



## Things to Ponder

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### 27<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – Mark 10:2-12

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Dear Parish Family,

What ought to be the most enduring effect of the visit of Pope Francis to the United States? I suggest that the answer to this question is contained in two quotes from today's Scriptures:

1. "Let the children come to me!"
2. "What God has joined together, no human being must separate."

Bishops from all over the world are gathering today to begin several weeks of reflecting on the nature of the "family." That word is based upon another much contested bond called "marriage." We often confuse the "call" to marriage with the "need" for intimacy. All humans have the need for intimacy. Not all are called to marriage.

Psalmists, poets and songwriters have portrayed this human desire in explicit physical terms; but, the most intimate encounter possible is that between the human soul and its creator. Marriage is often used as a model for this union; but, genuine human intimacy is not an end in itself. Our relationships are meant to give life. The essence of the vocation of marriage in particular is contained in three questions that are asked of the bride and groom prior to their exchange of vows:

1. Have you come here freely and without reservation to give yourselves to each other in marriage?
2. Will you love and honor each other as man and wife for the rest of your lives?
3. Will you accept children lovingly from God, and bring them up according to the law of Christ and his Church?

Our Holy Father Francis has challenged us to accept the gospel as a liberating message that enables us to live with joy. His patron, whose feast is today, reflected that joy in his acceptance of all God's creatures. May we, too, be "instruments" of such joy and peace!

Yours in Christ,

*Rev. Bill Foley*

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