

Audience 8

The words “it is not good for man to be alone” takes us from “original solitude” to what the Pope calls “original unity” When Christ was talking to the Pharisees about a man leaving his parents to be joined to his wife, and the two becoming one flesh, he started with the words “in the beginning” then we have to look at the importance of “original unity” which starts with the creation of man as male and female.

Genesis 1 does not show ‘original solitude’ as man is both “male and female” (“God created **man** in the image of himself, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them.”), but Genesis 2 makes us think of man (meaning humanity) by means of the body, and how he lives in the world but goes beyond it, then 2 makes us think of the same man, but through the male and female aspect.

The physical and sexual are not completely shown. Although the physical body has stamped in it the sign of sex which is either male or female, the fact that man is a “body” belongs more to the physical aspect of man than it does to the fact of being male and female. In other words being male and female has a deeper meaning than just the physical aspects of the body. Therefore original solitude which applied to “man” came before original unity. “Original Unity” is based on masculinity and femininity as if it was two separate unions of God and the “body”, two ways of the human being created in the image and likeness of God.

Although Genesis 2 describes the creation of man and woman as two separate acts, both Books of Genesis tell the same story. Genesis is written in the language and way of speaking of the times it was written in. Scholars call it “mythical”, but not in the sense of a fairy tale, but in the real meaning of the word myth which is an old word meaning a way of telling a story with more meaning.

Genesis 2 is like a discussion between God and man. This is shown best at the stage where man is specifically created as male and female. This seems to take place in two dimensions at the same time – the actions of God as the Creator happens in a way that cannot be attributed simply to chance, at the same time as man becomes aware of himself. First God says man should not be alone, next as we can see man now knows he is alone, and then God creates woman after putting man to sleep.

In this case sleep is not as we know it, but more like man is taken into a state of non-existence at a time when he is looking for another being like himself, and when he awakes, man is now male and female, and has moved into a state of original unity.

Woman is made from Adam’s rib which makes it clear that they have the same characteristics (“bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh”), and she is called “a helper fit for him”. In a way woman is created in the same physical state as man, despite their sexual differences because “she was taken out of man”. On seeing a being like himself, Adam is overjoyed with the person he sees as a second “self”. This establishes what the Pope calls “original unity” – woman, a second self a helper fit for him – they all describe unity.