

27 OTB.18; Gen 2:18-24; Heb 2:9-11; Mark 10:2-16.... *“For the price of a rib!”*

This one, at last, is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.... Gn 2:3

One day, after a near eternity in the Garden of Eden, Adam calls out to God, *“Lord, I have a problem.”* “What’s the problem, Adam?” God replies. *“Lord, I know you created me and have provided for me & surrounded me with this beautiful garden and all of these wonderful animals, but I’m just **not happy.**”*

“Why is that, Adam?” comes the reply from the heavens. *“Lord, I know you created this place for me, with all this lovely food and all of the beautiful animals, but I **am lonely**”* “Well Adam, in that case I have the perfect solution.

I shall create a ‘woman’ for you.” ***“What’s a ‘woman’, Lord?”***

This ‘woman’ will be the most intelligent, sensitive, caring, and beautiful creature I have ever created. She will be so intelligent that she can figure out what you want before you want it. She will be so sensitive & caring that she will know your every mood and how to make you happy. Her beauty will rival that of the heavens and earth. She will un-questioningly care for your every need and desire. **She will be the perfect companion for you,”** replies the heavenly voice.

“Sounds great” **“She will be, but this is going to cost you, Adam.”** *“How much will this ‘woman’ cost me, Lord?”* Adam replies. *“She’ll cost you an arm & a leg.”*

Adam ponders this for some time, with a look of deep thought and concern on his face.

And finally Adam, says to God. ... “Ehhh. What can I get for a rib?”

The rest, as they say, is history. Source: unk

The writer of one of the creation stories in Genesis takes us back in time. Adam is surrounded by the beauty of God's creation, and yet it is incomplete. *The symbol story of Adam & Eve* sets the stage for all that follows in the Bible. That **“rib”**, or **‘sela’**, in Hebrew, means that only the human female was suitable partner for the human being. **Man & Woman, ideally, are “Co-equal Partners in Life”.**

And, thus, humans are social beings, not intended to live alone.

All of humanity is intended to live as a Family, as partners in God’s world. Yet, we are unsure about ourselves & our relationships which can be adversarial or based on need, *not love*. **Why is that? Perhaps, it’s because...**

“Every person needs more love than he or she deserves.” -Jorg Splet

How clear. How true.

No scholarly language is needed to explain this. In that little sentence all kinds of people come to our minds to confirm it: people who need more love than they deserve. *Perhaps you think of an undocumented alien or a homeless person or a drug addict.* You don’t have to go beyond the circle of your own acquaintances. In your own neighborhood you will find people who *need more love than they deserve.* This applies much closer to home. It describes me and maybe, you, too?

Let’s face it. Our spirits need love just as much as our bodies need air. Only then do the *untold possibilities* dormant within us come to life. When we love and are loved, *our loneliness is transformed into intimacy,*

... our angst/fears into courage, and the gateway to heaven opens up.

2 Fr. Anthony de Mello tells the story of a journalist who wants to write a book about a guru. He pays him a visit & begins with the question, "People say you are a genius. Are you?" "You might say so," the guru answered none too modestly. But the journalist, who was not particularly shy either, fired another question, "And what makes one a genius?" The guru responded. "The ability to see." With this response the journalist was at a loss and mumbled, "To see what?" The guru quietly answered, "The butterfly in a caterpillar, the eagle in an egg, the saint in a selfish person. Whoever sees this is a genius, a genius in love. He picks up what is hidden in the other & is able through his loving way of looking to... call it forth!"

To reveal to a person his or her own beauty"... that defines love. Jean Vanier, L'Arche

Jesus had a special gift for this. He created a climate in which people could unfold themselves, discovering the good they carried within themselves. *Love means showing the other person how beautiful she or he really is.* The other person cannot discover this alone; even a mirror will not suffice. Another human being is needed, a relationship is needed. **Where that happens ... love is realized.**

(The God Who Won't Let Go, Breeman, p21,2001)

We need love, but it must come from outside ourselves. Human love has a source; a Source that loves beyond all measure. Jesus once said, "**As the Father loves me, so I love you. Remain in my love.**" *The Letter to the Hebrews* tells us that Jesus, "**for a little while was made lower than angels, that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone**". God's love, revealed in Jesus, shows us who we

... really are: "**Therefore, he is not ashamed to call them "brothers & sisters"**". In Jesus, we are **bone of bones & flesh of flesh** with God because divine love intended it to be. Divine love reveals to us our *true* beauty, our *true* identity.

Each of us reflects the beauty of God. Each of us is irreplaceable.

We hear, "**It is not good for man to be alone.**"

We are made to be in-relationship, in-community. Our family is universal.

How do we claim this heritage?

Created in relationship *with God & each other*, we are to recognize the divine beauty of every human being. We are to walk in justice & compassion. In the gospel, Jesus' response is not simply a prohibition against divorce, but a criticism of the **hardness of heart** that leads to divorce. Jesus knew that divorced women became victims and outcasts. Jesus upheld the rights of the poor, and all who are considered *outcast*. **Divine love cherishes the possibilities in everyone.**

In God's world there is no room for outcasts. **They are Jesus. They are us.** At this Eucharist we gather to look at our lives. We are called to mutual respect and interdependence, not dominance of one over the other. The gospel challenges

... us to examine *all* our relationships. Are they marked by mutual respect, acceptance, understanding and forgiveness? Does our love encourage growth?

What do you get for Adam's *rib*? ... a divine family called **Humanity!**