

Formed in Prayer

Let us be still
and ask the Holy Spirit to be with us.

Dear Father, be with us as we pray.
Open our ears to hear your Word in the Gospel.
Unite us in faith, hope and love as we pray together.
Send your Holy Spirit to inspire
and sustain us in our mission.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.



Gospel

Luke 20:27-38

Some Sadducees – those who say that there is no resurrection – approached Jesus and they put this question to him, ‘Master, we have it from Moses in writing, that if a man’s married brother dies childless, the man must marry the widow to raise up children for his brother. Well, then, there were seven brothers. The first, having married a wife, died childless. The second and then the third married the widow. And the same with all seven, they died leaving no children. Finally the woman herself died. Now, at the resurrection, to which of them will she be wife since she had been married to all seven?’

Jesus replied, ‘The children of this world take wives and husbands, but those who are judged worthy of a place in the other world and in the resurrection from the dead do not marry because they can no longer die, for they are the same as the angels, and being children of the resurrection they are sons of God. And Moses himself implies that the dead rise again, in the passage about the bush where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. Now he is God, not of the dead, but of the living; for to him all men are in fact alive.’

*What words or phrases struck you in Sunday’s Gospel reading?
What might God be prompting you to consider or inviting you to do in and through the Gospel?*

Reflection

We can all probably see something of the modern state of online “debate” reflected in Sunday’s Gospel story. The Sadducees appear to be making a petty attempt to “trap” Jesus with a line of questioning designed not to increase understanding or promote dialogue, but rather to nit-pick and hopefully find fault in order to show him up. How many times have we observed (or been party to) a similar type of “debate” where controversial issues or viewpoints are challenged not with respect or a listening ear, but rather attacked in the hope that one will emerge “victorious” and show the other up as a fool? We have much to learn from the example of Jesus’ response in today’s story. He doesn’t shy away from answering the questions put to him, and as a result we learn a lot from his response regarding the implications of marriage in this world and the next. We can sometimes be intimidated into silence if someone accuses us of not having the “correct” view. Importantly, Jesus has an answer prepared, and he relays it coherently and respectfully, without stooping to the game-playing of the Sadducees. As Catholic leaders we have an obligation to engage in debate and dialogue where it is called for, but to do so with a measured, prepared and respectful approach. Above all, as St Paul says, “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.” 1 Peter 3:15

Prayer

Jesus, Word of Truth
May we learn from your example of strong but respectful leadership.
Equip us with the necessary wisdom and prudence needed to answer difficult questions
in a way that encourages greater openness and true dialogue.
Amen.