**FRIDAY FEBRUARY 25 – VII WEEK O.T. [C]**

**But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother (and be joined to his wife), and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, no human being must separate."**

**Man could live the sole perfect flesh, for he was created as good by God. His nature was good, it was in the image of God:** “**Then God said: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and the cattle, and over all the wild animals and all the creatures that crawl on the ground." God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them, saying: "Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that move on the earth." (Gen 1, 26-28)** “**The LORD God said: "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a suitable partner for him." So the LORD God formed out of the ground various wild animals and various birds of the air, and he brought them to the man to see what he would call them; whatever the man called each of them would be its name. The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of the air, and all the wild animals; but none proved to be the suitable partner for the man. So the LORD God cast a deep sleep on the man, and while he was asleep, he took out one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. The LORD God then built up into a woman the rib that he had taken from the man. When he brought her to the man, the man said: "This one, at last, is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; This one shall be called 'woman,' for out of 'her man' this one has been taken." That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one body. (Gen 2, 18-24)**

**With sin, nature is deteriorated. Here is the first fruit of such deterioration: man no longer acknowledges the woman as his flesh: “When they heard the sound of the LORD God moving about in the garden at the breezy time of the day, the man and his wife hid themselves from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. The LORD God then called to the man and asked him, "Where are you?" He answered, "I heard you in the garden; but I was afraid, because I was naked, so I hid myself." Then he asked, "Who told you that you were naked? You have eaten, then, from the tree of which I had forbidden you to eat!" The man replied, "The woman whom you put here with me - she gave me fruit from the tree, so I ate it."(Gen 3, 8-12) One has caused a true death in nature.**

**Our God keeps two commandments to custody of marriage: “You shall not commit adultery and you shall not covet your neighbour’s wife.” The Law of Moses allows the divorce only for some very serious cases: "When a man, after marrying a woman and having relations with her, is later displeased with her because he finds in her something indecent, and therefore he writes out a bill of divorce and hands it to her, thus dismissing her from his house: if on leaving his house she goes and becomes the wife of another man, and the second husband, too, comes to dislike her and dismisses her from his house by handing her a written bill of divorce; or if this second man who has married her, dies; then her former husband, who dismissed her, may not again take her as his wife after she has become defiled. That would be an abomination before the LORD, and you shall not bring such guilt upon the land which the LORD, your God, is giving you as a heritage.” (Dt 24, 1-4) There is no other reason, but that one.**

**Let us read the text of Mk 10, 1-12**

**He set out from there and went into the district of Judea (and) across the Jordan. Again crowds gathered around him and, as was his custom, he again taught them. The Pharisees approached and asked, "Is it lawful for a husband to divorce his wife?" They were testing him. He said to them in reply, "What did Moses command you?" They replied, "Moses permitted him to write a bill of divorce and dismiss her." But Jesus told them, "Because of the hardness of your hearts he wrote you this commandment. But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother (and be joined to his wife), and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, no human being must separate." In the house the disciples again questioned him about this. He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."**

**With Malachi, the Lord wants the marriage to be respected. Here are his words of fire: This also you do: the altar of the LORD you cover with tears, weeping and groaning, Because he no longer regards your sacrifice nor accepts it favorably from your hand; And you say, "Why is it?" -  Because the LORD is witness between you and the wife of your youth, With whom you have broken faith though she is your companion, your betrothed wife. Did he not make one being, with flesh and spirit: and what does that one require but godly offspring? You must then safeguard life that is your own, and not break faith with the wife of your youth. For I hate divorce, says the LORD, the God of Israel, And covering one's garment with injustice, says the LORD of hosts; You must then safeguard life that is your own, and not break faith.” (Mal 2, 13-16) Jesus comes to regenerate the nature, to fill it with grace and Holy Spirit. Now it can express every goodness. May the Mother of God obtain for us the gift of faith.**