

MADE TO BE IN COMMUNITY PART ONE

“Friendship is a deep oneness that develops
 when two people, speaking the truth in love to one another,
 journey together to the same horizon”.

– Timothy Keller

THE LESSON: GENESIS 1+2

Community matters. Though each one of us needs times of solitude, we also need one another. This is true for all people, but for believers it is actually a vital part of our faith. We believe that we were *designed* for community. Together, believers form the Church, the bride of Christ, and the scriptures remind us to meet together often and to love one another deeply.

When it comes to Christian marriage, men and women enter into community in a unique way. The marriage liturgy points out that matrimony was “instituted of God in the time of man’s innocency”. It goes on to warn that it is not to be entered into “lightly”, and that those who marry should consider what marriage is actually *for*:

“Matrimony was ordained for the hallowing of the union betwixt man and woman; for the procreation of children to be brought up in the fear and nurture of the Lord; and for the mutual society, help, and comfort, that the one ought to have of the other, in both prosperity and adversity” (BCP, p. 564).

Although marriage involves deep companionship, it does not replace a couple’s need for the larger Christian community. Even in marrying one another, their vows are made in the presence of that community. In the years that follow, they will continue to need the support of their family of faith, and there will continue to be ways for them to serve that larger family too.

AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Each morning and evening, follow your own rule of prayer.

(IF YOU DON’T HAVE ONE, TRY SAYING THE MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS FROM THE “FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED IN FAMILIES”, WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 728 OF THE BCP. IF YOU DON’T HAVE A COPY, YOU CAN LOOK IT UP HERE: [HTTP://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER](http://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER).)

Spend some time praying for the home where you live. You may also want to pray for your future home. (Consider whether this is a prayer you’d be comfortable praying together with a boyfriend or girlfriend, someone who might one day become a husband or a wife.)

Merciful Saviour, who didst love Martha and Mary and Lazarus, hallowing their home with thy sacred presence: Bless, we beseech thee, our home(s), that thy love may rest upon us, and that thy presence may be with us. May we all grow in grace and in the knowledge of thee, our Lord and Saviour. Teach us to love one another as thou hast given commandment. Help us to bear one another’s burdens and so fulfil thy law, O blessed Jesus, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit livest and reignest, one God, for evermore. Amen.

(PRAYER FOR THE FAMILY, FROM THE “FAMILY PRAYERS” SECTION OF THE BCP, P. 732)

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GENESIS 1+2: **A HELPER TO HOLD FAST TO**

1 ²⁶Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...” ²⁷So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ²⁸And God blessed them... ³¹And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good...

2 ⁷The Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature... ¹⁸Then the Lord God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.”

¹⁹Now out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. ²⁰The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. ²¹So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. ²²And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” ²⁴Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. ²⁵And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.