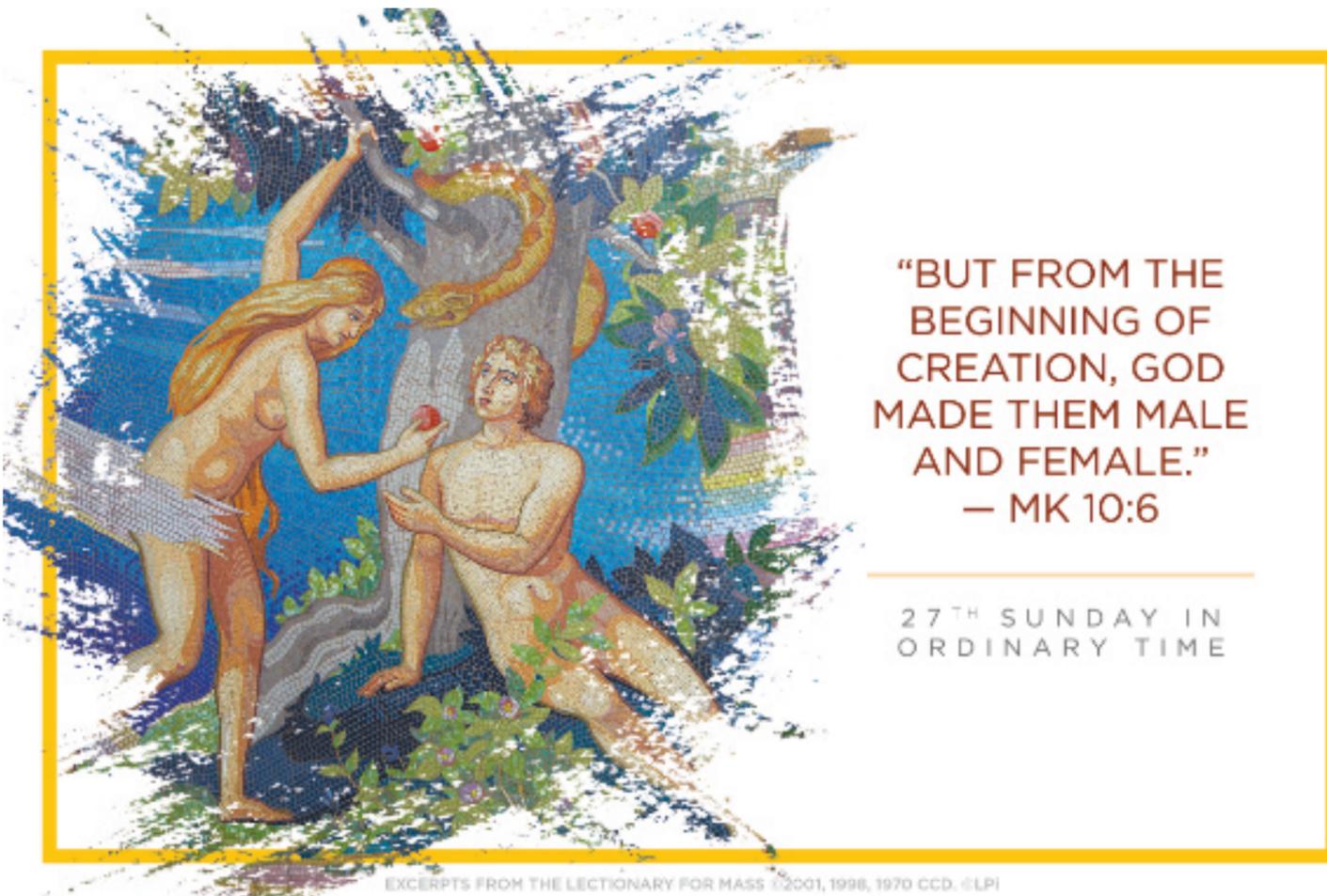




parish newsletter

3 October 2021 | Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)



Reflecting on the Gospel

Archbishop Fulton Sheen said, “It takes three to make love, not two: you, your spouse, and God.” Apart from the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ, nothing speaks better of God’s incarnate love than marriage. God designed it this way. We place great value on love and rightly so. What we fail to realise, however, is that love, its very presence and place in our lives, is not simply part of the human package deal. Love comes from God. It is one of God’s greatest gifts to human beings. When we begin to realise that our very ability to love is sacred, it changes up how we see the essence of life, and purpose and sanctity of marriage.

