

# Sunday Homily

## 27th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

3 OCTOBER 2021

YEAR B

DIVINE OFFICE WEEK III

“This is why a man leaves his father and mother  
and joins himself to his wife, and they become one body.”

### Illustration

Julia was excited at the prospect of her new job, teaching fifteen- and sixteen-year-olds a variety of subjects, including religion. She had passed her own exams at college with flying colours. She was young and attractive and was familiar with the culture of the day. She was looking forward to the challenge of helping other young people fulfil their dreams and she was especially excited at the prospect of trying to share her faith with them, when it seemed that so many others saw the teaching of religion as an impossible burden.

Nevertheless, nothing could have prepared her for what she was actually to encounter. The young people did indeed find her attractive and soon began to confide in her. There was Maria, the tormented soul who sat at the back, her face etched with frustration and anger: it transpired she had been appallingly abused by a close member of her family from early childhood. There was Stephen, a sullen and disruptive student, who countered his innate shyness by asserting himself whenever the opportunity arose. There was Brian, a confused young man with a chip on his shoulder, who had all the answers. She calculated that almost 50 per cent of her pupils were living either with a single parent or with a step-parent. Among the many subjects to be covered in that first term was Christian marriage. How on earth could she broach the subject with this group of people, many of whom were already scarred for life because of the unhappy marriages of their parents?

### Gospel Teaching

Thank God, Julia was bright and capable. She quickly realised that before she looked at Jesus' teaching on marriage, she would need to convince these young people of his unconditional love for each of them and their families in all the mess that surrounded them and the society in which they were all struggling to cope and, hopefully, one day to make their mark. They looked at how Jesus dealt with people who came to him with different afflictions – physical, mental and spiritual – and they noted how he responded to them with love and compassion. What Julia may not have realised was that the person of Jesus was having a real influence on these youngsters, not so much because of what they learnt about him, but because of the love and compassion they realised she had for them.