

Fr. Romeo Evangelista Homily
Sunday, October 3, 2021
27th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Cycle B

A woman said to a marriage counselor, “I married looking for an ideal, but got an ordeal, and now I want a new deal.” It seems that people nowadays have a negative view of marriage – as somebody put it. “Love is blind – marriage is the eye-opener.”

The deep sacramental and religious meaning of marriage sad to say even within the Church has been, in recent years, dramatically compromised. We say that marriage is a vocation, marriage is a sacrament – meaning, married people have given their relationship to God – surrendering it to God’s purposes. This is the faith of the Church. But do we really mean it? Do we know what all this implies?

We can look at human sexual relationship at a number of different levels. Two people can come together purely for physical pleasure.

This is a very low-level man-woman relationship. Two people can also come together for economic reason or for psychological companionship. Many relationships, even marriages, have this basic orientation or purpose.

On a higher level, two people can come together out of authentic love that is to say, couples willing the good of one another. That is good to see – when that level is attained. Such people have gone beyond the level of mere physical attraction, beyond the level of more economic or psychological satisfaction. However, none of these levels is the properly religious level. None of these levels, even the higher one – even the level of couples saying to one another “I love you” and meaning it – not even that level has reached the level of the sacramental.

Sacramental marriage has reached a higher plane – it has gone to an even deeper place. Standing before God, they marry in Church, man and woman say in truth and in fact: “Lord, we

belong, as a couple, to you. We believe that you have drawn us together precisely for your purposes. So that we, as a couple can fulfill a mission that you have given to us.”

I wonder quite frankly how many, even committed Catholics think of marriage that way. The deepest spiritual purpose, the fundamental vocation of married couples, is to mirror to the world what God is like: God who is Love. The purpose of Christian marriage is to symbolize Christ’s love for the Church.

The sacrament of marriage is unique in this way: The couple does not really receive a sacrament, rather, they are the sacrament. They themselves are the living signs of Christ’s love for the Church. It is said that there are three requirements to be a good friend and a good spouse: patience, patience and patience. Patience in marriage or in friendship or in any relationship for that matter is almost everything, really. So much of human loving is patience, and its twin, forgiveness.

Sacramental love is a commitment that is unconditional. With this kind of love, one is able to say: “Even if you do not like me anymore, I still love you.” “Even if you refuse to forgive me, I still love you.” Even if I do not need you anymore, I still love you.” “I love you not because of, but in spite of.....” Love is the only reason for my loving you.

My dear friends, if your way of loving have reached to this level, it means you have truly embraced the true meaning of Sacramental love. A love that is not only exclusive to married couples but to all of us who are willing to commit ourselves in following the footsteps of the Lord.

Amen