God is love. It stands to reason then that if we follow the path of unconditional, self-emptying love we will then stumble upon God. It is precisely this

intimate wedding of God with love that gives such eloquence and honour to the love between husband and wife. As a living sign of Christ’s love for the Church and for humanity, husbands and wives speak volumes of God’s unconditional incarnate love for all of his children! The Divine power that brings unity and life to marriage is so strong that once joined, it really cannot be separated.

Admittedly, marriage covenants can be extremely difficult to negotiate and, at times, very painful to experience. God’s perfect divinity always meets our broken and imperfect humanity. God is okay with this setup as he created it this way. Our loving is never as unconditional as God’s and often tainted by our own imperfections, needs, memories, hurts, sinfulness, and weakness. All of this baggage negat-

ively impacts even the most well-intentioned marriages, causing them to be hurtful and empty. We are love works in progress. God can succeed in perfecting our love only if we keep our eyes fixed on him as the source of that love. That’s why marriage is always about three and not just two.

The Divine intimacy at the heart of marriage is what can make them celebrations of great union and happiness. Couples who are still madly in love with each other after many years, still looking at each other with that timeless twinkle in their eyes, best tell the story of God’s oneness with humanity. Honour, celebrate, and support those who have accepted a vocation to marriage. Living in a world that easily pulls relationships apart, may they find hope and inspiration from their faith companions who are on the same journey!

When Adam had a need for a companion, God used what was available: Adam’s rib. Everything that He had put into place was already perfect, already complete. Woman was a new creation, but not a new species. Adam

searched through all of creation to find the perfect mate, but God had tucked the answer inside of His creation all along.

I’m guilty of it as much as anyone else — looking to Heaven with a chip on my shoulder. “Why haven’t you sent me what I need? I’ve been asking over and over again.” But have I even thought to look inside of myself?

Where is the rib you are missing today? What are the opportunities God has set before you? What are the needs that He is ready to fulfil, if only you would stop wasting time lamenting all the solutions that don’t fit the bill?

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

Live the Liturgy

Inspiration for the Week

“What God has joined together.” We are all familiar with these words. Because man and woman are essentially of the same substance, although also distinctively different, there is an



innate desire to be connected and united. Admittedly, marriage covenants can be extremely difficult to negotiate and, at times, very painful to experience. But they can also be celebrations of great union and happiness. This is proven by couples who have been married for many years who still have that same twinkle of devotion in their eyes that was present on their wedding day. God designed it to be this way. By God’s power, the two become one. This is not of human design. The true intimacy of marriage is a Divine Intimacy. It is a bond created by a power far greater than any found in the two people who are joined. Marriage is where the virtue of love is most fully expressed.

First Reading

That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one flesh. (Gn 2:24)

Psalm

May the Lord bless us all the days of our life. (Ps 127)

Second Reading

He who consecrates and those who are being consecrated all have one origin. (Heb 2:11)

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!
Your word is truth, O Lord:
consecrate us in the truth.
Alleluia!

Gospel

“Therefore what God has joined together, no human being must separate.” (Mk 10:9)

Everyday Stewardship

Recognise God in your everyday moments



Therein lies the...rib

“If I were God...” is a dangerous way to start a sentence, but how many of us do this? Probably more regularly than we would like to admit. Even if we don’t verbalise the sentiment, we likely think it from time to time. Most of us

