

## My Notes

Saturday, February 16, 2008  
10:42 AM

- Opening Prayer
- Introduction stuff
  - The book is \$5.50
  - We are done with the books
- Read 1 Peter 3:15b-16a
- Since we will be reading from Ephesians chapter 5 today, let's look at Ephesians 6:14 since chapter 6 comes right after chapter 5
- Old business
  - Last week we turned a corner
  - I would hope that all the teaching I taught before last week, any orthodox priest or theologians would agree with what I said
    - They might get to the teaching via different insights, Scripture, and analogies, but the teaching would be the same
  - However last week we moved to more Scripture study than apologetics
  - We call the Scripture the living Word of God
  - It comes alive to us because each person can find something
  - An insight is alright so long as it doesn't conflict with the teaching of the Church and is true to Scripture itself
  - Even so, the Catholic Church expects us to believe the following from the first three chapters of Genesis
    - God created out of nothing
    - Even if evolution, the first man and woman were different than the animals because they had the breath of God in them, an eternal soul
    - The whole human race descends from one man and one woman
    - They first existed without sin
    - They then sinned
- Read from Love and Responsibility - (last paragraph on page 272 - "Sexologists state...")
  - When do you think this was published? 1960
  - Do you think it was written by a male or female? Male
  - Do you think it was written by a virgin or non-virgin? Virgin
  - Do you think it was written by a religious or non-religious, a lay person? Religious
  - Written by priest, an auxiliary bishop; later archbishop, Pope John Paul II
- Theology of the Body
  - Used 7 for his 129 Wednesday audiences to speak specifically about this passage, Ephesians 5:21-33
  - Read from page 467 (last three sentences of 86:3; Man and Woman He Created Them, translated by Michael Waldstein; ISBN: 0-8198-7421-3)
    - "crowning" of the themes and essential truths that ebb and flow like long waves through the Word of God revealed in Sacred Scripture
    - key text and "classical"
- Ephesians 5:21-33
  - This reading is controversial
    - Even my Catholic Study Bible says in its commentary on the Lectionary that this reading should be left out - I obviously disagree
    - Christopher West - we can know what is most important by what is most profaned - sexuality, especially femininity

- Talked last time about why Christopher West thinks this may be
- Background
  - Paul's great letter on the Church
    - What it is and what its purpose is
      - ◆ Purpose: to make known God's plan of salvation known throughout the universe
    - Stresses unity
      - ◆ 7 unities
        - ◇ Church
        - ◇ Spirit
        - ◇ Hope
        - ◇ One Lord
        - ◇ Faith
        - ◇ Baptism
        - ◇ One God
- Read Ephesians 5:21-33
- Let's go backwards
  - Verse 33
    - John Eldridge - Wild at Heart - 3 corresponding deep desires of each sex
      - ◆ Write them on board
        - ◇ Male
          - ◆ Something worth fighting for
          - ◆ A beauty to behold
          - ◆ An adventure to go on
        - ◇ Female
          - ◆ To know she is worth being fought for
          - ◆ To know she is beautiful (inside and out)
          - ◆ To share in an adventure
      - ◆ John Eldridge asks why the knight in shining armor saving the princess is such a timeless story - it touches the deepest core of who we are as male and female
      - ◆ Deepest desire
        - ◇ Female - to know she is worth fight for, to be cherished; she is lovable
        - ◇ Male - to know he has what it takes; he is capable
  - Verse 32
    - Key to the whole passage
    - This whole section must be read in light of this verse
    - If the Pope is right and this passage is the key to the Bible and I say this verse is key to the passage, maybe we can say this verse is key to the whole Bible
    - God is Trinity
    - We are made in his image
    - God is so other, a mystery
      - ◆ Other than a few terms (infinite), we can really only speak in the negation and analogies
    - Read all of the passage as analogous to Christ and the Church
      - ◆ Looking at it analogous doesn't diminish its importance; rather it heightens it
  - Verse 31
    - Echoes Genesis 2:24 - in the beginning, before sin
      - ◆ In his Theology of the Body, Pope John Paul II asks what does it mean to be human during the three different periods
        - ◇ The three periods

- ◆ Before sin entered the world
  - ◆ After sin entered the world
  - ◆ The end of time when in Heaven with God (or in Hell with the Devil)
- There are lots of analogies for God's relationship with his chosen people - in this case the Church
- God is so other, a mystery that all analogies are inadequate in some way - if pushed they will break down somehow
- However, maybe the least inadequate analogy is that of marriage of bride and groom
- In OT, the prophets often compared the Jewish nation as an adulterous wife
- People of faith have seen in the erotic words of the Song of Songs insights into God's relationship with His people
- Flesh
  - ◆ Sacrament in its most general meaning is "makes visible the invisible grace of God"
  - ◆ Each person's body is a sacrament - it makes visible the invisible reality of the person, a person created by the God and sustained by His grace
    - ◇ Bodies make visible the invisible reality of their soul
    - ◇ Read brackets on page 468 (last two sentences of 87:5; Man and Woman He Created Them, translated by Michael Waldstein; ISBN: 0-8198-7421-3)
  - ◆ If we read verse 31 in light of 32, where does Christ become one flesh with His church?
    - ◇ Eucharist
    - ◇ Remember God and the Church are the reality and we made in the image of that reality, we are the analogy
      - ◆ Thus Eucharist shouldn't remind us of sexual intercourse, but sexual intercourse should remind us of the Eucharist and the pleasure both physical and spiritual of being united with God ultimately in Heaven
    - ◇ Rev 19:7-9 - wedding feast of the Lamb - in the end
      - ◆ Where do we experience the foretaste of the Heavenly wedding feast? Eucharist
- Verse 30
  - Notice how fleshy this passage is: body, flesh, etc
  - Jesus, the second person of the Trinity took on human flesh; therefore, flesh cannot be bad in and of itself - God created all things good - some say Paul thought the body was bad and the spirit good - Bible inerrant; can't be what he meant
- Verse 29
  - Christ and the Church are not the analogy; they are the reality
    - ◆ Everything is analogous to the reality of Christ and the Church; not the other way around
    - ◆ Everything is a sacrament, making the reality of the union of Christ and His Church visible
  - Christ obviously does not hate His body, the Church, but loves and cares for her
- Verse 28
  - If Christ and the Church are the reality, then husbands have a pretty tall order to follow
    - ◆ Christ died in service to the Church, His bride; husbands are called to sacrifice everything, their very lives for their wives
  - We can see this love of husband for his wife's, especially her body, in modern practices of NFP
    - ◆ The husband can truly say, "I love one more thing about you: I even love your fertility."
- Verse 27
  - "present to himself the church in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that

she might be holy and without blemish."

