

INTRO – Today we hear about marriage and divorce – at least the readings talk about that
But I think Jesus is still playing hardball – its time to get serious about our faith.
Marriage is a **covenant** and covenant is present in a wide range of relationships (Marriage is one)

- So what is Covenant? An agreement between two parties – but more than just a contract.
 - Covenant with God is unique – God sets the conditions and each person decides whether or not to agree and enter into it
 - God's Covenant is rooted in love and requires obedience and loyalty to Him alone
 - As we hear readings say – its not good for man to be alone – so man/woman cov.

then about – divorce coming from OUR hardness of heart

apply covenant to your relationship with God

- Isn't what God says about marriage what God intends for our relationship with HIM?

GEN - 1st Reading is from the creation story

- God creates light, stars, the earth, plants AND finally Man – then all the animals
- None is a suitable partner – NOW WHAT? READ IT
 - A characteristic of covenant is the sense of unity between the two parties
 - “This one is bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh”
 - “A man leaves his mother and father and clings to his wife”
 - COVENANT LESSON – blood/scar – cloak – name (Marriage 2 become 1)
 - God's intent, in our relationship with Him is the same
 - Symbol of Christ the head and we the Body – God wants an intimate personal link.
 - OUR destiny – from creation – unity with God in Covenant – BLESSED

PS128 “May the Lord bless us all the days of our lives” READ IT

What struck me about this PS is the frequency of the word BLESS or BLESSED (part of the covenant)

Blessed are you who fear the Lord Blessed shall you be

The Lord blesses you from Zion The benefits of being in covenant with God is being blessed

- BUT I'm in jail – where's the blessing in that? – HEBREWS tells us

HEB – talks about JC, who, like us, suffered

We sit here suffering in jail – HEB says “It was fitting that He, for whom and through whom, all things exist, should be made perfect through suffering – so that He can call us brothers.

In Covenant we share Christ's submission – and because we do – in Covenant He calls us brothers

GOSPEL

READ IT

- I had an uncle who was an elderly Franciscan in Canada.
- One night he was brutally attacked in downtown Montreal by 3 men.
- But He was able to identify one of the men, as did a witness.
- The police arrested the man. Shortly afterwards he was freed on bail.
- A local man came to visit him and told him how bad he and others felt
 - A bunch of the fellows wanted to take care of the situation themselves.
 - Father knew where the man lived, but he kept it to himself
 - He was a Franciscan – St. Francis' is the saint of peace. COVENANT
 - His prayer is: “Make me an instrument of your peace.” That was my uncle.
- Violence begets violence, but love begets love.
- Today's Gospel speaks about love - love of a man & woman united in marriage.
 - Covenant - When we look at a married couple *we should see a reflection of God's love*
- I do not know if I can be like my uncle and be a man of peace when I am confronted with violence.
 - The Power to do this is within me though because Jesus is there.
 - And you have it in you to be people of peace in the face of violence because Jesus is there.
 - We can be better than the world around us.
 - We can be people of deep and lasting peace - ***We can be Christians.***