

► Sunday, November 9, 2008, Dedication of the Basilica of St. John Lateran

Gen 28:11-18; Ps 84:3, 4, 5-6, 8, 11; I Cor 3:9-13, 16-17; Lk 19:1-10

Week #12: Main Theme: The dignity of every human being and the dignity of the baptized.

Today, in celebrating the establishment of a church in Rome (St. John Lateran), we celebrate the universal Church. The Basilica of St. John Lateran, no St. Peter's, is the cathedral of the Bishop of Rome, the Pope. St. John Lateran is, therefore, the preeminent church in the world as is indicated by an inscription on its main door: "Most Holy Lateran Church, of all the churches in the city and the world, the mother and head." In celebrating this church, we aren't celebrating what we do but what God does. The Church is filled with weak and sinful people, but in God's great mercy He enables us by sacramental grace to attain to Christian greatness and to serve His plan of salvation.

In fact, God doesn't just dwell in the Church as a whole; He also dwells in you, in every baptized Christian who has not separated himself by mortal sin. As Paul said today, you are the temple of God! The Church always defends the dignity of each human being, because she knows that the root of that dignity is God's love for us: He wants to dwell in us as His temple! Let us treat ourselves and others with dignity, with justice, with chastity, and let us work to build a culture of life and love in which the rights of all people are respected. And let us pray that all Christians will stand courageously with Holy Mother Church to defend the dignity of every human being.

Bulletin: "It is impossible to further the common good without acknowledging and defending the right to life, upon which all the other inalienable rights of individuals are founded and from which they develop."

Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*, #101