

► Sunday, December 7, 2008, Second Sunday of Advent

Is 40:1-5, 9-11; Ps 85:9-10, 11-12, 13-14; II Pt 3:8-14; Mk 1:1-8

Week #16: Main Theme: Justice in our sexual relationships requires indissolubility.

In Advent, we celebrate Jesus' coming some two thousand years ago in the Incarnation. We recall that John the Baptist was "a voice crying out in the desert," preparing the way of the Lord." But we also recall that Jesus continually comes to us in the sacraments, especially here in the Mass. And He will come again definitively and establish "new heavens and a new earth," as the second reading says. What will this kingdom be like? The psalm gives us a glimpse: "Truth shall spring out of the earth, and justice shall look down from heaven." Truth and justice—they are always connected. We cannot have justice in society unless we live in accord with God's truth in every one of our relationships. Mother Teresa loved to point out that justice begins in the family. Are we just in our most intimate relationships--sexual relationships included?

Justice in our sexual relationships requires lifelong faithfulness (open to life). There is a word for the truth that marriages cannot be dissolved; it is "indissolubility." A Cardinal from Chile, Cardinal Medina Estévez, has said, "Only indissolubility guarantees the true equality and dignity of the man and the woman." Why? Because the indissolubility of marriage ensures that each one of us who is called to marriage will be treated with the love and support that we deserve, no strings attached. We all need to be able to trust in another's love. God's love is completely trustworthy, and by His grace spouses can reveal to the world His love through their just and loving treatment of one another.

Bulletin quote: "[Jesus'] unequivocal insistence on the indissolubility of the marriage bond may have left some perplexed and could seem to be a demand impossible to realize. However, Jesus has not placed on spouses a burden impossible to bear, or too heavy ... By coming to restore the original order of creation disturbed by sin, He Himself gives the strength and grace to live marriage in the new dimension of the Reign of God."

Catechism of the Catholic Church, #1615

Suggested bulletin insert: "God Will Not Leave Us: How Lifelong Married Love Shows God to the World"