness, and to restore our dignity to what it was meant to be from the beginning. The reference to Jesus as "leader" (Greek, *archegos*) is a recurrent theme in

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 128:1-2, 3, 4-5, 6 (5)

R. May the Lord bless us all the days of our lives.

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.

Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine
in the recesses of your home;
your children like olive plants
around your table.

Behold, thus is the man blessed
who fears the LORD.

The LORD bless you from Zion:
may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem
all the days of your life.

May you see your children's children.
Peace be upon Israel!

READING II Hebrews 2:9-11

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

Brothers and sisters:

He "for a little **while**" was made "**lower than the angels,**"
that by the grace of God he might taste death for **everyone**.

For it was fitting that he,
for whom and through whom all things exist,
in bringing many children to **glory,**
should make the leader to their salvation perfect
through **suffering**.

He who **consecrates** and those who are **being consecrated**
all have one **origin**.

Therefore, he is not ashamed to call them "**brothers.**"

GOSPEL Mark 10:2-16

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

[The **Pharisees** approached Jesus and asked,
"Is it **lawful** for a husband to divorce his wife?"

They were **testing** him.

He said to them in reply, "What did **Moses** command you?"

Hebrews: God's people are on pilgrimage to the heavenly sanctuary and final Sabbath rest, following Jesus, the leader, who blazed the trail to perfection through suffering. Now we are to follow him, and this journey includes the way of the Cross. But God makes us perfect through suffering. As our high priest, Jesus consecrates his people. Jesus suffered and died, and because of this, he entered into the glory that is our destiny in Christ.

GOSPEL

In the episode before this reading, Jesus had been teaching about the ideals of discipleship; now he is asked about the legitimacy of divorce. Coming from the Pharisees, the question is not sincere, since Jewish Law assumed that divorce was legitimate, and the only point of discussion was the proper grounds for it. Jesus' reply goes behind the legislation of Deuteronomy 24 and settles on the principle found in the creation story. He explains that divorce was instituted as a