

Second Sunday after Epiphany

Sanctity in Marriage

“Jesus too was invited to the marriage” (John, 2:2)

Our Divine Lord attended the marriage feast of Cana, not because He desired to share in the mirth and gaiety that accompany such events, but because He wished to emphasise the sanctity of marriage, to inform us that when a couple enter the married state with noble and holy ideals, He Himself is invisibly present to enrich them with His choicest graces.

Marriage is holy because God Himself established it in the Garden of Paradise and gave a special blessing to the first married couple, Adam and Eve. It is holy also because its principal purpose is the procreation and upbringing of children, destined to the happiness of life eternal. Christian marriage is endowed with an additional sanctity because Christ raised it to the dignity of a sacrament.

Accordingly, Catholics who marry should enter this holy state with high ideals. They may indeed seek the domestic happiness and temporal advantages that normally come from the life-long union of a man and a woman who love each other dearly. But their primary objective should be to promote God’s glory by sharing with Him the great act of bringing human beings into the world and of rearing them for the attainment of eternal happiness, and of contributing toward the sanctification of each other.

It is unfortunate that the sanctity of married life is so widely forgotten or neglected today. Many young people enter marriage with no thought of its divinely established duties or of its holy purposes. Selfishness pervades their married life from the beginning; in a few years the shallow emotional love they had in the beginning disappears, and the divorce court is the final outcome. What a sad contrast to the ideal of married life which God intended in instituting this holy state.

The Catholic Church will never compromise on the doctrine she teaches concerning the indissolubility of marriage, the sinfulness of practices opposed to its purposes, the obligation of husband and wife to give their best care to the temporal and spiritual upbringing of children God sends them, etc. These laws are the laws of God, and they can never change, whatever changes may take place in the world’s attitude toward marriage. Unfortunately some Catholics are forgetting the ideals of the Church in their married life and tending toward the ideas of the world.

Practical Application

If you are already married bear in mind ‘the holiness of your state in life; if you are planning marriage in the near future, resolve to obey the laws of God and of the Church in entering this holy state. Regard marriage as, in a sense, a divine vocation.