

OUR LADY STAR OF THE SEA WEYMOUTH
HOMILY FOR THE TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR (B)
4th OCTOBER 2009

In a few minutes we will say:

“We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.”

This can become routine, but today in our first reading we heard part of the creation story, on which our creed is based, and in our church we are surrounded by reminders of God’s creation.

We celebrate and worship our Lord God as the source of all life, but we should also celebrate the amazing fact that God has entrusted so much to us.

We worked hard to produce the fruit and the vegetables. We are responsible for looking after his creation and enabling it to fulfil its potential to produce fruit and flourish, for its own sake as well as ours. We are co-workers with God to ensure that the earth remains fruitful as he commanded us to. It is an awesome responsibility.

Our reading today focuses on the particular responsibility of men and women.

God could have made millions of little Adams and Eves to populate the world, but did not.

Instead he has entrusted men and women to populate the earth, to have the children who will care for creation after us.

Parents are co-creators with God.

Having children is one of the most God-like things that human beings can do

Jesus, in our gospel, refers to this reading, to make it clear that becoming one body means marriage.

The right situation for having children is in marriage.

Appropriately our gospel also includes children.

Jesus values children so much that he says the kingdom of heaven belongs to them, and unless we welcome the kingdom of God like a little child we will never enter it.

I have often wondered why this should be so.

Little children have many dubious qualities.

However, having two little granddaughters and having discovered more about St. Therese of Lisieux, I think I can begin to see the point.

Most little children trust their parents and grandparents totally. When we take them out they trust us to bring them safely home again. When we give them food and drink they trust that it will be good for them.

This is total trust.

Perhaps it is this relationship of total trust that we must develop with our Lord if we are to enter his kingdom.

St. Therese wanted to be a missionary and a priest but she accepted that neither were possible and totally trusted the Lord to make her life valuable doing routine jobs in the convent at Lisieux.

It is total trust in our Lord that enables us to take up our responsibilities as co-workers and co-creators of God.

Marriage requires this total trust

Marriages can go wrong but Jesus forbids a man to divorce his wife and remarry, and he forbids a woman to divorce her husband and marry another.

He did this to prevent abuse. He did not intend anyone to put up with abuse.

He does not explain why remarriage after divorce is wrong.

Some people find remarriage a spiritually enriching experience.

There is clearly something about remarriage after divorce that is not normally compatible with our role as co-workers and co-creators with God, not part of God's plan in creation. It is part of our purpose as co-workers and co-creators with God to do everything possible to remain one body when we are married. It is essential that we keep this in mind before we marry.

Perhaps it was no accident that St. Mark follows this teaching with the little children.

If Jesus' teaching on divorce puts us off marriage or seems unfair to the innocent victims of marital breakdown, let's remember that God is our creator and we are called to co-operate with him in bringing his creation to fulfilment

Let's pray for the total trust that we need to achieve this purpose and enter his kingdom.

Rev Geoff Carey