

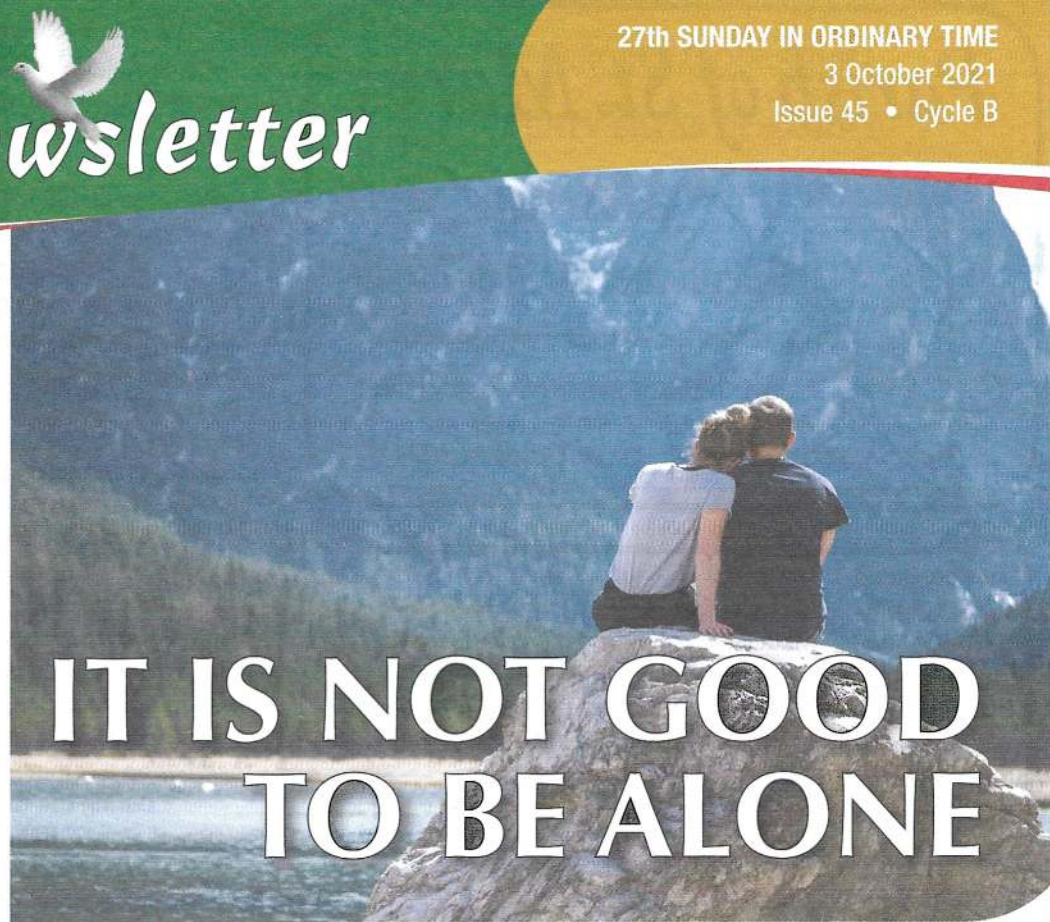
Parish Newsletter

We humans are social creatures. It is not good for us to be alone. The book of Genesis has God recognising that and setting up marriage as one solution. Man and woman set up a life-long relationship. Problem solved? If only it was as easy as that.

Healthy relationships are a tremendous blessing, but they do not happen automatically.

In *The Joy of the Gospel*, Pope Francis points to the family as the place in which children learn the basics of living with others. He says, 'the family is the fundamental cell of society where we learn to live with others despite our differences and to belong to each other' (No.66). This is the school where we learn that love in action means at times being ready to put the preferences of others ahead of our own. Regularly in his homilies, Pope Francis refers to what he calls the three most important words in family life: please, thanks, and sorry.

When people marry, they do so with the serious intention of making it last for life. Jesus in the Gospel endorses that perspective. He gave an example of self-sacrificing love and invited us to follow in his footsteps. Married couples get many opportunities for this in their daily care for one another and for their



children. All going well, they get the reward of seeing one another flourish and their children mature into happy and productive individuals. Their sacrifices are made in the service of life. Like Jesus, they have lived that others might have life and have it to the full.

It is not always so. In today's world marriage breakdown and divorce are common. In most parishes there are people in this situation, some of whom have remarried. There is a pastoral challenge here. In the past such people may have been excluded from active participation in parish life. In his letter *The Joy of Love*, Pope Francis proposes a

different approach. He recognises that many such people are in this situation despite their best efforts to make a marriage work. He encourages creating a culture of care, hospitality, and tenderness in the parish community on behalf of those who have been wounded, including those who have been divorced and remarried.

It is not good for a person to be alone. That principle applies also to those whose marriages have broken down. They also need friendship and support and a place where they can feel at home.

— John Byrne, OSA

Reflection

What is your experience of saying to others, 'please', 'sorry' or 'thanks'?

Lesson

'Let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action' (1Jn 3:18).

Prayer

May the Lord bless us all the days of our life.



TWO IN ONE FLESH

God said: 'It is not good that the man should be alone.' Do I value my husband, my wife? Do I really know you, my beloved and lifelong companion? When was the last time we were intimate or celebrated our sexuality; the essence of our being two in one flesh? How much of a priority are you in my life?

— *Marriage Matters*

www.twoinoneflesh.org.uk



This Week (4-10 October)

- 4 **M** St Francis of Assisi
- 5 **T** St Faustina Kowalska, religious
- 6 **W** St Bruno, priest
- 7 **T** Our Lady of the Rosary
- 8 **F** St Keyne, holy woman
- 9 **S** St John Henry Newman, priest
- 10 **S** 28th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

