



Bringing Home the Word

The Dedication of the Lateran Basilica
November 9, 2025

A Sign of God's Presence

Paige Byrne Shortal

Saint John Lateran in Rome was the first Christian basilica, dedicated on November 9 in the year 324. Its name comes from the family who donated the land, the Laterani family, and the church is dedicated under the patronage of both St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist. Until the fourteenth century, the popes lived in the palace adjoining the church, and it—not St. Peter's—is still the pope's cathedral. As the pope is the shepherd of the universal Church, the Lateran Basilica of St. John is the cathedral church of the world. Over the doorways of the facade, the inscription reads, *Ecclesiarum Urbis et Orbis Mater et Caput*,

that is, "Mother and head of all the churches of the city and of the world."

The movement of history is to bring people together, not separate them. Witness our technology that has created of our world a global village where we can be in almost instant communication with anyone on the planet. It is through Rome that we connect to all Catholics everywhere. Rome's failures are our failures. And Rome's glories are also ours. One of those glories is the freedom to worship as one people despite differences in our native languages, our races, our stations in life. St. Paul writes, "Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16). That is what this feast of dedication is about: building the whole people of God, across space and time, into a holy temple. †

Sunday Readings

Ezekiel 47:1–2, 8–9, 12

Then he brought me back to the entrance of the temple, and there I saw water flowing.

1 Corinthians 3:9c–11, 16–17

Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

John 2:13–22

"Zeal for your house will consume me."



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A Word from Pope Leo XIV

Because of the Jewish roots of Christianity, all Christians have a special relationship with Judaism.... The theological dialogue between Christians and Jews remains ever important and close to my heart. Even in these difficult times, marked by conflicts and misunderstandings, it is necessary to continue the momentum of this precious dialogue of ours.

ADDRESS, ROME, MAY 19, 2025



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- What does being a member of the Church mean to me?
- Do I feel connected to Catholics everywhere?



Understanding Scrupulosity

Rev. Thomas M. Santa, CSsR

Scrupulosity has been long recognized by priests, rabbis, and spiritual directors. Great saints have counseled their followers about it. Still others, such as St. Alphonsus Liguori and St. Ignatius of Loyola, struggled with the disorder themselves. For many years, mental-health professionals dismissed scrupulosity as a symptom of neurotic behavior and treated it accordingly. Only more recently has it been understood as a sub-type of obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). Studies suggest that approximately three million people in the United States have OCD; it has been further asserted that approximately six percent of this group (about 180,000 people) have religious scrupulosity.

Scrupulosity has two distinct manifestations: developmental and emotional. For the most part, developmental scrupulosity can be traced to a specific time in adolescence during which the person became excessively focused on sin and its consequences. Someone who first experiences scrupulosity as an adult can often trace it to a powerful conversion experience; for example, at the conclusion of the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA) process. Often, people with developmental scrupulosity can experience relief, if not a complete “cure,” with the help of a kind and patient confessor. We can best understand developmental scrupulosity as the manifestation of a “tender conscience.” Emotional scrupulosity, on the other hand, is a more enduring form of the disorder. The manifestation is primarily obsessive when the person has persistent intrusive and senseless ideas, images, or impulses. The manifestation is primarily a compulsion when the person feels compelled to carry out a repetitive action. The person often understands that the compulsion is senseless; for example, repeatedly washing hands, checking locks, reciting prayers, or performing a specific ritual action associated with religious practice.

Emotionally rooted scrupulosity requires professional help. It’s not possible to pray yourself out of emotional scrupulosity. Prayer and a gentle confessor are important and useful, but behavior modification and medication therapy are also required—and highly effective. †

From *Understanding Scrupulosity: Relief and Encouragement* by Rev. Thomas M. Santa, CSsR, Liguori Publications (828829). To order, call 800-325-9521 or visit Liguori.org.

Scrupulosity has developmental and emotional manifestations.

Wisdom from Catholic Update

From “Ten Excuses for NOT Praying” by Jerome Kropp

“God already knows what’s in my heart; he doesn’t need me to tell him.”

Yes, God knows what’s in our hearts. How sure are we that we do? If we look honestly and steadily within ourselves, we’ll see resentment, jealousy, envy, and pride. Some may even find hatred, toxic anger, the impulse to destroy good, or the desire to achieve supremacy of self. When we see ourselves with clarity, the fact that God knows what’s in our hearts can be downright uncomfortable! Let that discomfort drive you to pray. A good Act of Contrition is an excellent prayer. You can also call on God to “heal my heart” or confess, “God, I have a sinful heart. Please forgive me; give me a clean heart.”

Catholic Update—a subscription newsletter published eleven times a year—explores Church tradition and teaching on contemporary topics. Liguori.org • 800-325-9521



For the Church throughout the world, that we may be a sign and source of goodness, truth, and beauty in this world. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

November 10–15

Monday, St. Leo the Great:

Wis 1:1–7 / Lk 17:1–6

Tuesday, St. Martin of Tours:

Wis 2:23–3:9 / Lk 17:7–10

Wednesday, St. Josaphat:

Wis 6:1–11 / Lk 17:11–19

Thursday, St. Frances Xavier Cabrini:

Wis 7:22b–8:1 / Lk 17:20–25

Friday, Weekday:

Wis 13:1–9 / Lk 17:26–37

Saturday, Weekday:

Wis 18:14–16; 19:6–9 / Lk 18:1–8

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