This Week

3 TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY (B) Ps Wk 3	Gn 2:18-24/Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5, 6 [cf. 5]/Heb 2:9-11/Mk 10:2-16 or 10:2-12 10.30 Mass St Mary's Bernard & Caroline Purdy (RIP) 17.00 Mass St Mary's People of the Parish 18.30 Parish Pastoral Council St Mary's
4 Monday St Francis of Assisi	Jon 1:1—2:2, 11/Jon 2:3, 4, 5, 8/Lk 10:25-37 08.00 Breakfast with God Mercy Chapel & Upper Room 12.05 Mass St Mary's Fr Donald Percy (RIP) 18.30 Alpha St Mary's Catholic Centre 20.00 Prayer Group St Cecilia's
5 Tuesday	Jon 3:1-10/Ps 130:1b-2, 3-4ab, 7-8 [3]/Lk 10:38-42 12.05 Requiem Mass St Mary's Sheila Anne Wilson 12.45 Over 60's St Mary's Hall
6 Wednesday St Bruno	Jon 4:1-11/Ps 86:3-4, 5-6, 9-10 [15]/Lk 11:1-4 11.00 Open for Students Upper Room open until 2pm 12.05 Mass St Mary's Terry McDonough (RIP) 18.30 Evening Prayer & Food Mercy Chapel & Upper Room
7 Thursday Our Lady of the Rosary	Mal 3:13-20b/Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6 [Ps 40:5a]/Lk 11:5-13 10.00 Confessions St Cecilia's 10.30 Open House St Mary's 10.30 Mass St Cecilia's Joan Holmes (RIP) 12.05 Mass St Mary's In thanksgiving (D&S)
8 Friday	Jl 1:13-15; 2:1-2/Ps 9:2-3, 6 and 16, 8-9 [9]/Lk 11:15-26 12.05 Mass St Mary's Eileen Jaggar (RIP) 18.30 Evening with Jesus & Friends Mercy Chapel & Upper Room
9 St John Henry Newman	Jl 4:12-21/Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12 [12a]/Lk 11:27-28 10.15 Confessions St Mary's 11.00 Mass St Mary's Peter & Gretal Hammond (RIP) 12.00 RCIA St Mary's Catholic Centre 18.00 Vigil Mass St Cecilia's John Lithgoe (RIP)
10 TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY (B)	Wis 7:7-11/Ps 90:12-13, 14-15, 16-17 [14]/Heb 4:12-13/Mk 10:17-30 or 10:17-27 10.30 Mass St Mary's Bill South (RIP) 17.00 Mass St Mary's People of the Parish 18.30 Parish Pastoral Council St Mary's



Bernadette, Jean Maureen, Christopher, Paula, Liz, Peter, Emilia, Jean, Teresa, Cath and Norman, the sick sisters at Oaklea, David, Marion, Dave, Neil



Janet Atkinson
Eileen Gibbins
Kathy Young
Marion Henry
Fr Bill O'Gorman
Angela Owens
Jim Fagan
James Hurst
Patricia Rutter
Kathleen Blackmore
Sheila Wilson
Mother Enda

If you would like a name added to our prayer list, please email or call the parish office.

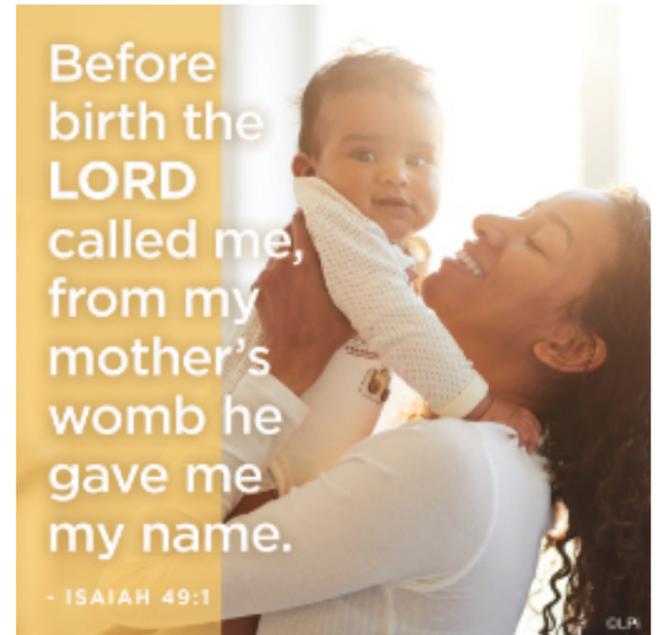


Questions for the Week

First Reading: Today's creation account of man and woman is the foundation of our Judeo-Christian understanding of the covenant of marriage. When a male and a female marry, "the two of them become one body." What do you see as some modern implications in this understanding of marriage??