- ◆ Does this not speak of the fact that we who are going to Heaven will not just appear perfect, but will become perfect
- ◆ Isn't it nice to have the hope that we will become perfect; not just declared perfect
  - ◇ And not just our souls, but our bodies as well
    - ◆ No spots or blemishes
- Verse 26
  - But who also is the Word? Jesus
    - ◆ John 1
  - Jesus is what sanctifies us; makes us truly holy and without blemish
- Verse 25
  - Again the reality, the standard is Christ and the Church
  - How much did Christ love the Church? <take cruciform position>
    - ◆ Christ made the ultimate sacrifice - he gave up his life for His Church
    - ◆ Christ sacrificed, gave up His body for his wife, the Church
    - ◆ Where does Christ still give up His body physically for His Church? Eucharist
      - ◇ He hands himself over for her
    - ◆ Going back to verse 31, what happens when a man and woman becomes one flesh, when a man literally gives of his own body <sperm> and a woman receives it openly (without any barriers, contraceptives)? God willing, a new life, a new soul is created
    - ◆ When we as Church, as bride, openly (without any mortal sin on our souls) receive Christ's body in the Eucharist and literally take into our own bodies, a new spiritual life can unfold
    - ◆ The fact we are made in God's image is stamped right in our bodies, in the sexual union of male and female
  - So who has it harder here?
    - ◆ I believe it is the man who is suppose to sacrifice for his wife, even to the point of death
    - ◆ The woman is suppose to be open to his sacrificial giving, to receive openly
      - ◇ And then just like the Church does who receives His love and then returns it, the woman receives the man's sacrificial giving and gives and loves back
    - ◆ Man is first he who gives; (he is second he who receives)
    - ◆ Woman is first she who receives; (she is second she who gives)
    - ◆ And again this is stamped right in our bodies
    - ◆ I don't think it is just custom that a man usually proposes to a woman - our former pope would say this custom is related to how God created us, male and female, from the very beginning
  - The woman doesn't have it easy either
    - ◆ We don't like to receive
    - ◆ Femininity is under attack
      - ◇ Again Christopher West thinks its because as we have seen woman, as she who first receives, represents us as Church, we who first receive from Christ
      - ◇ Satan hates us - he doesn't want us to be happy with God in Heaven
        - ◆ We have to think with the mind of the Deceiver
        - ◆ Satan can't create anything; he can only plagiarize it and twist the Truth
        - ◆ If our bodies and sex are meant to be signs of God's love for us, then wouldn't we expect Satan to attack this (femininity) the most?
          - ▶ It is obvious he has
        - ◆ Satan attacks the sign of God's people being open to God's love which is the

woman (as he did in the Garden),

- ◆ We are taught in today's society, if you want something, no one is going to give it to you. You have to go get it yourself
  - ◇ The Christian message is that you don't have to do everything for yourself
  - ◇ Only do what God asks you to do; God will do the rest

▪ Verse 24

- Again the reality is Christ and the Church; the sign or sacrament is the relationship between husband and wife
- I want to qualify the "everything"
  - ◆ First, for this exercise, I want to do a play on words so let's use the word submission instead whatever you have in your Bibles
  - ◆ If you take the word apart, you get sub (under), mission - under the mission of
  - ◆ A woman is first under the mission of God and then her husband
    - ◇ So if the husband asks the wife that she knows is against God's will, then she doesn't have to obey

▪ Verse 23

- Again I think this is harder on the husband
- "savior" - He needs to make decision for he and his wife based on what will best save them; get them to Heaven, especially her
- **So what is the husband's mission? To get both of them, and their children to Heaven**
- His calling is not to any leadership, but a *servant leadership*

▪ Verse 22

- So what are wives being submissive to? The mission of the husband to get them and their children to Heaven
- If he isn't doing that, then you don't have to be obedient

▪ Verse 21

- If there is any question that this should not be a tyrant rather than a servant leader, we just have to look at how the whole passage starts
- There is to be a mutual give and take which is alive and well in most happy marriages that one sees

○ Finishing remarks

- If understanding our sexuality, our being male and female is so key for understanding who we are as children of God, does it not make sense that the first piece of armor Paul says to put on in the next chapter of Ephesians it to gird your loins with the truth
- My understanding or read of the verses on submission are my own based on my reflecting on things I've heard and read
  - They are not Father Kevin's understanding or official Church teaching (although many of the teachings of the Church would point in this direction)

• Small groups

- What do you think about John Eldridge's three deep desires of each gender? Do they ring true to your experience? Why or why not?
  
- Does this interpretation of this passage seem plausible? Why or why not?
  
- Does this take on the passage make this passage more palatable? Why or why not?

- Should it be read in Church on Sunday? Why or why not?
- Can you figure out how the Theology of the Body can be used as an argument for a male-only priesthood? (hint: it has less to do with leadership and more to do with the Mass)