

Under Construction

It seems as if St. Peter's is ALWAYS under construction.

-Whether it is concrete that is poured for the steps, or the fence that is being built or elevator being installed/fixed or even the heat that is being adjusted, St. Peter's is a working progress which will hopefully be completed in the near future.

-As I was REFLECTING on this, I thought that what was happening AT ST. PETER'S was an **appropriate analogy** for the MISSION OF THE CHURCH.

-Just as **new elements** are being added to this Church for the **praise and glory of God**, so you THE LAITY are called to ASSIST in adding NEW MEMBERS to the NEW TEMPLE, that is the body of Christ, to make this **whole planet** RESOUND with the PRAISES OF GOD.

Pope Benedict Emeritus in 2008 remarked that the dedication of St. John Lateran was meant to reveal

“GOD'S DESIRE to build a *spiritual temple* in the world”,

and this will be accomplished in TWO ways with the Church giving and passing on life as 1) a EUCHARISTIC TEMPLE 2) EVANGELIZING TEMPLE

A Eucharistic Temple

The readings today invite us to see the *Eucharistic symbolism* present in the readings.

-What is key to note is that Jesus was speaking of the TEMPLE OF HIS BODY *during* the feast of PASSOVER. WHY is this significant?

-During the Feast of Passover, over **200 000** lambs would be slaughtered at the temple to provide for ALL the **Jewish pilgrims** who have come to celebrate.

-The **priests** who slaughtered the lambs would DRAIN THE BLOOD into a basin and then they would POUR THE BLOOD into a SPECIAL DRAIN at the base of the altar in the temple.

-This blood would EMPTY into a STREAM *flowing from the side of the temple*, so during Passover you would see BLOOD AND WATER *flowing from the side of the temple*.

Now imagine the apostle John who *had just seen blood and water flow from the temple a day earlier*, and NOW at the FOOT OF THE CROSS he was seeing BLOOD AND WATER flow from the **side of Jesus** and recalling Jesus' words which referred to the **temple of his body**.

-Jesus is the FULFILLMENT of the NEW TEMPLE!

-Jesus is the fulfillment of what Ezekiel PROPHECIZED: a temple whose WATERS GIVE LIFE wherever it goes because it is MIXED with the SAVIOR'S BLOOD, the BLOOD that has POWER to **liberate** us from **death** through the **forgiveness** of sins.

An Evangelizing Temple

But this life we have received ***was not meant to be ours alone***—we are called to SHARE THIS LIFE with others.

-One of the reasons why Jesus was clearing away the temple was because the money changers were selling their goods in the ***court of the Gentiles*** which prevented NON-JEWS from praying IN the temple.

-The PURPOSE of the temple was to allow for the worship of God ***by all peoples*** and not JUST the Jewish people:

It shall come to pass in the LATTER DAYS
that the mountain of the HOUSE of the LORD
shall be established as the highest of the mountains...
and ALL THE NATIONS shall FLOW to it (Is 2:2)

This PARTICULAR MISSION to guide ALL THE NATIONS into the HOUSE OF THE LORD is given to YOU the LAITY.

"The NEW EVANGELIZATION that can make the twenty-first century a springtime of the gospel is a task for ***the entire People of God***, but will DEPEND in a DECISIVE WAY on the ***lay faithful*** being FULLY AWARE of their *baptismal vocation* and *their responsibility* for bringing the GOOD NEWS of Jesus Christ to their CULTURE AND SOCIETY." –St. John Paul II

The LAITY have a SPECIAL DUTY AND VOCATION to be present in the VARIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES of your life which the clergy cannot be in such as your families, your workplace, your friendships, at the hockey rink, at the hair salon etc. These are SPECIAL opportunities to EVANGELIZE.

To evangelize requires that we engage in ***authentic friendship*** with others i.e., we LOVE them.

-By GENUINELY loving them for WHO they are and WHERE they are at in their ***journey with God***, we allow *the love of God* to EMBRACE and TRANSFORM them through our WITNESS, and the opportunity will **potentially** open itself up one day for us to ***speak a word*** to INSTRUCT or to INSPIRE. We might even have the opportunity to INVITE THEM to ENCOUNTER GOD.

I just went to a young adult adoration where a student had invited *two protestants* to come whom she knew from work.

-One had been coming previously and ***was now thinking about becoming Catholic*** and the other was ***asking questions*** about the REAL PRESENCE OF JESUS CHRIST in the EUCHARIST. *What a beautiful and simple witness!*

-This student was on fire for her faith, she received life from Jesus' sacred Body and Blood and this moved her to share the fullness of that life with others!

One day the construction of this Church ***will end***, but the *building up of the body of Christ* will ***continue*** until our Savior comes again in glory. Will you take up YOUR MISSION and fulfill your baptismal vocation to BRING CHRIST to our *culture and society* while the universal Church is '***under construction***'?