Second Reading: The author of Hebrews tells us that we are "brothers" with Jesus in our common experience of suffering and death. In what way do you find comfort in this idea?

Gospel: Both in public with the Pharisees and later in private with the disciples, Jesus takes a strong stand on the sacred and unbreakable bond of marriage. How do you imagine the Pharisees and the disciples reacted to Jesus' position?



Why do we do that?



Question: Can you tell me something about St Francis of Assisi?

Answer: St. Francis of Assisi (1181 – 1226) left a life of luxury for a life devoted to Christianity after reportedly hearing

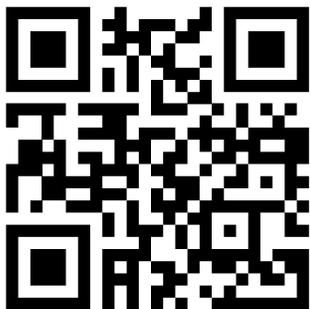
the voice of God, who commanded him to rebuild the Christian church and live in poverty. He founded the men's Order of Friars Minor, the women's Order of St. Clare, the Third Order of St. Francis and the Custody of the Holy Land.

Born in 1181 in Italy, St. Francis of Assisi was renowned for drinking and partying as a youth. During a military expedition/battle between Assisi and Perugia, he was captured and imprisoned for ransom. He spent nearly a year in prison and began receiving visions from God. After his release from prison, St. Francis of Assisi claimed to have heard the voice of Christ, who told him to restore the Christian Church and live a life of poverty. As a result, St. Francis of Assisi abandoned his life of luxury and became a devotee of the Catholic faith.

Today, St. Francis of Assisi, known for his deep love of nature and animals, is the patron saint of the environment and animals. Each October, many animals are blessed on his feast day.

Announcements

Parish Census



This week we're holding a parish census after the homily at all Masses. Scan the QR code to go to the parish website and start filling in the form. There are also paper copies available if you prefer.

Why are we holding a census now? Well, so much has changed after the pandemic and our parish records are old and out of date. The census will mean we have accurate information and can provide the best possible pastoral care. This census will also make sure we have the appropriate consent to hold your information. We not not share your information with anyone else.

Alpha starts tomorrow!

Are you ready to begin a new phase in your relationship with Jesus? Do you have questions about God, life, the universe and everything? Do you wonder

sometimes if Christianity really makes sense? Alpha is an 11 week course that'll be finished before Christmas. Each meeting begins with tea, coffee, biscuits and cake - and sometimes something more substantial! - then we watch together a short film before going into small groups where we have the chance to talk about what has touched us and what questions might have been raised in us. Alpha is informal yet transformative! Give it a try: 6.30pm on Mondays at St Mary's Catholic Centre, Bridge Street.

Baptism for School-Aged Children

If your child was not baptised as an infant and is now in primary school we're starting a programme of preparation for children on Monday, 11 October Please sign up on the parish website.

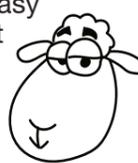
Day of Prayer with St Teresa of Avila and Icon Exhibition

Tuesday, 17 October at Oak Lea Centre, at 10.30am, there's a special day of prayer with St Teresa of Avila lead by Fr Stephen Watson.

On Wednesday and Sunday afternoons in October from 1.30-4pm there's an exhibition of icons on the mysteries of the rosary also in the Oak Lea Centre.

and even more so when there's a disconnect between that and what they say.

St Francis's teaching is still relevant nearly 800 years after his death. The people of Sunderland need to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ and we've been called to proclaim it to them. It's easy to dismiss words, but when we orient our lives according to the gospel and live radically the obligations of love of neighbour it's much harder to ignore the truth all people need to hear.



Flock Notes

Saint Francis of Assisi once famously told his brothers that they must always be proclaiming the gospel; however, they should only use words when absolutely necessary.

'Actions speak louder than words', might be a modern way of saying the same thing. We instinctively pay more attention to the things that people do,

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Rev Eddy Barker, Parish Deacon
Canon Alexander Barrass, Priest in Residence



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