Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

Gospel text (*Mk* 10:2-16): The Pharisees approached Jesus and asked, "Is it lawful for a husband to divorce his wife?" They were testing him. He said to them in reply... "From the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, no human being must separate."

The Pastoral Care of the Divorced and Remarried

EDITORIAL TEAM evangeli.net (based on texts by Benedict XVI)
(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today, the Gospel brings to our attention the actuality of people remarried after divorce as a great sadness and concern of the Church. Their situation (married-divorced-remarried) cannot fulfill the mission of the catholic matrimony: to be the image of the matrimony between “Christ-Spouse” and “Church-Spouse”. The mentioned irregular situation is not coherent with the reception of the greatest exponent of the spousal union: the sacrament of the Body of Christ.

The Church loves those who live in this situation. Parishes should do everything possible for them to feel loved, accepted, although they cannot receive either the absolution or the Holy Communion. Nevertheless without the physical reception of the sacrament they can also live fully in the Church and be spiritually united to Christ.

- Divorced and remarried couples can see in their suffering a gift to the Church, as it also contributes to defend the stability of marriage. This suffering is also a suffering of the Church community for the great values of our faith.

Unions between people of the same sex

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Today, more than ever before, we insist that it is not possible to count as equal something which is diverse; in a social environment it is necessary to accept diversity. It is not mere terminology. The essence of the human being tends toward the union of a man with a woman as reciprocal realization, attention and care, and as the natural way toward procreation. This conveys to matrimony its social transcendence and public character.

Matrimony (a man and a woman) is never the same as that of a union of two same sex human beings. To

distinguish is not to discriminate. In a time when we place an emphasis on the richness of pluralism and social and cultural diversity, it is contradictory to minimize the fundamental human differences.

- We cannot pass on to future generations the belief that the commitment to a stable family relationship between a man and a woman, is the same thing as living together with a person of the same sex.