

Reading

Genesis 2: 18–24
They become one body.

A reading from the book of Genesis.

18 The Lord God said,
‘It is not good that the man should be alone.
I will make him a helpmate.’

19 So from the soil the Lord God fashioned all the wild beasts
and all the birds of heaven.
These he brought to the man to see what he would call them;
each one was to bear the name the man would give it.

20 The man gave names to all the cattle,
all the birds of heaven and all the wild beasts.
But no helpmate suitable for man was found for him.

21 So the Lord God made the man fall into a deep sleep.
And while he slept, he took one of his ribs and enclosed it in flesh.
22 The Lord God built the rib he had taken from the man into a woman,
and brought her to the man.

23 The man exclaimed:
‘This at last is bone from my bones,
and flesh from my flesh!
This is to be called woman,
for this was taken from man.’

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

The word of the Lord.

Looking at the Text

M O-2 Genesis 2:18-24
They become one body.

The Book of Genesis

Genesis is the first book of the Bible. Some have called it the book of beginnings, for it starts with the stories of the beauty and goodness of Creation. It continues with God's plan for saving and blessing people, with stories of people being presented with opportunities, to choose between the bad or the good, to demonstrate faith when others around think they are mad, to believe in God's promises when it seems impossible, to make choices to forgive and to trust. Perhaps one of these stories might speak to you about opportunities and choices you make as a couple, which lead to great blessings in your life, for example, choosing to get married according to the rites of the Catholic Church.

In Genesis, chapter two, God sees the companionship of men and women as the pinnacle of creation. To reflect his creative loving goodness and faithfulness God makes a man and a woman, and plans for them to be side by side in a committed, loving and fruitful relationship, as good stewards of the world, taking responsibility for the environment. In this passage, we hear how delighted the man and the woman are to be together, two people made for each other, becoming one in the love and intimacy of their relationship.

Reflecting on Scripture together

Use the 'Reflecting on Scripture together — a simple way' in the introduction 'Choosing your Wedding readings'.

Further Reflection

Following the 'slow reading' process, here are some questions for further reflection:

- In what ways do you find yourself and your husband or wife to be 'just right' for you? What 'delights' you about your partner? How does it feel to have found each other? What's the difference between being 'friends' and being 'one' in marriage? What does it mean for you to be 'one' in your life of love and intimacy, in heart and mind, and in body? How will you support each other in your married life together?
- What do you particularly like about this reading? Why might it be suitable for your wedding?

Note about the Reading

M = this indicates that this is a reading which speaks explicitly about Marriage. One of the chosen readings must be taken from those which are about Marriage.

These notes have been prepared by Caroline Dollard, Marriage & Family Life Project, CBCEW www.catholicfamily.org.uk This is one of a series of Liturgy Office resources to support the *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*. www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/Marriage © 2016 Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales