**Homily** **for the 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*Rev. Francis D. Kim*

        Our readings today talk about marriage. Especially, the first reading, the Book of Genesis, is a good one for all married couples, for all who are preparing for marriage, for all who might enter into marriage some day, and for all of us who care about married couples.

        This Sunday, some truths about marriage need to be stated about which we seldom reflect and which we need to remember.

        Let me tell you this beautiful story. Do you know Felix Mendelssohn’s ‘Wedding March’? It is one of the best known music pieces for wedding ceremonies.

        This music was composed by Mendelssohn for Shakespeare’s play ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream.’ There is a beautiful love story behind this masterpiece. Mendelssohn got an idea for composing this music from his grandfather’s love story.

        Mendelssohn’s grandfather, Moses, was far from being handsome. Along with being rather short, he had an ugly hunchback. When he lived in a small town in Germany, he often visited a merchant in town who had a lovely daughter named Fromet.

        Hopelessly, Moses fell in love with this beautiful young lady. But, she was repulsed by his misshapen appearance. Fromet was a vision of heavenly beauty, but caused Moses deep sadness by her refusal to look at him.

        One day, Moses gathered his courage and climbed the stairs to her room to take one last chance to speak to her. After several attempts at conversation, Moses shyly asked to her, “Do you believe marriages are made in heaven?”

        “Yes,” she answered, still looking at the floor. “And, do you?” She asked.

        “Yes, I do,” he replied. “You see, in heaven at the birth of each boy, the Lord announces which girl he will marry. When I was born, my future bride was pointed out to me in a dream. Then, the Lord added, ‘But, your wife will be hunchback.’”

        Moses continued, “Right then and there, I called out, ‘Oh, Lord, a hunchback woman would be a tragedy. Please, Lord, give me the hump and let her be beautiful.’”

        Then, Fromet looked up into his eyes and was stirred by some deep memory. She reached out and gave Moses her hand, and later, she became his devoted wife.

        This is a marriage: deep love for each other, perfect sacrifice for one another, and complete offering to each other.

        Marriage is not something that was invented by man. Instituted by God Himself, it has been present since the beginning of human history, since the creation of the first man and woman. Marriage was made in heaven!

        But, these days, a reality of marriage life is difficult. Think of the divorce rate. Statistics give marriage only a fifty-fifty chance. A Church wedding is also just a stepping-stone to the divorce court.

        We are all touched by divorce. It is a fact of our world and of our families. We always need to show special compassion and care for those who are divorced.

        A broken marriage is always a sign of our broken world. It shows how much we need the healing grace of God, the wisdom of the Holy Spirit before entering relationships, how much we need the help of others to make a marriage survive, or after the tragedy of divorce, to find repair and renewal.

        In the Gospel today, for the question of the Pharisees about marriage and divorce, Jesus teaches about the real purpose of marriage. He tells us marriage is God’s wonderful plan for the human race.

        As the people of God, we should not be swayed by how society or others think of marriage, and rediscover how our faith understands marriage. Marriage is a vocation, a calling to life and love between husband and wife. It means following the way of selfless love that Jesus has loved us.

        Our world needs the witness of fidelity in vocation whether in priesthood or marriage. Fidelity gives powerful light in a broken world.

        A loving relationship, and especially that blest in Marriage, is a covenant of continuing God’s creation.

        Remember the marriage was made in heaven!