

**The Reflection from Pastor Fr. John
Carlos, Holy Cross Church, Harrison, NJ,
October 3, 2021**

IN GOD'S PLAN

The relationship between man and woman was the bond instituted by the Creator to most perfectly satisfy humanity's need for relationship. That relationship, that marriage between man and woman, was to be faithful and permanent.

We live in a society that often mistakes a man and a woman's need for human connection as sexual desire. In response to such desire, our culture is flooded with suggestive images, pornography, dating apps and websites, and a thriving sex industry. We have a society that promotes a "hook up" culture of casual sexual encounters, a society where serial co-habitation is replacing committed relationships, a society where many people move from one sexual partner to another.

Yet at the very time when our culture offers ways to satisfy every sexual desire, we have a society in which many people seem to be lonely, disconnected, and unhappy with their lives. This dissatisfaction leads some people to escape into a virtual world of social

media and digital fantasy. Others turn to drugs, alcohol, or an endless accumulation of possessions. Still others continue seeking ever more sensual pleasure to fill their emptiness.

Sunday's readings remind us of a basic desire that we all have. One as important as food, water, clothing, shelter, sleep, sanitation, and health care. That need is not for sex. It is the need to have at least one person in our lives to love us, to care about us, to cherish us, to keep their promises, to never abandon us, to be there for us in good times and in bad.

In God's plan, a faithful, loving marriage is the place where a man or a woman finds that person.

In your service, prayerfully.

Father John Carlos