

Fr. Patrick J. O'Doherty

HUSBANDS AND WIVES – PRIESTS TO ONE ANOTHER

Caryll Hauslander (RIP 1954) had this to say, “In a sense, husbands and wives are one another’s priests because their life is a lifelong giving and taking of Christ’s life. Everything in their lives has a quality of a miracle. All their words of compassion or forgiveness are, in a sense, little absolutions, their union a communion with Christ. Every breaking of bread at their table a remembrance and more than a remembrance of Him.”

It was and is the Lord God who says, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make him a helpmate suitable to himself. And so it is a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, they are no longer two but one flesh.” Jesus Christ our Lord is true God and true Man. Can we say as well of Jesus our Lord, true Man, that it is not good for this Man to be alone? In a sense, Jesus our Lord, the Word of God, the second person of the Blessed Trinity, left his Father by becoming a man. Scripture has it that he did not cling to his equality with God but humbled himself, emptied himself, becoming flesh, assuming the condition of a servant, becoming like us in all things except sin.

St. Pacian, Bishop, has this to say, “In these times of salvation Christ received body and soul from Mary, he came to save this soul, not to leave it in hell, he united it with his Spirit and made it his own. And this is the marriage of the Lord, the union of two in one flesh. So that according to that great mystery two became one flesh, Christ and His Church.” Dare I say it again? It is not good for God, become Man, to be alone.

Let us go back again to our ancestor Adam and the Lord God’s pronouncement, “It is not good for the man to be alone” and his making for him a helpmate. Remember how the Lord God cast a deep sleep upon the man and while he was asleep he took one of the ribs and enclosed it in flesh? The Lord God built the rib he had taken from man into a woman and brought her to the man. The man exclaimed, “This one at last is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. This one is to be called ‘woman’ for this one was taken from man.” So, too, in the fullness of time the Lord God cast a deep sleep upon the man on the cross, that sleep that we call death. When they came to Jesus they found he was already dead and so, instead of breaking his legs, one of the soldiers opened up his side with a lance and immediately there came out blood and water. Blood, Lamb’s blood, Gott blood, blood of Christ the Lamb of God who has been sacrificed for the salvation of the world, for the sake of his bride, the Church.

Footnote: John’s Gospel Chapter 20 footnote R Jerusalem Bible 1966 edition has this to say, “Many of the fathers of the Church, not without good reason, interpreted the water and blood as symbols of Baptism and the Holy Eucharist and these two Sacraments as

signifying the Church which is born like a second Eve from the side of Christ, another Adam. It is not good for the Lord God made Man to be alone."



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